

## **DON'T GO QUIET**

GM ... // name // newbies // online ...

We are now in the 3rd week in our series looking at the letter to the Galatian church.

This book reminds us that ...

**There are two ways to live: (1) in bondage to fear, or (2) in freedom through faith in Jesus.**

Apart from Jesus we are enslaved / in bondage to the fear of ...

- our past sins ...
- our present failures ...
- our misguided mindsets ...
  - I am what I do/have/others say & think about me

Galatians is this book about the freedom we have in Jesus from all these things.

**He came and opened our prison doors to lead us out.**

**But there is a part of us that doesn't want that freedom.**

We get so familiar with our prisons that we are too afraid to walk out of them.

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Like in Shawshank Redemption → Old man ... whole adult life in prison ... now in his old age ... finally getting out. His freedom is in his hands ... but he is too afraid to live free. → Institutionalized .

- we spend so much time in our prison ... ironically it becomes this structure of trust and safety.
- And instead of living in our freedom we want to run back into our prison walls ...

**But here is the thing about walls ... the divide and isolate.**

**We isolate ourselves // or we isolate others → Putting people into groups: insiders and outsiders. [us vs. them]**

Our fears // our prison walls // seem like personal struggles that don't effect anyone else.

**But that couldn't be further from the truth.**

### Galatians 2:11-13

**11 But when Cephas [Peter] came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. 12 For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing [who?] the circumcision party.**

Not just Peter ... others followed [insiders / outsiders]

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**13 And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.**

**Fear drives us to judge people and withdraw from them.**

**What made Peter “draw back and separate himself?”**

He was **afraid** of this circumcision party.

**[if your new to church and thinking ...”Is that what it sounds like?” → YES! even back then there seemed to be a cause for everything.]**

Of all the guys who should have known better it was Peter.

He was the first guy to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles [non-Jewish people] and saw the Holy Spirit give evidence that God saved them when they believed.

He came back to tell the church in Jerusalem what happened.

Check out the account from Acts...

### Acts 11:1-3

**Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. 2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem,**

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**the circumcision party criticized him, saying, 3 “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”**

Notice that the circumcision party's problem isn't that the Gentiles got saved ...

It's that Peter went into their home and shared a meal with them.

Now, on the surface this seems racist ... but this demand for separation it is driven by a religious fervor.

As a Jew your identity was intertwined with keeping the law of Moses.

One big one is that males were circumcised.

Circumcision was an outward sign of God's salvation to the Jews. → all the way back to Abraham, first Patriarch.

But the Gentiles were uncircumcised ... they were “not a part of God's special people.”

**To convert from Gentile to Jew meant, along with believing in the God of Israel and obeying the law of Moses, you also HAD TO to snip the tip.**

So, to eat with uncircumcised people was a big deal.

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B/C in that era ... **mealtime was big-time.**

To share a meal with a person was an act of communicating fellowship, value, and acceptance.

But meals went even deeper.

Meals were part of your religion's practice.

Many religions ate meals offered to their gods.

The Jews had food restrictions ... things they couldn't eat.

So, eating with a Gentile meant disobeying Moses' Law ... and thereby sinning against God.

Such an act would defile a Jewish person.

**So why did Peter go to Gentiles and eat with them?**

### **Acts 11:5-18**

**5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. 6 Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. 7 And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' 8 But I said, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' 9 But the voice answered a second time from heaven, 'What God has**

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made clean, do not call common.' 10 This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven. 11 And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea. 12 And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. 13 And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter; 14 he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.' 15 **As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. 16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'** 17 **If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"** 18 When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

Peter was the first guy to see God save the Gentiles.

So when the circumcision party criticized him in this moment ... he stood up to them.

**His faith was bigger than his fear.**

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The whole event is so fresh in his memory.

*V17 “If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when WE BELIEVED in the Lord Jesus Christ, **who was I that I could stand in God’s way?**”*

So, now fast-forward in the not-too-distant future, and we see a different Peter shrinking back in fear at a different church.

**He doesn’t boldly stand in faith against these same guys**

...

**Instead, he shrinks back in fear.**

**The tragedy is that his actions are dividing the church and denying the Gospel.**

And he is leading people to sin along with him.

**He is throwing up walls of fear that divide.**

**He is making insider and outsiders.**

But that is what happens when we give into fear ...

... you don’t get freedom ... you don’t get unity ... you get segregation...

... you don’t get authentic Christianity ... you get hypocrisy.

**Fear leads us into a false faith full of hypocrisy.**

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### Galatians 2:14

**14 But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”**

Peter was doing the classic, “Do as I say, not as I do.”

His behavior didn't match his belief.

Now, our job isn't to elevate ourselves above Peter and think ... “That's not me.”

**No, it is meant to sober us.**

**It is meant to make us watchful.**

**B/C we are prone to the same hypocrisy as Peter.**

**We are driven by the same fear that lurks inside us.**

**This fear that we aren't good enough.**

**We don't measure up.**

And that is the great question we never ask, “Measure up to what?”

We feel imperfect but we don't know why ...

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**And that is b/c we don't have an absolute authoritative measure.**

... so we measure ourselves against each other.

**That is Peter's mistake ... it is our mistake.**

B/C the only true measure is the one we find in the Gospel.  
That is the measure by which we measure ourselves and our lives.

Peter's conduct to withdraw and not eat with the Gentiles was **not in step** ...

Paul uses the greek word from which we get "orthopedics"  
... the study of bone alignment.

There is proper bone alignment ...

... then there are dislocations, fractures, and deformed bones.

And that is what hypocrisy does...

**Figuratively, Peter's behavior was dislocating himself from the Gospel and from others.**

In 1 Corinthians 13 Paul says that dissonance turns us into an irritating clanging cymbal.

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~~Our lives are like Lloyd in Dumb and Dumber making the most annoying sound in the world.~~

I think this is what Paul had in mind...

**SHOW CLIP [TEST ON SUNDAY TO SEE IF CLIP WILL WORK]**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cVITelATBs>

When we our way out of joint to the Gospel ... that's what its like to be around us ...

It doesn't matter what we say and what we pray ...

... when our behavior isn't inline with the Gospel it hurts people and turns them off to our faith.

The church in America is still recovering from the way we threw up dividing walls of slavery and segregation with our African-American brothers and sisters.

Philip Ryken recalls ...

**Our behavior can undermine our belief. It is possible for Christians to believe the gospel in their hearts and even confess it with their mouths, yet deny it with their lives. A tragic example comes from the history of the**

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**Southern Presbyterian Church prior to the Civil War. In those days it was customary for Presbyterian elders to give their parishioners tokens signifying that they were eligible to participate in the Lord's Supper. Sadly, in some churches African slaves were not given the customary silver token, but one made of base metal. Nor were they allowed to receive the sacrament until all the white church members had been served. This was a divisive and prejudicial way of handling a sacrament that God intends to signify our union together in Christ. Whether the elders believed the gospel or not, their actions clearly denied it.**

The Southern Presby's ... behaved like Peter ...

They were in a culture where slavery and segregation from "those kinds of people" were acceptable.

**Society was telling them it WASN'T a big deal to throw up diving walls driven by fear ... White people could feel superior ... "better than."**

**But look at the ramifications of their sinful behavior! It was HUGE!**

**Today is no different ... it doesn't matter what society says ... sin ... fear driven behavior ... it is a BIG DEAL.**

Sin acts more like a bomb than a bullet.

It does a lot of damage to a lot of people.

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That is why we need to be like Paul ...

We need to hold fast to the Gospel ...

We need to measure our lives by it ...

Christians are meant to be nice and loving to everyone ...

But we have to hold each other accountable to the Gospel.

**Which is what Paul did.**

### Galatians 2:15-16

**15 We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; 16 YET[!!] we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.**

**Faith in the Gospel delivers us from prejudice and hypocrisy.**

Paul starts off by pointing out what he and Peter both knew ...

Yeah, we are born Jews ...

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We were raised up in it ... circumcised ... knowing the law, keeping the law ... earning our own righteousness.

**Then he says there was an interruption for both of them.**

**“YET!!!”**

... Peter, remember! We tossed all of that stuff away!

Now we know that a person can't be justified by keeping the law.

We can't achieve to God's righteousness through our own efforts.

That is the same Gospel we believe today ...

Your birth doesn't matter, your race doesn't matter, your works don't matter.

**The only thing that matters is faith in Jesus ...**

**B/C ...**

**Through faith in Jesus you die to the law that says you are never good enough.**

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**Galatians 2:17-21 [use same font colors]**

**17 But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! 18 For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. 19 For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. 20 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. 21 I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.**

Earlier, we talked about how we are driven by an inner fear that tells us we aren't good enough.

That fear works itself out through prejudice and hypocrisy.

That is in there b/c of God's law ...

His authoritative measuring standard of righteousness ... that is what condemns us.

It condemns us ... not B/C the law is evil ... but B/C we are ...

We fail to keep it...

We fail to love God and others perfectly all the time.

**And the solution isn't to do better next time ... or just try to be better than that other person.**

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**Once you break the law once you're always a law breaker.**

**The law makes no distinctions.**

**Nothing you are ... nothing you can do will get you pardoned and get your rap sheet removed.**

**So what is our hope?**

**In one word: death.**

**Probably, not what you were expecting to hear.**

**But that is the truth.**

**The only way from getting out from under the law is to die by it. → that's why Paul says "For through the law I died to the law."**

**The law of God demands the penalty of death for breaking it.**

**And until you die you will always sense that you're "never ever perfect" ... to quote a lyric from Pink.**

**To live in the law is to live under constant condemnation.**

**And that is why you MUST be saved by faith in Jesus Christ.**

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Through faith in Jesus you are united with him in his death.

His death becomes your death.

Through the law he died to the law FOR US.

He took on all our sin, then was punished for it ... once and for all.

When you die to the law it has no claim over you.

It can't condemn you ...

Paul says it again in the book of Romans this way ...

### Romans 8:1

1 There is therefore now [what?] no condemnation [] for those who are [let's say it together] in Christ Jesus.

Why is there no condemnation for all of us in Christ Jesus?

### Romans 8:2

2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

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So we are not just dead to the law ... we are alive under a new law.

### The law of the Spirit of life.

That is what Paul is meaning in Galatians 2:19-20

#### Galatians 2:19-20 [keep font color]

**19 For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. 20 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.**

We are set free from the law that condemns us, fills us with fear, tells us we are never enough.

We now live, but it is Christ who lives in us.

This body of flesh we occupy that makes us look unique.

My big nose ... large head ... pasty skin ...

God made that and loves all that ...

But when he looks at me to judge my righteousness ...

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**He isn't seeing me ... he is seeing Jesus.**

**Which means this for all of us who are IN JESUS.**

**Jesus is also IN YOU!**

So His righteousness is now considered yours.

**By faith we are covered in Jesus' righteousness.**

**Now, think about that ...**

**Do you think you can do better than Jesus at being righteous?**

Of course not!

And that is the life you now live **by faith...**

**But that means you also recognize that in everyone else.**

**Faith changes what we see in each other.**

When God looks at your spouse that forgot your anniversary, he sees the moral uprightness of Jesus his son.

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[not a confession]

When God looks at your mom/dad who lost their cool and blew up at you ... he sees the moral uprightness of Jesus.

When God looks at your friend who betrayed you ... IF they are IN Christ ... he sees Jesus' righteousness.

When God looks at his church ... all over the world ...

... he doesn't grade us or measure us by what we look like, or our style of worship, or the rules we keep.

He looks down and delights in us b/c he sees Jesus in all of us.

**What do you see when you look at others?**

**Is it only the exterior stuff that makes us different?**

**That will drive us right back into fear ...**

And while fear throws up walls that divide ... faith tears them down ...

**Faith gives us a new way to regard others.**

**2 Corinthians 5:16-17, 21**

**16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ**

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**according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.  
17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**

**21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

Our culture may have a hundred different ways to categorize us and tell us how we are different.

But the most important thing is that you are IN Jesus and Jesus is IN you.

That means you are a new Creation ... you are no longer under the law that condemns you ... you are the righteousness of God ... you are a child of God ...

**These are the Gospel identifiers that set us free from fear and break down the dividing walls of hostility.**

## **NOT A CHRISTIAN**

Jesus is offering you freedom from sin and death.

You can't earn it or pay for it.

**You must believe in Jesus, the only son of God, who died for your sins.**

**That is how you are saved and set free.**

**Today is the day of salvation ... put your faith in Jesus.**

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## **CHRISTIAN**

Some of us need to take a moment to reflect and repent before we come to the communion table.

Where have we let fear drive us back into prison?

Where have we put up dividing walls of prejudice to make us feel better than others?

Where are we living out of joint, dislocated from the Gospel?

Check your heart ... do business with God who is always gracious.

And when you are ready, come take communion.

Repentance should lead us to thankfulness that our sins are always forgiven b/c of Jesus.

His body broken and his blood shed for us.

We live free from the law that condemns us because of that.

In this same spirit of thankfulness we can also come and bring our tithes and offerings.

Not b/c we are trying to earn God's grace, but b/c we've received it.

You can give online, or on our app, or drop it in a giving bucket at the communion tables around the room.

## **PRAY**