



Date: February 4, 2025

Galatians Section: Galatians 1:10-24

Key Text: Galatians 1:11-12

Main Idea: God's Gospel

Genre: Letter

Author: Paul

Audience: The Church in Galatia (Specifically Gentiles)

Setting: Between 47 and 55 A.D.

Quotes of the Week: "Our identity shapes our reality. We don't strive to earn God's favor but live from the security of our relationship with Him. As believers, life is a journey of growing in and living from our identity in Christ" – Pastor Giles

Galatians Preview:

Highlight:

The Book of Galatians is a New Testament epistle written by the Apostle Paul to the churches in Galatia. This letter serves as a passionate defense of the gospel of grace, addressing the critical issue of justification by faith apart from works of the law. Paul confronts false teachings that insist on adherence to Jewish customs for salvation, affirming that believers are made right with God solely through faith in Jesus Christ. Themes of freedom in Christ, the role of the law, and the transformative power of the Spirit are central to the letter. Paul also emphasizes the unity of all believers, declaring that in Christ there is no distinction of race, social status, or gender. Galatians culminates in a call to live by the Spirit, producing the fruit of godly character, and to use this freedom to serve one another in love. The book is a foundational statement of the Christian faith, underscoring the sufficiency of Christ's work and the freedom it brings.

Focus of Galatians:

- **Topic/Themes for Galatians:**

- Freedom in Christ Alone
- The Gospel of Grace—No Additions Required
- Justification by Faith, Not Works of the Law
- The Spirit Empowers, Not the Flesh
- **The Cross Defines Our Identity and Freedom**

- Our response to this Truth:

- Believe in the True Gospel - Walk by Faith - Stand Firm in Freedom - Live by the Spirit - Love and Serve One Another

Recap of last week:

Galatians 1:10-24: God's Gospel

(Verse 10) Not Seeking the Approval of Man: Paul emphasizes that his goal is to please God, not people.

- As we enter the text we are going to hear this question raised all through the book, and the question is going to be: is Jesus truly enough?
- We saw this idea that Connor drew so beautifully on the whiteboard last week of the vertical and the horizontal. And the question would be: is what Christ has done enough? Or is there more that needs to be done on our behalf?
- This is the message that Paul is preaching, and he's not backing down from it. He is preaching Christ crucified and that His work alone is sufficient for all of life.
- We can imagine that this would not be a popular opinion. Why do we think that this was not a popular opinion of the people in that context?
 - Pridefulness – We naturally think that there is something that we need to bring to the table.
- But we need to remember that this world is not our home. The best that this world has to offer will never fulfill us. And that is what Paul cautions against. Not living this life as if we are trying to please mankind.

(Verses 11-12) God's Gospel: He asserts that the gospel he preaches is not of human origin but received through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

- Next, Paul is going to tell the Galatians that if they have a problem with this gospel that He is preaching, they need to take it up with God. (As Josiah said, he is essentially shifting the blame)
- He is giving them a reminder that this was not part of his plan. This work that Jesus came down to do was not part of Paul's master plan, but rather this was part of God's plan.
- This has been God's plan for all of eternity. It is to save and redeem sinners through the work of His Son.
- Paul was someone who persecuted the church and hated Christians. He wanted nothing to do with this gospel. But he was given the revelation of Jesus Christ that brought him to a saving faith.
 - And it is important to notice the structure of how Paul presents his argument. He points to the facts of what has already happened to show why this is true and to assert its validity.
 - And while he does this, he will appeal to the authority of God. God is the one doing the saving, God is the one doing the sanctifying, and God is the one doing the keeping.
 - Paul says that he didn't receive this from any man, but this is the direct result of God's work. (Notice the monergism in our salvation)
- **Why do we think it is important that God is the worker in our salvation?**

(Verses 13-14) Remembering His Past in Judaism: Paul recounts his past, where he intensely persecuted the church and was zealous for the traditions of his ancestors.

- Paul is then going to point to his past. He is then going to talk about his former life as a Judaizer and how he persecuted the Church.
- There are two parts of Paul's past that I want us to look at. The first would be His life in Judaism. He was advancing far above those of his age and was very zealous for keeping the law.
 - And we are going to see that if there was anyone who was good at keeping the law, it was Paul. He was the best of the best.
 - **Philippians 3:4-11:**
 - **4** though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: **5** circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; **6** as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. **7** But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. **8** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— **10** that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, **11** that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.
- This is very similar to Isaiah 64:6:
 - **6** We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
- The next part of Paul's past that we will look at will be His transformation. Sam will talk about it in His section, but what I want us to see is that even the most self-righteous person cannot escape the grace of God.
- Paul would've been classified as one of the most self-righteous and yet sinful men of his day. He thought that He could earn his way to heaven, and at the same time, he was slaughtering Christians and was in opposition to the church. But then we will see that God steps in and redeems the most broken of sinners.

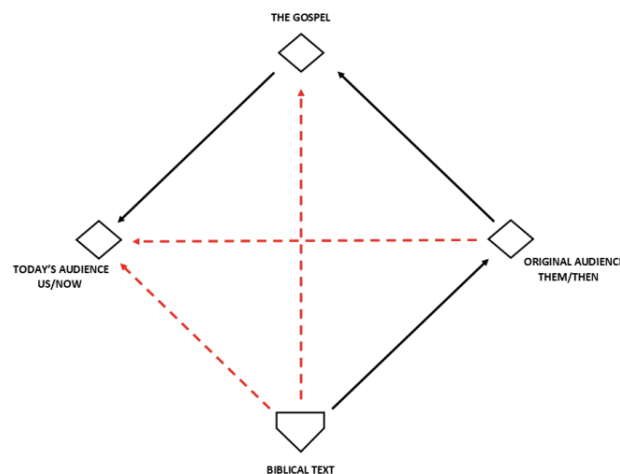
Galatians 1:15-24 - Set Apart and Called by God

- Right away in verse 15, we have our "But God" moment in Galatians 1:
 - As we heard from Noble, Paul had recounted his past, where he intensely persecuted the church and was zealous for the traditions of his ancestors.
 - Paul now describes the spiritual aspect of God enacting his faith, and his eyes being opened to clearly see Jesus as the complete fulfillment of the OT scriptures.
- To help us remember what Paul's transformation story was, we are going to look back to Acts 9, where the conversion of Paul takes place (flip there!)

- Paul's transformation story (commonly referred to as the conversion of Saul of Tarsus) is one of the most significant moments in all of the NT.
 - We read of Saul (later known as Paul) as a Roman citizen, a Pharisee, and a respected teacher of the Law who was “breathing threats of murder against the disciples of the Lord”.
 - We can see how Saul was zealous for the teachings and traditions of his Jewish ancestors and he hated the disciples and early followers of Jesus and was therefore persecuting and punishing them.
 - **Paul is pointing out to the Galatians his incredible experience where God directly stopped him in his path, and says that God set him apart before he was born!**
 - This is not man's Gospel! Paul is describing himself as merely a vehicle that God chose to use to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles.
 - We see that God predestined Paul to believe in Jesus, become an Apostle, and to teach + preach the Gospel to many more. We even read his writings today!
 - So... we have Paul explaining his divine conversion, and then he recounts his timeline after that moment.
 - **Why is the account of Paul's conversion + preceding events important within the context of Galatians?**
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- **Paul finishes his thought by telling of his next travels, where he goes into Syria and Cilicia, and that he was still unknown to the Churches in Judea, except that he was a man who has been changed from persecuting Christ to loving Christ.**
 - **This section is the ending to the beginning of Paul's letter to the Galatians, where he is setting the tone going forward.**
 - Paul is absolutely arguing against the false Gospel being taught by the Judaizers and their claims against himself.
 - Going forward, we will start to unravel Paul's arguments against the Law-Gospel, and how it is going against the person and the work of Jesus, and also goes against all of scripture!

ANOTHER WAY TO GO ABOUT THIS IDEA: THINK BASEBALL

- When preparing and studying scripture our focus is to always stay true to the scripture.
 - In order to best do this we use a method called the Simeon Trust method, which simply lays out a process to faithfully discern the Bible.
- FIRST:
 - Understanding who the text was written to. (The Audience)
 - Understanding why the text was written. (The Purpose)
 - Understanding the structure, genre, context, emphasis, and melodic line of the text.
 - In a nutshell: The first step focuses on understanding what the text meant to its original audience.
- SECOND:
 - Once we have done this, we must filter it through the Gospel.
 - This means understanding when and why this text was written in reference to the cross. → Is it pointing to the coming of Christ (OT), is it pointing to Christ and what Christ has already done (NT), is the text speaking of law, is it speaking of the Gospel, etc?
- THIRD:
 - Once we've understood the text's original meaning/audience, and have filtered it through the Gospel lens, we are able to determine what it means to us now. Without this process, proper application of the Bible is essentially impossible.
- COMING HOME:
 - Once we understand the appropriate application of the text, our leg work essentially stops and we become fully reliant on the Holy Spirit to work in us.



The Gospel: *We Can't, God Can, Jesus Did!*

- **Sin.** None of us can escape it. Because of sin, we are enslaved and burdened under the weight of the law. We are trapped in a cycle of guilt and condemnation, unable to achieve the righteousness God requires. God's standard is perfection, and no amount of good works, rule-following, or religious activity can justify us. The law has revealed our sin, but in our brokenness, we need someone to save us from it.
 - “**10** For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” **11** Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.” **12** But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.” (Galatians 3:10-12)
- **Christ Redeems.** These two words are at the heart of the gospel. In His mercy, God provided the only way for our salvation—through Jesus Christ. Christ redeemed us by becoming a curse for us, bearing the full weight of our sins on the cross. Through His sacrifice, we are delivered from the curse of the law, declared righteous through faith, and granted the promised Spirit.
 - “**13** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— **14** so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.” (Galatians 3:13-14)
- **Crucified with Christ.** Being crucified with Christ, our old self is put to death, and we are raised to new life in Him. This life is not earned by our efforts but is lived by faith in the completed work of Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us. It is only through Christ that we are made alive and can live a life pleasing to God.
 - “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life 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)