

Tapes For Growing Christians

Study Guide for
GALATIANS

Growing Christians Ministries
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lesson 1

A Denunciation of the Galatian Churches for Distorting the Gospel of Christ Galatians 1:1-10

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Only a gospel that is Christ-centered will save you.
2. Only a gospel that is Bible-based will save you.

practical application

1. Don't preach to please people.

questions

1. Briefly outline the salutation of the letter to the Galatians.
2. What was the source of Paul's apostleship?
3. Why was it important that Paul stated the source of his apostleship?
4. Who were the Judaizers? What were they teaching?
5. How did the apostle Paul respond to this false teaching?
6. Galatians 1:4 is a summary of the gospel. Name the "who" of this verse.

answers

1. Salutation to the letter: Galatians

1:1 – the writer of the letter is the apostle Paul

1:2 – the recipients of the letter are the churches of Galatia

1:3 – the greeting of the letter

2. Jesus Christ and God the Father

3. It was important for the Galatians to understand that Paul's apostleship came from Jesus Christ and God because the Judaizers were trying to undermine Paul's authority.

4. The Judaizers were certain Jews who had influenced the Galatian churches. They were teaching that salvation was not through faith in Christ alone, but that one also had to keep the requirements of the Mosaic Law.

5. He affirmed that salvation is by God's grace alone. The work of Christ on the cross saves. Salvation is not by a person's own work of keeping the law, or of any other good works that he might do.

6. The Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One who gave Himself for our sins.

discuss / consider

1. "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel."

(Galatians 1:6) Paul was surprised that the Galatians had, in such a relatively short time, turned to a different gospel. The Judaizers were teaching a perversion of the gospel of Christ by faith

alone, by mixing in the requirements of the Mosaic Law. They were adding human works to the perfect and finished work of Christ for salvation. Good works have their place in the Christian life, but not for salvation. If you add any works to God's grace (God's unmerited favor), it is no longer God's grace.

Consider distortions to the pure gospel of God's grace that are prevalent today. Pray for those who are under such teaching, that their eyes may be opened to the one true gospel, salvation by faith in Christ alone.

2. "If anyone, even an angel from heaven, preaches any other gospel...let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8) To be accursed (anathema) means to be eternally condemned. This curse is pronounced on anyone who adds to or takes away from or changes in any way, the gospel that was handed down from the apostles.

Review 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 for the gospel preached by the apostles. Notice that there are no requirements of the law or of good works added to this gospel. Check out Ephesians 2:8-9.

challenge

"Do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ." (Galatians 1:10) Many people do not like to hear that they cannot work their way to heaven because this doesn't allow for human pride. And some do not like to hear that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven. They would rather believe that there are many different ways to heaven. There are those who believe that sincerity is sufficient to become heaven-bound. Such preaching would be appealing and pleasing to most people, but it would not be the truth. Do you want to be a servant of Christ (Galatians 1:10)? Then don't preach a distorted gospel. Don't preach to please people. Preach to please God and to honor His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for the sins of the world.

memorize

"The Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil age..."
(Galatians 1:4)

"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel..." (Galatians 1:6)

"...there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ." (Galatians 1:7)

"For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ."
(Galatians 1:10)

lesson 2

Paul Defends His Apostolic Authority in View of the False Teachers Galatians 1:11-24

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The gospel of Jesus Christ was not invented by man.
2. The life of a believer is not programmed by man.

practical application

1. Have you had both a Damascus Road and an Arabian Retreat experience?

questions

1. Read Acts 9:1-18 and Galatians 1:11-16. From these Scriptures, write a biographical sketch of Paul's (Saul's) early days as a believer.
2. According to Galatians 2:21, where did Paul first preach the gospel?
3. Why did Paul relate details to the Galatians concerning his conversion and early Christian life?
4. Explain the concept of revelation.
5. What is the difference between religion and biblical Christianity?

answers

1. Saul actively sought out and persecuted Christians until he met the Lord Jesus. As he neared Damascus, a light shined around him from heaven; he fell to the ground and heard a voice asking, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" Saul identified the voice as the Lord's. Then Saul asked the Lord what he wanted him to do. At that point Saul remained blind for three days. The Lord Jesus spoke to both Saul and Ananias (a disciple of the Lord). The Lord assured Ananias that Saul was His chosen vessel to bear His name to the Gentiles, before kings, and to the Jews. Saul (Paul) realized that he had been called from birth to preach the gospel among the Gentiles. He went into Arabia for three years, then he went to Jerusalem.
2. Paul was from Tarsus, in the region of Cilicia. He returned home to share the gospel.
3. The Judaizers were distorting the pure gospel of Jesus Christ and they tried to undermine Paul's authority as an apostle. So Paul did this to defend both his authority as an apostle and the gospel he preached, that both came directly from the Lord Himself.
4. Revelation is direct communication; a divine truth from God.
5. All the religions in the world are human-works oriented except biblical Christianity. Biblical Christianity is uniquely different in that man does nothing for salvation and God does everything.

discuss / consider

1. *"I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ."* (Galatians 1:11-12) Paul received the gospel of Jesus Christ independently by revelation from the Lord Himself! Review the difference between man-made religions and biblical Christianity. In the former, man tries to attain his own salvation by works; in the latter, God does everything to provide the free gift of salvation.
2. Paul's life had been totally works-oriented in the past, but now he lived by faith according to the gospel given to him directly from the Lord. The former Saul, who persecuted Christians, was now Paul, the Christian, and he was leading others to Christ. *"It pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles..."* (Galatians 1:15-16) Paul recognized that he had been separated from birth to preach Christ to the Gentiles. He was led by the Lord step-by-step, and he noted that his life was programmed by God Himself. How about you? As a believer, do you realize that your birth, your conversion, and your area of service are all programmed by the Lord? *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you," says the Lord, "thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you hope and a future."* (Jeremiah 29:11). Recall other Scriptures that assure you of God's leading in your life.

challenge

1. The apostle Paul was "religious" before his dramatic conversion on the way to Damascus to persecute Christians. Now he was saved and had a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Question: Are you "religious," or do you have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you had a Damascus Road experience, having confessed your sins, realizing that Christ died as your substitute for those sins? Have you received Him as your Lord and Savior?
2. After Paul's conversion, he went to Arabia for a retreat, spending time alone with the Lord, studying the word and looking for the Lord's guidance. Have you taken time out for an Arabian Retreat? Do you spend serious quality time with the Lord?

memorize

"I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ."(Galatians 1:11-12)

"When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood." (Galatians 1:15-16)

"I went immediately into Arabia ...for three years." (Galatians 1:17-18)

"He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy. And they glorified God in me." (Galatians 1:23-24)

lesson 3

The Apostle Paul Continues to Defend His Apostolic Authority in View of the Judaizers, Who Were Seeking to Undermine both His Authority and the Gospel that He Preached Galatians 2:1-10

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal /teaching points

1. The right use of Christian liberty is important in Christian living.
2. The right hand of fellowship is important in Christian service.

practical application

1. Let's be eager to remember the poor.

questions

1. When was the epistle to the Galatians written?
2. What is the subject of the epistle to the Galatians?
3. Was Paul inconsistent by having Timothy circumcised, but not Titus?
4. Was circumcision necessary for salvation?
5. Were Peter, James and John in total agreement with the gospel that Paul preached?
6. To which group of people did the Lord send Paul? To which group did He send Peter?
7. Explain what is meant by the term, "the right hand of fellowship."

answers

1. The dating depends on which visit to Jerusalem Paul is referring. He made two visits to Jerusalem, one recorded in Acts 11, before his first missionary journey, and one in Acts 15, after his first missionary journey. Therefore, Galatians could have been written as early as 48 or 49 A.D., and would be Paul's first written epistle. On the other hand, it could have been written in the mid-fifties A.D.
2. Salvation is by grace through faith alone, not of works.
3. No. There were good reasons for Timothy to be circumcised (see Acts 15:3). Paul had Timothy circumcised to emphasize his Jewishness because he did not want to offend the non-Christian Jews that they were seeking to reach with the gospel. If, on the other hand, Titus had been circumcised, it would have been seen as a capitulation to the demands of the Judaizers, and the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ would have been distorted and compromised.
4. No. But there was nothing wrong with being circumcised.
5. Yes. In fact, they gave the apostle Paul the right hand of fellowship when they realized that God raised up Paul specifically to bring the gospel to the Gentiles.
6. Paul was chosen of the Lord to preach to the Gentiles. Peter was chosen of the Lord to preach to the Jews.
7. It means that there is approval and agreement with a fellow believer's message and ministry.

discuss / consider

1. Review the reasons why Paul had Timothy circumcised, yet not Titus. Discuss how this illustrated the right use of Christian liberty. Consider some parallel examples on a mission field today, how missionaries make the right use of Christian liberty. Actually, these examples can apply to believers as they witness today. Are there times when you have chosen to use Christian liberty so there will be neither offense nor compromise?
2. The Lord's disciples in Jerusalem extended the right hand of fellowship to Paul because they were in agreement with the gospel that he preached. Have you observed this within your church setting?

challenge

Paul said, *"They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do."* (Galatians 2:10) The Lord Jesus said, *"You have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good."* (Mark 14:7). There are people all around us who need to hear the gospel, and there are poor people all around us that need help. Do you consider this your mission, too? Do you set aside time and money to help in this type of ministry?

memorize

"False brethren tried to thwart our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage, to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue..." (Galatians 2:4-5)

"He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles." (Galatians 2:8)

"...they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship..." (Galatians 2:9)

"They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do." (Gal 2:10)

lesson 4

**The Record of the Apostle Paul Rebuking Peter,
Because Peter Was Wrongly Treating the Gentile Believers as Second-class Citizens
Galatians 2:11-21**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Justification is not by the works of the law. (Galatians 2:15-18)
2. Sanctification is not by the works of the law. (Galatians 2:19-21)

practical application

1. Let a good marriage be an illustration of practical sanctification.

questions

1. Why does Paul give us the record of his rebuke of Peter?
2. What was the basic error committed by the false teachers called Judaizers?
3. There were two kinds of Judaizers. Who were they and what was the difference?
4. How were the Gentiles looked upon by the Christian Judaizers?
5. Which type of Judaizer is described in Galatians 2:4?
Which type of Judaizer is described in Galatians 2:12?
6. Were all of the early apostles in the Jerusalem church completely free of the influencing effect of Judaism?

answers

1. It is part of Paul's argument to show the false teachers of Judaism that Paul's apostolic authority and the gospel he preached was acknowledged by the Jerusalem church to be from the Lord. Even Peter, who was rebuked, acknowledged Paul's authority.
2. They did not understand God's grace and they insisted that salvation was not a free gift from God. They taught that you had to work for your salvation by keeping the requirements of the law of Moses.
3. There were the non-Christian Judaizers and the Christian Judaizers. The non-Christian Judaizers were legalist Pharisees, who did not acknowledge Christ in any way, and said that salvation was obtained only by keeping the requirements of the Mosaic Law. The Christian Judaizers, on the other hand, acknowledged Christ as the Messiah and His work on the cross as payment for the penalty for sin. But they believed also that you had to work at keeping the requirements of the law.
4. The Gentiles, who did not have the law of Moses, were at best, considered second-class citizens and at worst, were made to submit to the legalism of Judaism before they could become Christians.
5. Galatians 2:4 describes the unbelieving Pharisaic Judaizers who had infiltrated the church. In Galatians 2:21, the "certain men" were Christian Judaizers.
6. No. The Lord's half brother, James, even though he was a pillar in the Jerusalem church, was not at that time completely free from the influencing effect of Judaism. The same was true of Peter at this point, when he gradually withdrew and separated himself from the Gentile believers. That is why Paul rebuked him.

discuss / consider

1. "A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ." (Galatians 2:16)
Justification means to be declared righteous before God. The works of the law are essentially keeping the Ten Commandments. The Judaizers were emphasizing either the latter only or a combination of faith plus works. Paul argued that to put yourself back under the law and add the matter of keeping the law along with faith for salvation, you are once again an unforgiven sinner because no one can keep the law. You cannot add works to faith for justification. Good works follow justification, but are not a means to justification. Is your understanding clear that justification is not by works but by faith alone? How would you speak to someone who was justifying his salvation by his works (going to church, being baptized, doing good things for people)?
2. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)
Sanctification means to become more godly and holy as a Christian. As to our legal position and standing before a holy God, believers are sanctified. Christ died as our substitute and representative. God sees us in Christ – having died with him and now made alive in Him. As believers, we have died to the law and are free to live for the Lord (Galatians 2:19). What about practical sanctification? This is not our standing, but our state; not our position, but our practice. Galatians 2:20 also covers practical sanctification. The goal and aim of the Christian is to walk with the Lord and to live by faith in the Son of God. The good news is that we have the ability to do this because Christ lives in us. When we walk with the Lord, we have the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. (See Romans 8:4) Are you sanctified in your position before a holy God? Are you sanctified in your practice before a holy God?

challenge

The church is the bride of Christ. Think of your relationship with the Lord as a good and honorable marriage, where you fall more in love with your Savior day by day. Walk with Him and practical sanctification will take place in your life. How much do you love the Lord Jesus Christ? How closely do you walk with Him?

memorize

"...a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ." (Galatians 2:16a)

*"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."
(Galatians 2:20)*

lesson 5

**The Apostle Paul Argues His Case that Salvation is By Faith Alone
and not By a Mixture of Faith and Works
He Argues Both from Experience and from the Case of Abraham
Galatians 3:1-9**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Receiving the Holy Spirit is by faith, and not by works. (Galatians 3:1-5)
2. Righteousness from God is by faith, and not by works. (Galatians 3:6-9)

practical application

1. Don't use Galatians 3:7 to spiritualize Israel.

questions

1. In his epistle to the Galatians, the apostle Paul is straightening out a very serious problem that had arisen in the churches of Galatia. What was this problem?
2. Why is it essential to know and understand God's way of sanctification?
3. What is meant by "sanctification?"
4. Refer to Galatians 3:1. What does the term "bewitched" mean?
5. According to Scripture, is salvation by faith alone, or by works, or by a mixture of faith and works?
6. According to Scripture, is sanctification by faith alone, or by works, or by a mixture of faith and works?

answers

1. False teachers, known as Judaizers, had come in and were preaching and teaching a different gospel than Paul was preaching and teaching. The Judaizers were wrongly teaching that you had to add works of the law to your faith in order to be saved.
2. Because, as believers, it affects our whole way of living.
3. Sanctification is to be made more holy or more godly.
4. It means to be cast under an evil spell by an evil influence of the devil.
5. Salvation is by faith alone.
6. Sanctification is by faith alone.

discuss / consider

1. Paul asked the Galatian believers, *“Did you receive the Holy Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?”* (Galatians 3:2) The reason he asked this was because they were being taken in by the false teaching of the Judaizers who said that you had to add works to faith. Furthermore, they were trying to grow in Christ by adding works to their faith. Any work of the flesh takes away from the grace of God, both then and today. If we were saved by works, then salvation would not be by God’s grace. Add works to faith and it is no longer God’s unmerited favor. Good works follow salvation, but they are not a means of salvation. The same is true of sanctification (growing more holy; growing in Christ). Sanctification comes about by yielding your mind and body to the Lord, and by letting the Holy Spirit empower the new life that you have in Christ. Weren’t you saved by faith alone? Are you now walking with the Spirit, who dwells in every believer?

2. The Judaizers would certainly be using Abraham as one of their primary examples to push their beliefs. So Paul uses the case of Abraham as his own example to defeat the false teachers at their own game. Refer to Galatians 3:6 and Genesis 15:6. This declaration by God was made years before Abraham was circumcised, so Abraham was already saved before the work of circumcision. The way of salvation has always been by God’s grace through faith. Righteousness from God is by faith, and not by works. How would you challenge someone who proclaims salvation by works?

challenge

Don’t use Galatians 3:7 to spiritualize Israel. Some take this verse, saying that since all believers for all time are sons of Abraham, then the promises of the Old Testament to the Jewish people no longer stand. They reason that all these promises are to be spiritualized to the Christian church today, and the church is the New Israel. This is not what Galatians 3:7 is saying. The point is that all believers are the spiritual sons of Abraham by the same saving faith. This does not mean that God has done away with His promises to the natural descendants of Abraham, namely, the Jewish people. These promises will be fulfilled in the future. Read Romans 11 in this connection.

memorize

“Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth?” (Galatians 3:1)

“Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?” (Galatians 3:2-3)

“Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” (Galatians 3:6)

lesson 6

**The Apostle Paul Continues His Argument that God's Way of Salvation
Is by Faith in Christ Alone, and not by Works of the Law
Galatians 3:10-18**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The curse of the law is removed only through faith in Christ. (Galatians 3:10)
2. The requirements of the law do not invalidate the promise of God. (Galatians 3:15-18)

practical application

1. Let's believe in the verbal inspiration of Scripture.

questions

1. *"The just shall live by faith."* (Galatians 3:11) Why does Paul keep hammering at this theme?
2. What is the gospel that Paul preached, whereby men must be saved? In other words, how does someone get to heaven?
3. What did the false teachers of Paul's day, the Judaizers, say about this gospel?
4. *"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse..."* (Galatians 3:10)
What does this mean?
5. What is the "law" of Galatians 3:10?
6. What is wrong with trying to keep the ten commandments and the law?

answers

1. Because justification is by faith alone, and people don't naturally believe it – then or today.
2. In order to get to heaven, we must believe in Christ Jesus by faith. As the perfect Son of God, He went to the cross and died for the penalty of our sins. You have to receive Him into your heart and life by faith.
3. They said that it couldn't be that simple. They said that you had to add the works of the law for salvation and sanctification.
4. It refers to those who try to obtain favor with God by keeping the law.
5. It is the ten commandments and all the other commandments of the Old Testament.
6. Nothing, except that it is not good enough for salvation, and it is humanly impossible.

discuss / consider

1. "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree')." (Galatians 3:13) We have already seen that no one can obtain favor with God by keeping the law. So is all hope gone? Not at all! Christ kept the law perfectly when no one else could, and thus redeemed us from the curse of the law by going to the cross and dying as our substitute. Because He died for us, we are free from the curse of the law. How then are we then free? By believing and receiving by faith the finished work of Christ on the cross. The curse of the law is removed only through faith in Jesus Christ. Have you believed and received the work of Christ by faith?

2. Refer to Galatians 3:15-18. Paul continued his argument that by faith Abraham believed God's promise. This promise was made 430 years before the giving of the law, so it was still valid and in effect when the law was given. And now the promises find their fulfillment in Christ and are thus in effect forever. God did not give the law as a way of salvation, for salvation comes by faith in the promise of God. The requirements of the law do not invalidate the promise of God. Salvation is in Christ (the Seed), and not in the law. Ponder this carefully, and thank God for His plan of salvation.

challenge

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God..." (2 Timothy 3:16) Inspiration is the process by which God superintended the writers and writings of Scripture. Paul believed in the verbal inspiration of Scripture, down to the very words and letters. Paul's argument hinged on whether the word "seed" in the promise to Abraham of Genesis 22:18 is singular or plural. Note Galatians 3:16, *"And to your Seed, who is Christ."* Do you believe in the verbal inspiration of Scripture? Believe it!

memorize

"No one is justified by the law in the sight of God...for the just shall live by faith." (Galatians 3:11)

"...the blessing of Abraham comes upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (Galatians 3:14)

"Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made...the Seed is Christ." (Galatians 3:16)

"For if the inheritance is of the law it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise." (Galatians 3:18)

lesson 7

**The Purpose of the Law, and the Answer to the Question, "Why did God give the law?"
Galatians 3:19-29**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The law revealed the condition of everyone under sin. (Galatians 3:22)
2. The law prepared the way for faith in Christ. (Galatians 3:23-25)

practical application

1. Don't make Galatians 3:28 say what it doesn't say.

questions

1. Select a, b, or c. The theme of this epistle is
 - a. justification by good works
 - b. justification by faith
 - c. justification by faith plus good works
2. What is the penalty for sin?
3. What is God's plan of salvation for us?
4. What were the false teachers in Paul's day teaching as a means for salvation?
5. What is meant by sanctification?
6. What were the false teachers teaching about sanctification?
7. Are works the means of salvation and sanctification?

answers

1. b. justification by faith alone
2. Death (Romans 6:23)
3. God will forgive our sins and declare us righteous if we turn to Him in faith and receive Christ as our Savior. God can do this because Jesus died on the cross as our substitute, and paid the penalty for our sins with His own perfect life.
4. They were teaching that you had to do works of the law for salvation, along with faith.
5. Sanctification means becoming more godly or more holy in your Christian life.
6. They were teaching that you had to do works of the law for sanctification.
7. No. Works are the result of salvation and sanctification.

discuss / consider

1. *"The Scripture has confined all under sin."* (Galatians 3:22) What does this mean? The law comes in when people believe that they can meet God's standards on their own. The moral requirements of the law reveal God's righteous standards, and they show that everyone has fallen short. So the law was not given for salvation, but rather to show us that we all need salvation, because everyone is under sin. But there is no law that can give life. The moral law of God reveals our condition under sin, but does not have the power to take away sin. *"...that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe."* (Galatians 3:22) Even though God's law leaves no doubt that everyone is under sin, the promise of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ is given to those who believe. Aren't you thankful that salvation is by faith?

2. *"The law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor."* (Galatians 3:24-25) The concept of the law as a tutor is not that the law leads a person to Christ, but that the law was a protective disciplinarian until Christ came. In the Old Testament, God used the law to discipline and protect His people from the evil and pagan practices surrounding them. But it was all to prepare the way for Christ. Now, as believers, our rule of life is to walk with the Lord and to serve Him.

challenge

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28) There are some who would have you believe that this verse justifies removing all male/female role distinctions. Not so! The context here is not concerning roles, but it has to do with salvation, that salvation of everyone is through Christ alone. Don't make Galatians 3:28 say what it doesn't say.

memorize

"What purpose does the law serve? It was added because of transgression, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made..." (Galatians 3:19)

"Before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Galatians 3:23-24)

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you all are one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)

"And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:29)

lesson 8

**The Apostle Paul Uses an Illustration from First Century Roman Culture to Show the Contrast Between the Former Position of Living Under the Law, and Now the Believer's Present Position Enjoyed in Christ
Galatians 4:1-11**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Under the law, the Jews were like minor children and slaves.
2. In Christ, believers are mature sons and heirs.

practical application

1. Let's not live like slaves when we're already sons.

questions

1. Why was the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament given?
2. Refer to Galatians 4:4. "Fullness" is a Greek word. What does it refer to in this context?
3. How did Greek, the universal language at that time, prepare the world for the gospel?
4. In what other ways was the world prepared to hear the gospel?
5. What type of expectations were being proclaimed from the many Jewish synagogues scattered throughout the Roman world?
6. Were these preparations all by chance?
7. Refer to Galatians 4:4. How are both the deity and the humanity of our Lord brought out in this verse?

answers

1. To reveal man's sinful condition and to show that no one could attain God's moral standards and requirements on their own. It was also given to serve as a transition until the coming of Christ. The law prepared the way for faith in Christ.
2. It refers to the appointed time, the time that God had in mind when He sent Jesus.
3. The language was readily available for the writing of the New Testament and the communication of the gospel.
4. The Roman Empire had established a peace as well as a road system that permitted missionary travels and church planting by the apostle Paul and the early Christians.
5. Monotheism and Messianic expectations were being proclaimed.
6. Not a chance! God was working behind the scenes to prepare for the appointed time. What a wonderful moment in history when the fullness of the time came!
7. *"God sent forth His Son (His deity), born of a woman under the law (His humanity)."*

discuss / consider

1. Read Galatians 4:3. The elements of the world, or basic principles of the world, refer to the elementary principles of religion. These basic moral requirements that God built into the moral conscience of mankind could only bring conviction and guilt, and thus bondage. Furthermore, under the law, the Jews were like minor children who were put under a guardian or steward. In this illustration, the children were actually heirs of the estate, but they were disciplined and treated as children until the time appointed by the father, until their coming of age, when they would be treated as mature children. So under the law, the Jews were like minor children and slaves. Relate this illustration to the next doctrinal or discussion point.

2. *"You are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Galatians 4:7)*

From slavery to sonship! And it's only because of what Christ has done for us. Those who were once under the law are redeemed and set free through faith in Christ. Believers are in the family of God, and can now call God, "Father." The Holy Spirit is in our hearts, giving us assurance of our new position in Christ.

challenge

Why do you live like slaves when you are already sons? This was the position of the Gentile Galatians before they became believers, and some continued in their involvement with the gods of the pagan Greek and Roman religions. The same question applies today. Why should we live like slaves when we are already sons? As a believer, you have been freed from bondage in slavery to sin, and now you are in the family of God. Remember, salvation and sanctification are by faith in Christ alone, not by works or by ritualism.

memorize

"When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." (Galatians 4:4-5)

"Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'" (Galatians 4:6)

"You are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Galatians 4:7)

lesson 9

**The Apostle Paul's Great Concern that the Galatian Believers Grow in Christ,
and that They not Get Sidetracked or Ensnared by the False Teaching of the Judaizers
Galatians 4:12-20**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. False teachers are not concerned about their own integrity.
2. False teachers are not concerned about the welfare of others.

practical applications

1. Have you gone into labor lately?
2. Would the apostle Paul be perplexed about you?

questions

1. Why did the apostle Paul say to the Galatians that he was perplexed about them?
2. What were the non-Christian Judaizers teaching?
3. What were the Christian Judaizers teaching?
4. "Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you." What did Paul mean by this?
5. What is meant by the expression, "pluck out your own eyes?"

answers

1. Because the Galatian Christians had come under the influence of the false teaching of Judaism, and Paul was concerned that they were turning away from the pure gospel of God's grace in Christ Jesus.
2. They were teaching that the keeping of the law was necessary for salvation.
3. They acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah and Savior, but they said that sanctification came by keeping the Mosaic Law.
4. Paul said this because he had been under the law before he became a Christian, but then he was free from the law after he became a Christian. He was refuting the works-oriented salvation and works-oriented sanctification as taught by the Judaizers. He was concerned when some of the Galatian believers were under the spell of the Judaizers.
5. It means giving up everything for someone.

discuss / consider

1. Paul asked the Galatian believers, *"Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16)* What happened to the wonderful relationship they had shared? The false teachers had come in and undermined Paul's authority and character. As a result, the Galatians were treating Paul as an enemy when he was telling them the truth. The same is true today. When false teachers cannot deny the message, they attack the messenger. False teachers are not concerned about their own integrity. Beware lest you be taken in by false teachers.

2. Paul said of the false teachers, *"They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them." (Galatians 4:17)*. The false teachers did whatever they could to alienate the Galatian converts from the apostle Paul. They courted the Galatians with flattery in order to gain a following, not because they were concerned about the spiritual welfare of the Galatians. The same is true today – false teachers are not really interested in the welfare of the people, but are more interested in gaining a following for themselves. Beware lest you be taken in by false teachers.

challenge

1. *"My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you." (Galatians 4:19)*

Paul likened his relationship with the Galatians to a mother with a baby. He went into labor, as it were, at the time of their salvation. Now he was in labor again in reference to their Christian growth. He wanted the Galatian converts to grow in grace, and he was so concerned for them that he went into labor for them, figuratively speaking. Are you as concerned about the new Christians that you know? Have you gone into labor lately?

2. Paul wrote to the Galatian church, *"I have my doubts about you." (Galatians 4:20)* As Paul looked at the wavering Galatians, he was perplexed as to their susceptibility to the false teaching of the day. He was genuinely concerned about their faith. Suppose the apostle Paul looked at your life and lifestyle; would he have doubts about your commitment to Christ? Would he see a woeful lack of Bible teaching? Would he see church-going and rule-keeping, but not a lot of love and devotion to Christ?

memorize

"Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16)

"They zealously court you, but for no good..." (Galatians 4:17)

"My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you." (Galatians 4:19)

"I have doubts about you." (Galatians 4:20)

lesson 10

**The Apostle Paul Goes Back to the Old Testament and the Story of Abraham;
He Uses Abraham's Two Sons, Ishmael and Isaac, and Their Mothers, Hagar and Sarah,
to Illustrate the Great Theme of the Epistle to the Galatians.
Namely, that Justification is By Faith Alone, and not by Works
Galatians 4:21-31**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Hagar and Ishmael represent salvation by works.
2. Sarah and Isaac represent salvation by faith.

practical application

1. Cast out the teaching of Judaism.

questions

1. T or F? Did the Arabia of Bible days include the Sinai Peninsula?
2. How did Paul use Mount Sinai as part of his illustration?
3. Why is it that human nature always wants to add human works to the finished work of Christ on the cross?
4. When Paul says in Galatians 4:24 that these things are symbolic, does he mean that they are not historical?
5. What do Hagar and Ishmael represent in Paul's illustrations?
6. What do Sarah and Isaac represent?

answers

1. True
2. Mount Sinai represented the law. But justification is not by law, but by faith alone.
3. Because human works appeal to human pride.
4. No. These events really happened, but the apostle was using them as an illustration.
5. They represent salvation by works.
6. They represent salvation by faith.

discuss / consider

1. Re-read Genesis 16. Abraham did not wait on God in faith for the promised son Isaac, but went ahead on his own and wrongfully had a son, Ishmael, with Hagar, Sarah's servant. In the illustration given by Paul, Hagar represents the law, the covenant made at Mount Sinai. Ishmael was born of Hagar through an act of the flesh, so the law was wrongly used and produced a religion of human works. Salvation by works doesn't save – then or today. If you are thinking that by keeping the works of the law, or by doing any good works that they will earn your salvation, you are wrong.
2. Conversely, Sarah and Isaac represent salvation by faith. Isaac was the promised son born to Sarah supernaturally. Paul used these illustrations to represent the difference between the law and works of the law, and salvation by faith alone. Re-read Galatians 4:28.
3. Sarah, in this illustration, is likened to the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is the heavenly Jerusalem, the home of all the faithful. See Hebrews 12:22-23. All the faithful are in the heavenly Jerusalem – the church, which consists of all believers of the New Testament, and the spirits made perfect, which are the believers of the Old Testament. In the future, this New Jerusalem will descend from its heavenly location to this earth. Refer to Revelation 21:2. If you have come to God through faith in Jesus Christ, and not by works, then you can look forward to living in the New Jerusalem.

challenge

Refer to Galatians 4:29-31. In these verses, Paul continues his illustration from the Genesis account of Hagar and Sarah. After Isaac was born, Ishmael, a teenager at that point, mocked young Isaac. As a result, Sarah asked Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away. Read the account in Genesis 21:10; quoted in Galatians 4:30. Now, 2000 years after the event, Paul is using this as an illustration of casting out any teaching suggesting that salvation or sanctification comes through works. Law and grace cannot be mixed. Beware the subtle ideas of works-oriented salvation or sanctification. Serve the Lord out of a heart of love and cast out the teaching of Judaism.

memorize

“It is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic.” (Galatians 4:22-24)

lesson 11

**An Exhortation to Stand Fast in Our Christian Liberty,
and Not Use Our Christian Liberty as an Opportunity to Sin
Galatians 5:1-15**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Freedom in Christ cannot include works, because
 - a. adding works devalues Christ,
 - b. adding works demands perfection,
 - c. adding works denies grace,
 - d. adding works disobeys the truth,
 - e. adding works destroys God's way,
 - f. adding works dismisses the events of the cross.
2. Freedom in Christ is not a license to sin.

practical application

1. Don't let legalism ruin your church.

questions

1. What is the difference between a believer's position and a believer's practice?
2. What is sanctification?
3. Read Galatians 5:4. Does this verse mean that you can lose your salvation?
4. What was Paul's great concern for the Galatian believers?
5. Does freedom in Christ give the believer a license to sin?

answers

1. Position has to do with our legal standing before God, which means we have the righteousness of Christ that comes through faith. See Galatians 4:31. Practice has to do with our lifestyle based on our position. See Galatians 5:1.
2. It is the process of becoming more godly and holy in this life.
3. Absolutely not! The point here is that if anyone turns to the works of the law for salvation, he is departing from the way of grace, and would be substituting his own works for the work of Christ on the cross.
4. He was concerned that they were in danger of falling back and adding the works of the Old Testament law to their practice. This would be to deny their freedom in Christ and be enslaved to the law once again.
5. Hardly! When a believer begins to reason that his sins are forgiven and he's on his way to heaven, and he has freedom in Christ, he may be tempted to use that freedom wrongly. That's a wrong attitude. Because we have freedom in Christ, we have freedom to do works of love as the Lord's servant., not to sin.

discuss / consider

1. If we stand fast in our position of freedom in Christ, we can't add works in practice for salvation or sanctification. Review the six reasons under doctrinal / teaching point #1. Refer to the Scripture for each reason. Then relate each reason to a "work" that you have observed in contemporary churches.

2. *"For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Galatians 5:13-14)* Freedom in Christ is not a license to sin. When a Christian considers his freedom as a license to sin, he does not understand the grace of God. Because we have freedom in Christ, we have freedom to serve the Lord in love.

challenge

Have you known the grief and bitterness of a church split? Many splits occur because of works-oriented sanctification and differences of opinion as to what constitutes spirituality. Many times these splits occur by adding non-essential requirements to the essentials, which in turn result in strife and personality problems. How sad! Don't let legalism ruin your church. Instead, do all in your power to mend differences by loving and esteeming one another.

memorize

"Stand fast in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage." (Galatians 5:1)

"You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." (Galatians 5:4-5)

"You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?" (Galatians 5:7)

"You, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Galatians 5:13-14)

lesson 12

**An Exhortation to Walk in the Spirit and Not Walk After the Flesh,
The Fruit of the Spirit Presented in Contrast to the Deeds of the Flesh
Galatians 5:16-26**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Believers who walk in the Spirit will not commit the deeds of the flesh.
2. Believers who walk in the Spirit will exhibit the fruit of the Spirit.

practical application

1. Remember, walking is a step by step process.

questions

1. Can you get to heaven just by living a good life and by doing good?
2. What were the false teachers of Paul's day teaching?
3. What is God's grace toward sinners?
4. What is sanctification?
5. Is sanctification obtained by keeping God's law to the best of our ability?
6. Why did God give the law?

answers

1. No. If you believe this, then re-read the epistle to the Galatians. Salvation is not by works, or by doing good or by being good, but it is by grace through faith. God provided salvation for sinners by giving His Son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. By faith, we must receive this gift of salvation by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.
2. They were teaching that you had to keep the law and do the works of the law along with your faith in order to obtain salvation. Not so! You cannot mix grace with anything, or it is no longer grace.
3. Grace is God's unmerited favor toward mankind.
4. It is the process of believers becoming more holy and godly in this life.
5. No. This would be works-orientation sanctification. The biblical method of sanctification is found in Galatians 5:16.
6. God gave the law 1) to prove that no one could measure up to His standard, and 2) to prepare the way for salvation by faith in Christ alone.

discuss / consider

1. To walk in the Spirit means to be occupied more with Christ. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to make us more Christ-like. It is impossible to be fully occupied with Christ and commit sin at the same time. This is the key to a godly life and sanctification – to be more and more occupied with Christ. When we are led by the Spirit we will be doing God's will. The flesh is the sinful nature that we are born with, and the flesh has its pull in our lives. Read 2 Peter 1:4. Let the new nature rule in your life.

2. *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."* (Galatians 5:22-23) Notice the contrast here is not between the fruit of the Spirit and the fruit of the flesh. Rather, it is between the fruit of the Spirit and the deeds of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). There is no fruit from the flesh. The fruit of the Spirit is Christ-likeness, the life of Christ lived out in the life of the believer. As we walk in the Spirit this fruit will be seen in our lives. Do others see Christ in you? Are you exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit in your life?

challenge

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:25) Do you want the fruit of the Spirit to characterize your life? If so, keep on walking in the word, in prayer, in Christian fellowship, in service and in worship.

memorize

"Walk in the Spirit... The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control... If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:16, 22-23, 25)

lesson 13

**Believers Are Exhorted to Bear One Another's Burdens
and at the Same Time Bear their Own Burdens
Galatians 6:1-5**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Believers should bear one another's burdens.
2. Believers shall bear their own burdens.

practical application

1. Don't think you are something when you are nothing.

questions

1. Refer to Ephesians 2:8-10. What do these verses tell us about our good works?
2. Does God have a plan for your life? Specifically for you?
3. How can you identify the works that God has designed for you?
4. How should we deal with sin in our lives?
5. What does Galatians 5:26 tell us about treating other believers?
6. The law of Christ contains all the commands of our Lord Jesus found in the New Testament. How can this law be summed up?

answers

1. That good works do have a place in the Christian life, not as a means of salvation or as a means of sanctification, but of service.
2. Yes, He does. God has already prepared areas of service where you can serve Him with good works.
3. Get involved in the needs around you, and you will find the area of service that God has chosen for you.
The rest of the body of Christ will let you know where you fit in and where you don't fit in.

4. Walk in the Spirit. The more we are in fellowship with the Lord, the less we will be involved in sin.
5. It tells us how we should not treat one another, but we might treat them with these negative attitudes if we are not walking in the Spirit.
6. See Galatians 5:14.

discuss / consider

1. *“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)* The word “burden” in this verse can refer to failures, temptations, testings, trials, sorrows or suffering, as well as work loads. Question: What do you do if you see a fellow believer struggling under one of these heavy burdens? Give specific examples.
2. *“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1)* In the restoration process, there must be discipline and repentance, but those who are spiritual should aim to restore that person with gentleness. What do you do when a brother or sister fails because of sin? Do you go to them and try to restore them? Do you bear one another’s burdens? Give specific examples.
3. *“Each one shall bear his own load.” (Galatians 6:5).* There is no contradiction here because two different words are used in Galatians 6:2 and 6:5. The word in 6:2 is used for a more heavy crushing load, whereas the word for burden in 6:5 is used for a light load. Are you bearing your own load? But remember, the Lord said that His yoke was easy and His burden was light – an invitation from Him to help shoulder your load.
4. *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10).* One day we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ and have our lives examined as to how we carried our load of responsibilities. “But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.” (Galatians 6:4). Examine your service now in light of the judgment seat of Christ, not by comparing yourself to others. Each believer will bear his own burden.

challenge

“If anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.” (Galatians 6:2-3).
“And what do you have that you did not receive? Now, indeed, if you did receive it why do you boast?” (1 Corinthians 4:7) Don’t think you are something when you are nothing.

memorize

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.” (Galatians 6:1)

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

“For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.” (Galatians 6:3)

“For each one shall bear his own load.” (Galatians 6:5)

“Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.” (Galatians 6:6)

lesson 14

Further Exhortations to Believers Concerning Their Relationships with Fellow Believers Galatians 6:6-10

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Believers who sow to the flesh will reap corruption.
2. Believers who sow to the Spirit will reap eternal life.

practical application

1. Don't forget to do good to unbelievers.

questions

1. List some of the believer's responsibilities toward fellow believers as given in Galatians 6:1-6.
2. *"Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches."* (Galatians 6:6).
What is this verse telling us?
3. Is Galatians 6:7-8 addressed to believers or unbelievers?
4. Read 1 Timothy 5:17. Does double honor mean double the amount of respect?
5. Does eternal life begin when you die?

answers

1. We are to bear one another's burdens by doing what we can to help. We are to help fellow believers who have sinned to come back to the Lord and to the fellowship of His people.
2. Those who are taught should share in love to help meet the needs of the teachers.
3. In context here, these verses are addressed to believers.
4. It means respect and remuneration. See also 1 Timothy 5:18.
5. Eternal life begins when you are saved. See John 3:36.

discuss / consider

1. *"He who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption..." (Galatians 6:8).* See also Job 4:8 and Hosea 8:7. Consider how these verses relate to each other and how they relate to you. The exhortation is to be a giving and sharing Christian, not one who thinks only of himself and his own comfort and pleasure.

How do you rate your own comfort and pleasure as compared to your giving and sharing?

2. *"He who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life." (Galatians 6:8)* Sowing to the Spirit means to give and to share for the furtherance of the Lord's work by meeting the needs of the Lord's servants. Are you enjoying your present eternal life, or are you just living your life like the average non-Christian? How concerned are you for the Lord's servants who share the gospel both at home and abroad?

Has the Lord touched your heart to give...sacrificially?

challenge

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all..." (Galatians 6:10). As believers, we are to meet the needs of the Lord's servants, and the needs of fellow-believers and to unbelievers around us. It has been said that we should do all the good we can in all the ways we can to all the people we can for as long as we can. Can this be said of you?

memorize

"Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches." (Galatians 6:6)

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." (Galatians 6:7)

"For if he sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life." (Galatians 6:8)

"Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." (Galatians 6:9)

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all..." (Galatians 6:10)

lesson 15

**The Apostle Paul's Conclusion to the Letter and His Benediction
Galatians 6:11-18**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The cross means death to the flesh.
2. The cross means death to the world.

practical applications

1. What are we boasting about?
2. Do we bear the brand marks of Jesus?

questions

1. What is contained in the conclusion of Paul's letter to the Galatians?
2. What were the Judaizers wrongly teaching?
3. What was the big issue discussed in the first church council in Jerusalem?
4. What is necessary for salvation?
5. What is meant by sanctification?
6. How does sanctification come about?
7. List the four faults of the Judaizers that Paul pointed out to the Galatian believers.

answers

1. Both a summary of the letter and a final statement refuting the false teaching of the Judaizers.
2. That circumcision and keeping the law were necessary for salvation.
3. This Galatian heresy, that the Judaizers were wrongly teaching that circumcision and keeping the law were necessary for salvation.
4. Justification is by faith in Christ alone.
5. It is the process of becoming more holy in the Christian life.
6. By walking in the Spirit and not after the flesh.
7. 1) they were seeking the favor of men and not God; 2) they were demanding circumcision because they were afraid of persecution; 3) they did not practice what they preached; and 4) they weren't really interested in the Galatians at all, but rather in boasting about their number of circumcised converts.

discuss / consider

1. *"But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."* (Galatians 6:14). What does Paul mean that he has been crucified to the world? The world is that evil Satanic system which is designed to appeal to our fallen natures. Since we are vulnerable to the appeal to the flesh, we must practice our position in Christ. What is our position in Christ? Because Christ died on the cross as our substitute, we died with Him, and we're raised with Him. That's the way God sees us – He sees us in Christ. The more we practice that position, the less the world will appeal to us. Are you practicing your position before God in Christ?
2. *"God forbid...the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."* (Galatians 6:14). What does it mean that the world has been crucified to me? This present evil Satanic world system is on its way out. See 1 John 2:17. When the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross, He not only died for our sins, but for the whole problem of sin and all of its effects. There's coming a day when there will be no more sin and no more world system. Do you recognize this truth? How does it impact your life?

challenge

1. The apostle Paul said he did not want to boast about anything other than the cross of Christ, and all that it meant in his life. If you are boasting about anything other than what Christ has done for you, try examining your priorities. What are you boasting about? List your boastings.
2. *"I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."* (Galatians 6:17) Read about the apostle Paul's experiences in 2 Corinthians 11:23-25. His body was literally scarred because of physical persecution. There are Christians today who literally carry the brand marks of Jesus because of persecution. Learn more about those who are being persecuted today – they are found all over the world. Have you ever been persecuted for standing for your faith? Do you bear the brand marks of Jesus?

memorize

"God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." (Galatians 6:14)

"I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." (Galatians 6:17)