

# *Galatians*

CHRIST HAS SET US FREE



GRACE ROAD CHURCH  
STUDY GUIDE



# GALATIANS

## CHRIST HAS SET US FREE

PERSONAL AND GROUPS STUDY GUIDE

Written and compiled by Abbey Sitterley

Cover design by Nicole Langford

© Grace Road Church  
440 East Avenue, Rochester, NY.  
All rights reserved.



# INTRODUCTION

Though Paul's letter to the Galatians is a short book of the Bible, it's full of rich theology, instructions, and encouragement for us as believers.

Dated anywhere between AD 48 and 57, Galatians was written by Paul the Apostle to the church in Galatia. Galatia is located in the Anatolian highlands, a part of modern Turkey, but in Paul's time it was a Roman province. Paul visited Galatia on his missional journeys and helped foster a community of believers there. Like his letters to the Corinthian, Colossian, Thessolonican, and other churches, Paul wrote both to correct and encourage these early Christian communities as they grew.

This particular letter of Paul's was written in response to a critical schism happening in the Galatian church. A group of Jewish Christians, called Judaizers, were teaching that, in order to truly be saved, one must have more than faith in Jesus. They believed that circumcision, as well as observance of the traditional Jewish calendar, were required to be made holy. Essentially, they wanted believers to observe the old covenant, salvation by works of the law, implying that the new covenant in Christ was not enough. As this group grew in influence, they sowed division in the churches they occupied, causing the circumcised to shun fellowship and brotherhood with the uncircumcised. Often, this meant that Jewish and Greek followers of Jesus weren't treating each other as part of the same body.

When Paul learned of this broken fellowship happening in the Galatian church, he penned this letter in an attempt to intervene. Paul calls them into account for entertaining a false gospel and extols them to remember the sufficiency of the faith that first saved them — faith not of their own works — and place their trust in the sufficiency of Christ's finished work. As a people redeemed through God's grace rather than our merit, we should pursue unity as one body in Christ.

Here are three big takeaways to keep in mind as we read Galatians together:

- We should guard against legalism but bear the fruit of the spirit, restoring one another
- We are free, but should not use our freedom to destroy
- We are People of the Promise instead of People of the Law

In this book, you can sense Paul's deep concern over the souls in the Galatian church and his desperation for them to take hold of the true gospel of Jesus Christ: that only by faith in Him can we receive justification and adoption into God's family.

Historically, this book has often been used by the Lord to revive the church and shake the cultural and religious cobwebs from the pure, undiluted Gospel of grace. We pray that it be so here at Grace Road, too!

# STUDYING A BOOK OF THE BIBLE

## Divinely Inspired

In 2 Tim. 2:15, Paul encourages us to “study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” While we might be tempted to approach a book of the Bible like any other literary study, we should approach Scripture not merely in an intellectual or literary way, but as the divinely-inspired Word of God.

Charles Spurgeon once said “Visit many good books, but live in the Bible.” As we study Paul’s letter to the Galatians, we want to keep the posture of our hearts in submission toward what God is seeking to teach us in His word.

## Journaling

Journaling can be a great way to process your thoughts about what you’re reading, as well as keep a record of what God has been teaching you during your study of Galatians. Writing can also act as a landing pad for questions that come to mind throughout the week, making it easier to bring those questions and thoughts into your Grace Group or Grow Group.

## Community Engagement

As God has created us for community, what better thing to talk about together than the Lord who brought us together! Talk things over in your Grace Group, Grow Group, or get brunch with new friends after church some Sunday. Our church is blessed to have many wise, caring members who would love to walk through things with you, and our pastoral staff are always happy to discuss things further. Feel free to reach out to [info@graceroadchurch.org](mailto:info@graceroadchurch.org) with any questions or concerns.

## Additional Resources

To learn more about how to study the Bible, books such as *Knowing Scripture* by R. C. Sproul and *Women of the Word* by Jen Wilkin are great resources to begin with. Ligonier Ministries and Desiring God Ministries also provide a wealth of articles, videos, and guides on biblical study, popular topics, and various other theological addresses. For further resources on studying the book of Galatians, refer to the Resources section at the end of this study guide.

# HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

To accommodate flexibility in the preaching schedule, we have organized this study guide into the following sections:

I NO OTHER GOSPEL [1:1-2:21]  
APPROX. SUNDAYS SEPTEMBER 11, 18, 25 | OCTOBER 2, 9

II PAUL'S DEFENSE OF THE TRUE GOSPEL [3:1-4:11]  
APPROX. SUNDAYS OCTOBER 16, 23, 30 | NOVEMBER 6, 13, 20 | JANUARY 8

III FREEDOM FROM LAW, FREEDOM IN SPIRIT [4:12-6:10]  
APPROX. SUNDAYS JANUARY 15, 22, 29 | FEBRUARY 5, 12, 19, 26

IV FINAL SUMMARY [6:11-18]  
APPROX. SUNDAY MARCH 5

Though some sections may not finish in accordance with seasonal observances such as Advent, each divide has been chosen to reflect the dominant themes of selected passages.

## PERSONAL STUDY QUESTIONS

We've designed this guide to help unpack and complement the ideas we will go over during our sermon series on Galatians. There are six questions to mark Monday through Saturday, but they don't need to be filled out each and every day. If you'd rather answer them in one fell swoop - go for it! Use this book as a means to continue digesting the Scriptures as we live our daily lives.

## GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

These are optional questions to use in addition to each week's Grace Group questions. Use one or two or all of them! Bridging our personal study with community discussion helps us dive deeper into the truth of God's Word through exposure to other perspectives, experiences, and ideas. We could spend a lifetime exploring the Gospel. The Group Study Questions are just a few extra prompts to keep you going.



*Valentin de Boulogne's depiction of "Saint Paul Writing His Epistles", 16th century (Blaffer Foundation Collection, Houston, Texas).*



**PART I**  
**NO OTHER GOSPEL**  
**GALATIANS 1:1-2:21**

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

— 1 John 4:1

“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.”

— John 6:37

“The gospel is so simple that small children can understand it, and it is so profound that studies by the wisest theologians will never exhaust its riches.”

— Charles Hodges



**5. Refer back to the Introduction. What's happening in the Galatian church as Paul writes to them?**

**6. Read the account of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15. How is this situation similar to the one occurring in the churches in Galatia?**

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**1. As you are comfortable, consider sharing your conversion experiences together. Do you notice commonalities? Differences?**

**2. Paul insists that his faith and revelation came to him from God, not man. As you remember your conversion stories, do you see ways in which God was drawing you to Himself before you came to believe?**

**3. Why is it important to talk about the history of the church as well as our own experiences?**

**4. Refer to the Charles Hodges quote at the beginning of this section. What do you think this statement means? How is the Gospel simple yet cosmically complex?**

**5. What are you looking forward to unpacking as we study Galatians?**

# **GALATIANS 1:6-10**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

1. Paul writes quite sternly in his condemnation of false gospels, calling those who don't preach the true gospel of Jesus to be 'accursed' - even the angels. What can we learn from Paul's righteous anger here?

2. Can you name some modern false gospels? Write them out below.

3. How can we ready ourselves for when we encounter these false gospels?

4. How should we navigate situations in which we are confronted with heresy? When should we extend grace and when should we react as boldly as Paul?

**5. Have you ever experienced division in a church? How did that experience impact your faith?**

**6. Read Matthew 6:24. John Calvin once nicknamed our hearts 'idol factories.' How is a heart with man as its idol opposed with God?**

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**1. How do we define a false gospel?**

**2. Can you identify any false gospels prevalent in our day?**

**3. When is it important to draw lines in the sand on doctrine and when should we exercise Christian liberty?**

**4. How do know which of our beliefs should be primary and which should be secondary?**

**5. Read Ephesians 4:1-16 together. How can this passage help us navigate disagreements in the body of Christ?**

# **GALATIANS 1:11-2:10**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

**1. In the closing section to chapter 1, Paul reiterates his spiritual journey from persecutor of Christians to being redeemed by Christ himself. What strikes you about Paul's story here?**

**2. When Paul returns to Jerusalem, he brings his understanding of the Gospel into the community of Christians there, "to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain." Do you have a group of Christians that you talk deep about the Gospel with? Why is having Christian community important?**

**3. In 2:4, Paul details that 'false brothers' were 'secretly brought in— who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery.' Who are these false brothers? Why would they want to spiritually enslave others?**

4. Romans 8:15 says that a spirit of slavery entices us to 'fall back into fear.' Contrast this with the 'spirit of Sonship' that we have received in Christ. What are some attributes of each? (Hint: 1 John 4:18, Phil. 4:6-7, 2 Tim. 1:6-7, Rom. 8:17, 1 Cor. 2:16, Heb. 12:7-8, Eph. 1:4-6)

[Spirit of fear]

[Spirit of Sonship]

5. Paul starts the account of his opposition to Peter by emphasizing his equality with Peter and the others, reminding the Galatians that 'God shows no partiality.' How does knowing our identity in Christ impact the way we navigate disagreements among each other?

6. What have you noticed about Paul's tone in the letter so far? When is he generous? Stern? Did you notice other tones? What can we learn today from Paul's approach?



## GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. As someone who was 'advancing in Judaism,' if anyone should have been stressing salvation by works, it was Paul! But God called Paul by grace, not because of his religious work, and gave him the same love and adoption that God gave to those Paul persecuted. Why is God's grace so scandalous?
2. Do you easily seek out community or do you find it difficult to get and stay connected?
3. Refer to Question 4 in Part 3 and share some of the attributes you came up with for each category.
4. Read James 4:1-13 together. What is the sin of partiality? How do we see this error play out today?
5. How should understanding our equal identity in Christ change how we approach, engage, encourage, correct, and love our brothers and sisters in the faith?

# **GALATIANS 2:11-14**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

- 1. Paul interchanges calling Peter Peter with the name Jesus gave him in John 1:42, Cephas. Embark on a quick Google search. What are the origin and meaning of both names?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. At Antioch, Paul opposes Peter 'to his face.' Do you struggle with in-person confrontation? What are the advantages of in-person communication over online or written dialogue?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3. What does Paul mean by saying that Peter stands 'condemned'? Why does Paul take Peter's actions so seriously?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4. Can you relate to Peter in this passage? Name a time when you succumbed to pressure of your peers. And can you relate to Paul here as well? Describe a moment when you stood up for what was right, even though it may have been hard.**

5. Peter shatters the community of the saints by hypocritically refusing to eat with the uncircum-sized believers. What was the impact of this error?

6. Does this passage unearth things you personally struggle with (i.e. hypocrisy, confrontation, division, etc.)? What can you learn from this passage in your desire to be more like Christ?

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How has online dialogue on social media and texting changed how we relate to one another?

2. Have you needed to confront someone and encourage them toward the truth? Talk about that experience. What did you learn from it?

3. Why do you think it's hard to go against the crowd? Why are we tempted to serve man rather than God?

4. Why is Peter's refusal to eat with the uncircum-sized believers a major problem?

5. What strikes you about this passage? Does it encourage you in a situation you are currently facing or help you better understand a prior experience?

# GALATIANS 2:15-21

## PERSONAL STUDY

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

1. Justification is a legal term, meaning that our debt has been settled. In John 19:30, Jesus himself utters a legal term on the cross with his last breath: *tetelestai*. What does this word mean?

2. Long ago, the Reformers coined the term *Sola fide*, a Latin phrase that means 'by faith alone.' Why is it important for us to understand that we are justified only by faith?

3. Martin Luther once said that the doctrine of justification by faith is "the article with and by which the church stands." How does missing the beauty of this Gospel truth impact our faith, our actions, and our communities?

4. Read James 2:14-26. What do these verses tell us about the interplay between faith and works?

**5. What are some ways in which you are tempted to try to earn your own salvation?**

**6. Read 2:20 slowly, then rewrite the statement below on your own behalf.**

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

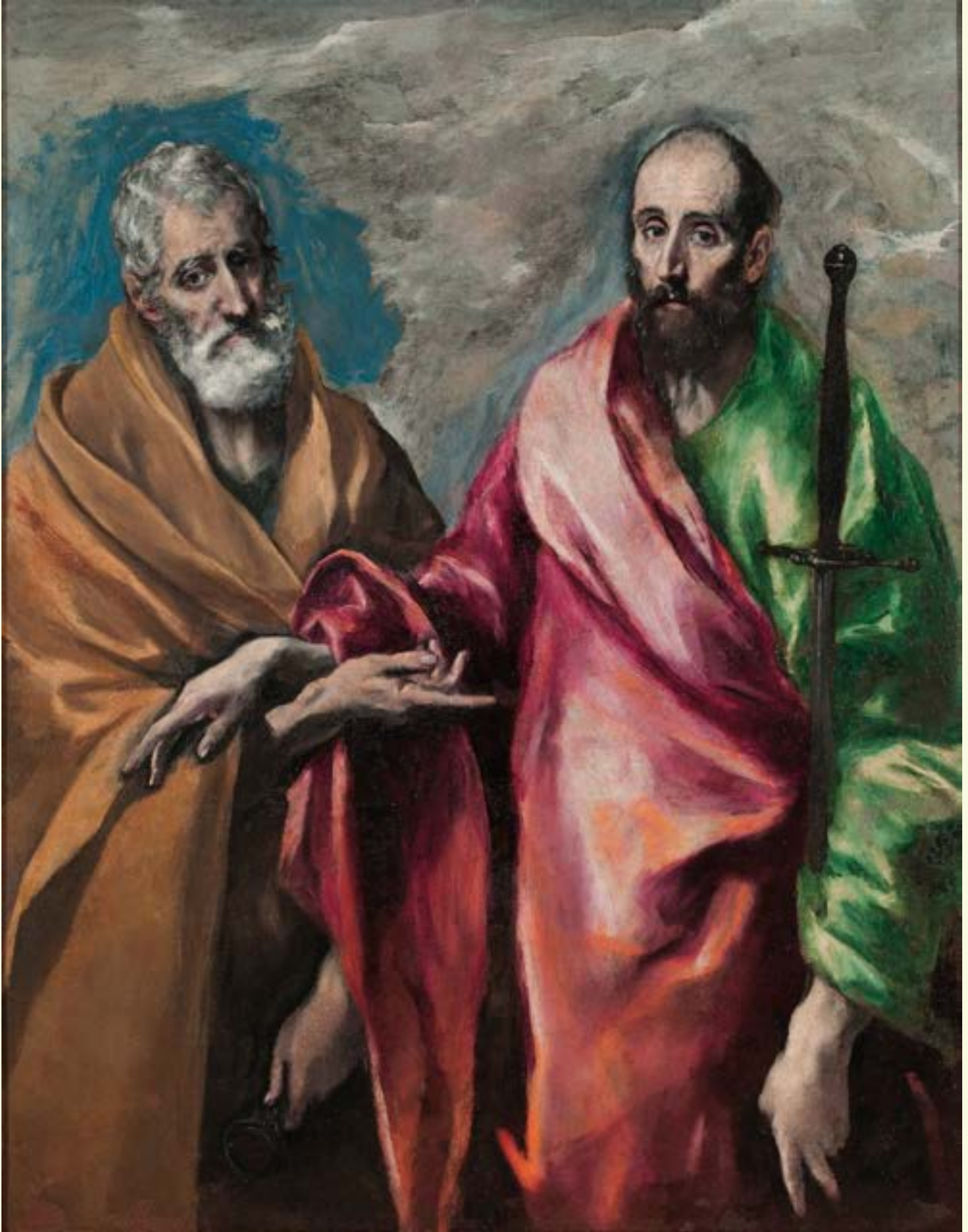
**1. What does the finished work of Christ mean for us who are in Him?**

**2. Throughout church history, there has been much debate on the relationship between faith and works. How does our justification by faith actually encourage us to do good work, rather than produce laziness and apathy?**

**3. Why is the doctrine of sola fide so hard for us to grapple with? Why do we still find ourselves trying to earn our salvation?**

**4. Is there anything in these past two chapters that you've wanted to talk about in community but haven't yet? Take some time to return to those ideas.**

**5. As you prepare to pray together tonight, what are some new things you've learned from these two chapters that you can bring before the Lord?**



*St. Peter and St. Paul, El Greco, oil on canvas*

**PART II**  
**PAUL'S DEFENSE**  
**OF THE TRUE GOSPEL**  
**GALATIANS 3:1-4:11**

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.”

– Hebrews 11:8-10

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished...For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

– Matthew 5:17-18, 20

In Christianity, the moment we believe, God imputes Christ's perfect performance to us as if it were our own, and adopts us into His family. In other words, God can say to us just as He once said to Christ, “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

– Tim Keller



# **GALATIANS 3:1-9**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

**1. Paul calls the Galatians 'foolish' twice, and even questions if they've been bewitched because they are so off-course. What does bewitched mean?**

**2. Why do you think Paul is so exasperated with the Galatian church?**

**3. Read verses 2 and 3 again. If Christ is the Author and Perfector of our faith (Heb. 12:2), can the flesh have any role in our faith?**

**4. Why do you think Paul begins his argument with Abraham? What significance does Abraham have in Jewish culture and history?**

5. What does it mean that Abraham's faith was counted to him as righteousness? (Hint: Rom. 4, Heb. 11)

6. What is Paul saying by claiming that those of faith are the sons of Abraham? (Hint: Gen. 37:4; Rom. 4:17)

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Do you try to sanctify yourself in your own strength?

2. What do our lives look like when we try to sanctify ourselves?

3. Read Hebrews 12:2 together. If Jesus is the Author and Perfector of our faith, what does that mean for us as we strive for holiness?

4. How does justification by faith run counter to the way of the world?

5. As a group, explore what Paul's argument about Abraham means. Why is this argument significant to his audience? Why is it significant to us?

# **GALATIANS 3:10-14**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

**1. Take a look at verse 10. Can anyone keep the law completely? Why not?**

**2. In his Commentary on Galatians, Martin Luther suggests that if the law cannot make us righteous, then neither can the additional civil laws and ordinances the Jews put in place to help them keep the law of God. Why might this be offensive to those who preach salvation by works?**

**3. What does it mean that Jesus Christ became a 'curse' on your behalf?**

**4. If Jesus has taken the curse of the law from our lives, what does that mean for our good works today?**

5. If Jesus has taken the curse of the law from our lives, does that mean we can go on sinning?  
(Hint: Rom. 6)

6. Check out Romans 6:13-14. If we are under grace, not the law (v. 14), what should we then do? (v. 13)

## GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why can't we keep the law completely?

2. What does it mean that Christ became a curse for us?

3. How does the Christian's justification by faith inform his or her good works?

4. Refer to Romans 6 together. How are we tempted to 'sin that grace may abound' in our daily lives? What does this look like for you?

5. This section deals with a lot of history, theology, and mystery. What stood out to you as you studied it?

# **GALATIANS 3:15-22**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

1. What is a covenant? (Hint: "What Is A Covenant?" by Mark Jones at [ligonier.org](http://ligonier.org))

2. How does the law expose our sin?

3. What does the law tell us about Christ ? (Hint: verse 19)

4. In what ways are we tempted to disregard the power of the law? In other words, what are some ways we excuse the severity of our sin?

5. Is there sin in your life that you have been treating lightly? Take a moment to confess it to God and commit to turning away from that sin.

6. What is the promise we receive when we put our faith in Christ?

## GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the function of the law?

2. In his great apologetic work *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis wrote,

*“A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust? If the whole show was bad and senseless from A to Z, so to speak, why did I, who was supposed to be part of the show, find myself in such a violent reaction against it?..”*

How does Lewis' line analogy help us understand the diagnostic properties of the law?

3. What are some ways in which we try to dim the brightness of the law's spotlight on our sinfulness?

4. Is it healthy to experience grief over your sin? What should we do when we are convicted in our hearts of sin?

5. How can community groups support each other in the fight against sin?

# **GALATIANS 3:23-29**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

**1. In verse 24, Paul calls the law our “guardian.” How is the law our protector?**

**2. How does faith in Christ render the guard of the law useless? How is faith greater?**

**3. Have you been baptized? Are you currently considering it? If you have been baptized, write what your baptism meant to you. If you have not yet been baptized, describe here what you know the Bible says about baptism.**

**4. Galatians 3:28 is a wonderful truth to rejoice in - that we are all one in Christ Jesus! What does this mean for ethnic, biological, and cultural distinctions? Are these expressions of humanity made moot by this verse or are they made a greater cause for celebration?**

5. This declaration was controversial in the culture of Paul's day. The sins of racism, classism, and bigotry abounded, just as they do in our age. How should the knowledge of our unity in Christ cause us to fight for racial harmony and seek diverse community?

6. As heirs according to the promise, what do we receive from God?

## GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How was the law employed as our guardian?

2. Christ did not abolish the law— he *fulfilled* it. Why is this distinction important?

3. Discuss the meaning, power, and celebration of baptism.

4. Galatians 3:28 is a famous passage in Paul's letter that shows us just how one we are in Christ Jesus. How can having our true identity rooted in Christ change the way we interact with one another?

5. Rather than an erasure or dismissal of biological, ethnic, and class differences, this verse celebrates our fundamental unity in Christ. How does it run contrary to the sins of racism, prejudice, and partiality?



# **GALATIANS 4:1-7**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

**1. The beginning of Galatians 4 is a triumphant summary of the argument Paul has made so far. In your own words, summarize what he is trying to say below:**

**2. Take a look at Psalm 27:10, Psalm 68:5, and Romans 8:15-17. How is your Heavenly Father different from your earthly father? Do your personal experiences impact how you read this passage?**

**3. What does the word “Abba” mean? What does use of this word imply about how close God entertains relationship with us?**

**4. Now that we are no longer slaves to ‘the elementary principles’ of this world, what are we free unto?**

**5. Do you live your daily life in the freedom of who you are in Jesus? What are some ways you can grasp that truth today?**

**6. How should our position as heirs to Christ's promise and as sons justified by faith alone prompt us to share the gospel with others?**

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**1. Share your summaries from Question #1 in this section (Gal. 4:1-7).**

**2. As you are comfortable, share a bit about your earthly fathers. What is he like? What is your relationship like? How is your Heavenly Father different from your earthly father?**

**3. Read what Scripture says about the way God acts towards the fatherless. What does this say about His character? (Psalm 27:10, Psalm 68:5, and Romans 8:15-17)**

**4. What has Paul been trying to say about who the Christian is in Christ Jesus so far? Do you struggle to take hold of these truths in your life? What might be holding you back?**

**5. What we believe about God informs what we believe about ourselves and the world around us. How do doctrines like justification by faith help us rest in the Lord?**



**5. Why is isolation unhealthy for us as part of the body of Christ?**

**6. How does our being pursued by God and our pursuit of deeper relationship with Him change our hearts?**

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**1. How can legalism and tradition blind us to the freedom we have in Christ?**

**2. What is your history with legalism? Did you grow up with legalistic practices you no longer observe?**

**3. What's the difference between legalism and being obedient to Christ? How do we sometimes confuse the two?**

**4. How do our personal beliefs impact our communities?**

**5. Do you resonate with Paul's concern for the Galatians? Are there people in your life that you would like to see return to the truth? Take a moment to compile a list of prayer requests and pray together as a group.**



*Gian Lorenzo Bernini - Dove of the Holy Spirit (ca. 1660, stained glass, Throne of St. Peter, St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican)*

**PART III**

**FREEDOM *FROM* THE LAW,  
FREEDOM *IN* THE SPIRIT**

**GALATIANS 3:1-4:11**

“Now the Lord is the Spirit,  
and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”  
– 2 Cor. 3:17

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”  
– John 8:36

“And I shall walk in a wide place,  
for I have sought your precepts.”  
– Psalm 119:45

“All other freedoms, once won, soon turn into new ser-  
vitude. Christ is the only liberator whose liberation lasts  
forever.”  
– Malcolm Muggeridge

# **GALATIANS 4:12-20**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 10:31-33, 11:1. Why does Paul emphasize imitating the apostles?

2. How have the Judaizers created a stumbling block for believers?

3. Have you ever confronted someone and received a negative reaction? How might that experience inform how you read Paul's plea here?

4. Paul writes in v. 17, "They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them." What are the motivations Paul is accusing the Judiazers of possessing?



5. How is the objective nature of truth an offensive thing today? How might it have been offensive in Paul's day?

6. After reading verses 19 and 20, what do Paul's feelings imply about the importance of staying true to the Gospel?

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. We tend to think of imitation as someone stealing our style or copying our behaviors in a negative way. Where do we see positive examples of imitation in everyday life?

2. What do you notice about Paul's care for the Galatian church? Can we learn anything from his example?

3. The Galatians cared for Paul's physical ailment and now Paul is trying to help heal their spiritual injury. Why does speaking the truth seem to hurt even as it heals?

4. What are the fruits of Christ being formed in us?

5. Read Ephesians 5:1-2 and 1 Cor. 11:1 together. Name a characteristic of Paul's ministry that reminds you of Christ. How can we aim to be better imitators of Jesus?

# **GALATIANS 4:21-31**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

1. What is an allegory? Write the definition here.

2. Refer to Genesis 16, 21:8-21. Who is Hagar?

3. How was Ishmael's birth according to the flesh?

4. When we try to do things in our own power, what does this motivation say about who we believe God is?

5. Paul describes the freedom of the 'Jerusalem above.' Flip over to Colossians 3:1-3. Where does true freedom come from?

6. Flip over to Col. 3:2. What are we called to do with our minds?

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Why are allegories, metaphors, similes, and other literary devices used so much in Scripture? How do they help us comprehend and apply ideas?

2. Have you read the story of Hagar and Sarah before? What do you like about this story? Does anything make you feel uncomfortable or surprised? Discuss the story as a group.

3. Name some modern cultural and social messages that encourage us to do things in our own power. What is the difference between a healthy sense of self and an unhealthy self-reliance?

4. If we are children of promise, what does that say about our identity in Christ?

5. Do you find it hard to embrace the freedom you have in Christ?

# GALATIANS 5:1-15

## PERSONAL STUDY

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

1. What does it mean to have freedom in Christ? What are we free to do or have as well as free from?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. In light of our complete freedom in Christ, why do we still err by submitting to man-made yokes of slavery?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Instead of customs like circumcision, what does Paul say counts in the kingdom of God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Paul's frustration reaches its peak in this passage. Refer to 2 Peter 2. What does Peter write about the outcome of those who lead others astray?

**5. Read verse 1 again. What's something you've been challenged to remain firm in the Gospel on?**

**6. Read Psalm 37:3. How can you cultivate faithfulness today?**

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**1. What are some things that lead us to return to a yoke of slavery?**

**2. Can you think of some heroes of the faith, either living or passed, who stood firm?**

**3. Read 1 Cor. 5:6. Paul emphasizes 'a little leaven leavens the whole lump' more than once. Why do you think he keeps repeating this saying?**

**4. When we use our freedom as opportunity for the flesh, what is this saying about:**

**a) who we believe God to be**

**b) who we believe ourselves to be**

**b) the purpose of Christ's atonement on our behalf**

**5. Paul refers to the Golden Rule Matthew 22:35-40. We hear this proverb a lot in our culture, and often as a political or social tool. What might we be missing because of its familiarity? Take some time as a group to really break down the Rule and discuss it.**

# GALATIANS 5:16-21

## PERSONAL STUDY

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

1. Connect verses 15 and 16. What does Paul say we should do to not be consumed?

2. Read Romans 7. The desires of the Spirit are directly opposed to the desires of the flesh, and Paul emphasizes this tension in verse 24. What does he say about the power of the Spirit later in Romans 8:26-27?

3. What are the works of the flesh? Write them below:

WORKS OF THE FLESH

4. What stands out to you about this list?

5. Many of these things listed would be considered as no big deal by the world, but Scripture says their label as works of the flesh is 'evident.' How do the true nature of these vices become hidden from us?

6. Read Isaiah 5:20. What is God saying about those who call evil things good?

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Refer back to the Personal Study questions for Galatians 5:16-21 and refamiliarize yourself with your Works of the Flesh list. Share with your group what stood out to you about this list.

2. We often split sin into two categories: sins of commission (things we did) and sins of omission (things we did not do). Scripture says the works of the flesh are opposed to the Spirit. Name some sins of omission that we commit which go against the Spirit.

3. How does walking with the Spirit keep us from satisfying the desires of our flesh?

4. Choose one person to read Romans 8 out loud for the group. What are some ways the Spirit helps us as we live in this tension?

5. How is the creation also affected by the brokenness of sin?

# **GALATIANS 5:22-26**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

1. Write out the fruits of the Spirit below.

### **FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT**

2. What does it mean that against these things there is no law?

3. G. K. Chesterton once said that Christianity gives room for “good things to run wild.” How does this perspective help illuminate our freedom?

4. What is the world’s definition of freedom? How is it different from freedom in Christ?



5. Read Matthew 16:24-26. Jesus says his followers must follow him how?

6. How can we walk in the Spirit?

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Why are these attributes listed as fruits of the Spirit? Why are they called 'fruits' any way?

2. We often look at this list as virtues we need to work to do, rather than things we are free to cultivate. How does Paul's phrase 'against such things there is no law' encourage us to embrace our freedom in Christ?

3. 'Crucifying the flesh' is a brutal phrase, meaning that we need to put to death our fleshly desires. What does this command say about the seriousness of sin and the call of discipleship? Can we be followers of Christ without surrendering our selves to God just as He did on our behalf on the cross?

4. Is Paul's message countercultural? Why might this sound crazy to the world?

5. If you feel comfortable, share about a time when you crucified your flesh and surrendered to Christ instead.

# **GALATIANS 6:1-5**

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

**1. What is our responsibility toward our brothers and sisters in Christ?**

**2. Paul says we should confront people in a 'spirit of gentleness.' What might our confrontation look like if not done in such a way?**

**3. Do you seek to bear others' burdens? Why is this command hard to follow?**

**4. Why might it be hard to let others' bear our burdens?**

5. Read Phil. 2:3. What is 'vain conceit'?

6. How does pride impact the way we serve and allow ourselves to be served?

## GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What should healthy Christian community look like?

2. Is gentleness a fruit of the Spirit you find difficult to cultivate? Why do you think this virtue is included in the list of spiritual fruits?

3. How does our pride deceive us?

4. In *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote,

*"The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community,  
but the person who loves those around them will create community."*

Discuss this quote together.

5. What are some ways you can love your community this week? Take some time to identify some needs you might be able to meet as a group.



**5. Why should we especially do good by other Christians?**

**6. Describe a time when you were helped by someone in the church of Jesus.**

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**1. How does God's supremacy and sovereignty cause us to revere Him? What should our response to this truth look like?**

**2. Why is hard for us to wrap our heads around the sovereignty of God?**

**3. Read Matthew 16:25 together. How does this verse relate to Galatians 6:7-8?**

**4. How do our beliefs about the return of Christ encourage us in our work today?**

**5. Christ is not only our example for holy living, but it is His power that conforms us unto His image. How is this unlike the world's definitions of self-improvement.**

## As The Ruin Falls

All this is flashy rhetoric about loving you.  
I never had a selfless thought since I was born.  
I am mercenary and self-seeking through and through:  
I want God, you, all friends, merely to serve my turn.

Peace, re-assurance, pleasure, are the goals I seek,  
I cannot crawl one inch outside my proper skin:  
I talk of love --a scholar's parrot may talk Greek--  
But, self-imprisoned, always end where I begin.

Only that now you have taught me (but how late) my  
lack.

I see the chasm. And everything you are was making  
My heart into a bridge by which I might get back  
From exile, and grow man. And now the bridge is  
breaking.

For this I bless you as the ruin falls. The pains  
You give me are more precious than all other gains.

- C. S. Lewis

**PART IV**  
**FINAL SUMMARY**  
**GALATIANS 6:11-18**

“Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding  
in the work of the Lord.”

– 1 Cor. 15:58

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for  
good works, which God prepared beforehand,  
that we should walk in them.”

– Eph. 2:10

“The real sin lay in thinking that any power to help  
and transform came from me. Of course it was not  
my wholeness, but Christ’s that made the difference.”

– Corrie ten Boom, *The Hiding Place*



# GALATIANS 6:11-18

## PERSONAL STUDY

Over the next six days, spend time pondering and answering these questions:

1. Why does Paul refer to his penmanship?

2. This is Paul's final plea to the Galatian church. Name three things he is trying to get across in this passage.

3. Read 2 Cor. 5:14-21. What does a 'new creation' look like?

4. In the bullet points below, write the main takeaways you received from our study in Galatians:

- 
- 
- 
-

**5. How has this book challenged your faith? How has it encouraged it?**

**6. What do you want to learn more about?**

## **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**1. How is the book of Galatians relevant today?**

**2. What does Paul mean by saying that he bears Christ's marks on his body?**

**3. What is the true Gospel?**

**4. In a few sentences, summarize what it means to have freedom in Christ.**

**5. For the final meeting of this study, take some time to pray together as a group - thanking God for things He has revealed to you in Galatians, interceding for one another, and asking Him for strength, guidance, and confidence in the truth before a watching world.**

# RESOURCES

## WATCH

- [Overview: Galatians / Galatians Background - The Bible Project](#)
- [Exposition of Galatians - John MacArthur sermon series, Grace to You](#)
- [“How Does Christ ‘Live in Me’? \(Galatians 2:20\)” - Ask Pastor John series, Desiring God](#)
- [“Galatians - Justified!” - Matt Chandler, Acts 29](#)
- [The Fruit of the Spirit - Alistair Begg sermon series, Truth for Life](#)

### The Gospel Coalition Conference 2017

- [“Paul’s Pilgrimage, Paul’s Plea” \(Galatians 1\) - John Piper](#)
- [“Apostolic Confrontation: The Exclusive Sufficiency of Christ” \(Galatians 2\) - Sandy Wilson](#)
- [“The Gospel of Grace: How to Read the Bible, Part 1” \(Galatians 3\) - Peter Adam](#)
- [“The Gospel of Grace: How to Read the Bible, Part 2” \(Galatians 4\) - D. A. Carson](#)
- [“Gospel Freedom, Gospel Fruit” \(Galatians 5\) - Thabiti Anyabwile](#)
- [“Boasting in Nothing Except the Cross” \(Galatians 6\) - Timothy Keller](#)

## READ

- [Galatians \(Reformed Expository Commentary\) by Philip Graham Ryken](#)
- [Galatians: Experiencing the Grace of Christ \(John Stott Bible Studies\) by John Stott](#)
- [Commentary on Galatians by Martin Luther](#)
- [Galatians For You \(God’s Word for You\) by Timothy Keller](#)
- [Christ Has Set Us Free: Preaching and Teaching Galatians by The Gospel Coalition](#)
- [Sermons on Galatians by John Calvin](#)

## LISTEN

- [Galatians \(Read by Urban D\) - Streetlights](#)
- [Galatians Meditations - Frontline Music](#)
- [Galatians sermon series - Dane Ortlund, Naperville Presbyterian Church](#)
- [#124 Justified by Faith - Knowing Faith Podcast - Spotify | Podtail | Apple Podcasts](#)
- [The Necessity of Justification - Michael Horton for TGC - Spotify | Apple Podcasts](#)

## ETC

- [ESV Illuminated Journals - Crossway](#)
- [Desiring God articles on Galatians](#)
- [Ligonier Ministries resources on Galatians](#)
- [The Gospel Coalition Galatians-related archive](#)













# CITATIONS

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, et al. *Life Together*. SCM Press, 2015.

Boom, Corrie Ten. *The Hiding Place*. Crossings Classics, 1992.

Carson, D. A. *Christ Has Set Us Free: Preaching and Teaching Galatians*. Crossway, 2019.

Keller, Timothy J. *The Freedom of Self-Forgetfulness: The Path to True Christian Joy*. 10Publishing, 2014.

Lewis, C. S., and Walter Hooper. *Poems: C.S. Lewis*. London, 1964.

Lewis, Clive Staples. *Mere Christianity*. Simon and Schuster, 1996.

Luther, Martin. *Commentary on Galatians*. Zondervan, 1958.

Muggeridge, Malcolm. *Jesus Rediscovered*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1995.

# PERMISSIONS

*The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®)*  
Copyright © 2001 by Crossway,  
a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.  
All rights reserved.

*ESV Text Edition: 2016*

*The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV) is adapted from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. All rights reserved.*

*Crossway is a not-for-profit publishing ministry that exists solely for the purpose of publishing the Good News of the Gospel and the Truth of God's Word, the Bible. A portion of the purchase price of every ESV Bible is donated to help support Bible distribution ministry around the world.*

///

Copyright 2022, Grace Road Church

