

The Park Church: Corporate Bible Study

BIBLE JOURNEY: STUDY 5, COURSE 2, GALATIANS

*LESSON 2: OVERVIEW OF GALATIANS / LESSON 3: WORKS-RIGHTEOUSNESS AS
SLAVERY*

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Review: Looking Back, Moving Forward

Min. Tonia Gathers last week from Lesson 1 : Epistles

Gospels vs. Epistles

	Purpose	Content	Style	Authors	Historical Context
Gospels	Narratives primarily focus on the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.	Contains the sayings and parables of Jesus, accounts of his miracles, interactions with different groups of people, the event of Passion Week.	Written as narrative history, telling a story with a beginning, middle and end.	Attributed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Provides a unique perspective on Jesus' life and ministry.	Considered to be written as scripture, with their style and content aimed at conveying theological truths rather than just historical facts.
Epistles	Letters written to the early Christian communities to provide instruction, clarity on doctrine and pastoral guidance	Discuss theological concepts – salvation, justification by faith, the role of the law, Christian conduct, the organization of the church.	More dramatic, resembling a moral essay of a formal teaching – starting with greeting, then the main content, ending with blessing and personal remarks.	Mostly written by the Apostle Paul, with a few others attributed to different apostles like Peter, John and James.	Regarded as more historically reliable due to their nature as personal correspondence addressing specific situations in the early church.

Appreciation for the Gospel Message

- ▶ **Personal Transformation** – *Paul's personal transformation is a powerful testament to the transformative power of the Gospel, which is the central message of the Bible.*
- ▶ **Unity of Scripture** – *Paul often cites Hebrew Scriptures, showing the continuity between the Old and New Testaments and how Christ fulfills the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament.*
- ▶ **Timeless Principles** – *The same struggles that the early church dealt with, we do as well. The advice Paul gave goes throughout centuries and generations.*

Feature Verse

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (NLT)

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.

Homework Assignment

- ▶ *Imagine you are Paul in 2024 and you are to write a letter to a church community today. What issues or challenges would you address in the church or society? Write out a sample letter.*
- ▶ *We should be able to find the principles of Paul's letters throughout scripture. Take a moment to find some connections between Paul's teachings and other parts of the Bible.*

Lesson 2: Overview of Galatians

- ▶ Galatians chapters 1 and 2 – A New Covenant Family through Jesus
- ▶ Galatians chapters 3 and 4 – The Role of the Law within God's multiethnic family - diverse and united in Spirit. (Jews and Gentiles)
- ▶ Galatians chapters 5 and 6 – Living by the Spirit and New Creation
- ▶ Galatia is a Roman province.
- ▶ Galatians was addressed to a number of churches in the region of Galatia, where Paul had traveled on one of his missionary journeys. (Acts 13 and 14)

Lesson 2: Overview of Galatians

Paul's letter to the churches of Galatia answers two major questions.

1. Are people justified simply by faith in Christ or is justification earned by following certain rituals or rules? (The Law)
2. If people are justified simply by faith in Christ, how should they live their lives?

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- ▶ **Play Video 1:**
- ▶ **Lesson 2: Overview of Galatians**
In | Paul, Peter & the Judaizers

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- ▶ **Play Video 2:**
- ▶ **Lesson 2: Overview of Galatians**
In | Judaizing in Acts & Galatians

Lesson 2: Overview of Galatians

- ▶ *I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse! Galatians 1:6-9 (NIV)*



Lesson 2: Overview of Galatians

Passage	True Gospel or False Gospel?
Treats Christ's death as meaningless. (2:21)	FALSE
Explains that all believers have the Holy Spirit through faith. (3:14)	TRUE
Tries to find favor with God by observing certain rituals. (4:10)	FALSE
Counts on keeping laws to erase sin. (5:4)	FALSE
Teaches that the source of the Gospel is God. (2:20)	TRUE
Says people must obey the law in order to be saved. (3:12)	FALSE
Declares that we cannot be saved by keeping laws. (3:21-22)	TRUE
Says that all believers are one in Christ. (3:26-28)	TRUE

Lesson 2: Overview of Galatians

- ▶ **Miracles** - In Galatians 3:5, Paul refers to miracles that have occurred in their midst:
- ▶ *Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? Galatians 3:5 (ESV)*
- ▶ In his letters, Paul rarely references his miracles or any signs and wonders he may have performed. When he does mention them he does so in a general way, as in the passage above. His reluctance to mention these acts, which may have impressed his hearers, is especially notable considering how often they are mentioned in the book of Acts.

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- ▶ **Play Video 3:**
- ▶ **Lesson 2: Overview of Galatians Behind | The Jerusalem Council**

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Play Video 4:

Lesson 2: Overview of Galatians

In Front| Tension Between Truth & Love

Lesson 3: Galatians – Works – Righteousness as Slavery

When we think of slavery, we tend to think of physical bondage and oppression. Paul has something metaphorical in mind in Galatians, though the physical reality was something everyone in Roman society understood.

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Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

Introduction

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

- ▶ *This matter arose because some false believers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. Galatians 2:4 (NIV)*
- ▶ *What I am saying is that as long as an heir is underage, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. Galatians 4:1 (NIV)*
- ▶ *So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir. Galatians 4:7 (NIV)*
- ▶ *Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. Galatians 4:8 (NIV)*

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

Galatians – Chapter 3 (NIV)

- ▶ **Faith or Works of the Law**
- ▶ 1 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified.
- ▶ 2 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard?
- ▶ 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?
- ▶ 4 Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain?

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

5 So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

▶ So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

▶ 6 So also Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

▶ 7 Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham.

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

- ▶ Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”
- ▶ 9 So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.
- ▶ 10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”
- ▶ 11 Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.”

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

12 The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.”

- ▶ 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 hung on a pole.”
- ▶ 14 He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

- ▶ **The Law and the Promise**
- ▶ 15 Brothers and sisters, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case.
- ▶ 16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ.
- ▶ 17 What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise.

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

- ▶ 18 For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on the promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.
- ▶ 19 Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator.
- ▶ 20 A mediator, however, implies more than one party; but God is one.

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

21 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.

- ▶ But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.
- ▶ **Children of God**
- ▶ 23 Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed.

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

24 So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith.

- ▶ 25 Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.
- ▶ 26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith,
- ▶ 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.
- ▶ 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
- ▶ 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

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▶ **Play Video 2**

▶ **Galatians**

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery
In | Argument 1 – Abraham, Faith & Gentiles

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

▶ Participation in Christ

- ▶ This idea of union with Christ, of being *in* Christ, is one of Paul's most fundamental ideas. It occurs over 200 times in his letters. In Galatians 2:19–20, Paul describes death to the Law and a new life that is Christ's life in him.
- ▶ *So **in Christ Jesus** you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were **baptized into Christ** have **clothed yourselves with Christ**. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you **belong to Christ**, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:26-29(NIV)*

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

- ▶ For Paul, being in Christ is something that happens to all who place their faith in Jesus. It describes who they are *now*. It's not something that will happen to believers later. It's not something that will describe them later. They are in Christ and in God's family *now*.
- ▶ Paul uses terms like “children of God” and “Abraham's seed” that were typically reserved for the Jewish people. Those who are *in* Christ are the heirs of God's promises to Abraham. Abraham's true heirs are those who are “baptized into Christ.” That makes all believers spiritual descendants of Abraham, and all believers in the Bible our spiritual ancestors.

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- ▶ **Play Video 3:**
 - ▶ **Galatians**
- ▶ **Lesson 3 – Works – Righteousness as Slavery**
In | New Exodus: Slavery to Sonship

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

- ▶ *Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek. This matter arose because some false believers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on **the freedom we have in Christ Jesus** and to make us slaves. Galatians 2:3-4 (NIV)*
- ▶ ***It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.** Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value.** The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. Galatians 5:1, 4, 6 (NIV)*

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery

Homework

As we should expect at this point, true freedom is not found in the law, the flesh, or human works, but in Jesus Christ alone. Are there things in your life that you're "yoked to" that are compromising your freedom in Christ? Do you remain enslaved to things from which Christ has set you free? Reflect on these questions below.

Lesson 3: Works – Righteousness as Slavery