

# galatians

## THE SIMPLE GOSPEL

### discussion guide

#### WEEK 6: NO TURNING BACK

##### Read the Text

##### Galatians 4: 8-31

<sup>8</sup> Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. <sup>9</sup> But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? <sup>10</sup> You observe days and months and seasons and years! <sup>11</sup> I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain.

<sup>12</sup> Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You did me no wrong. <sup>13</sup> You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, <sup>14</sup> and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me. <sup>16</sup> Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth? <sup>17</sup> They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them. <sup>18</sup> It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you, <sup>19</sup> my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! <sup>20</sup> I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

<sup>21</sup> Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? <sup>22</sup> For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. <sup>23</sup> But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.

## Main Point

Paul continues his passionate plea for the Galatians to remember the truth and turn back to Jesus. He references God's promise to Abraham and Sarah and reminds us that ***we can rest in God's promise that we are saved***. This salvation is granted not in what we've done, but in what Jesus did for us through his death on a cross. And all we need to do is have faith in Him. How do we find this rest in God's promise though? Paul tells us that one way is to ***rejoice in God's power to be saved***. Rejoice! The way we rest in God's promises is by rejoicing in His power to fulfill those promises regardless of our circumstance. When we do this – when we are able to rejoice in the Lord instead of defining our contentment by our circumstances – we get to experience something transformative. We get to experience freedom.

***Rejoicing in Jesus removes worldly pressure to be slaves.***

We can cast out any pressure or temptation to follow anything other than Jesus. We get to pursue Jesus through things like prayer, reading the Bible, musical worship, – not because we have to in order to be good Christians – but because we get to and it grows us in more intimacy with Jesus.

## Reflect Together

- 1. *Who is God?*** God keeps His promises and we can rejoice in that. How is God's character and consistency good news in times of trial and struggle?
- 2. *What has He done?*** You are not the child of a slave. But rather a child of freedom. What does this mean to you and how is it true?
- 3. *Who are you?*** How do you see yourself turning back to the law? Consider symptoms in your life like anxiety, self-

condemnation, guilt, shame, insecurity, etc. What does this say about your relationship with the law vs. your comprehension of grace?

**4. *What are you to do?*** What would it look like to lay your legalistic tendencies at the feet of Jesus?

### **Abide Together**

Pray over what came up during discussion. Consider this prayer...

Father, you invite us to rest in you.

Thank you for granting us freedom. Freedom from the law. Freedom from our sin. Freedom from worldly desires. Freedom from slavery.

We confess our tendency to turn back to the law.

We confess our tendency to replace grace with legalism.

We confess our tendency to take control and trust in ourselves instead of trusting in you.

Forgive us, Lord. Help us trust in you.

Let us be a community of grace.

Help us turn to you and know your ways so we can in turn show those ways to others.

Thank you for your forgiveness. Thank you that we don't need to strive to earn your love and forgiveness. Thank you that Jesus is enough and that it is through Him that we are made right before you. Amen.

### **Mission Together**

Are there people in your life who you feel legalistic towards?

Maybe the lifestyle or personal choices of a non-believer or a fellow Christian? What is a step towards them you can take to show the grace of Jesus?