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OCF/CMF Study: Paul's Letter to the Galatians
Study Guide #1

Introduction: Paul visited the Roman province of Galatia (now central Turkey) on at least three occasions (Acts 13, 14, 16:6, 18:23). He founded churches on his first missionary journey in the southern Galatian cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Paul had taught that no one could earn the favor of God; faith was all that was needed to receive God's forgiveness and the gift of new life (i.e., salvation or being born again). Some later Jewish-Christian visitors to Galatia taught that Paul was really not an apostle because he was not originally one of the twelve; that faith itself is not enough; that non-Jewish converts must first become Jews, be circumcised, and observe all the Jewish laws. Paul was distraught (Gal 4:20) and responded with urgency to this dangerous false teaching (that would minimize the meaning of the crucifixion) by writing his most strongly worded letter. This letter is known as the Magna Carta of Christian liberty. See if you can detect Paul's feelings (perhaps fury and rage) as we study this letter.

Would someone please read Gal 1:1-5?

1. What part of a formal letter is this? Salutation.
2. What is added?
 - a. Explanation of how Paul became an apostle.
 - b. Explanation of the mission of Jesus.
3. How does Paul "pull rank" on the false teachers? His appointment is directly from God (v.1).
4. Notice the order of dividends of owning stock as a child of God. How does grace precede peace? No one can know peace unless he first experiences the grace of God.
5. How does v.4 deal with the issue of earning salvation? God had long ago established the blood sacrifice as a necessity for the forgiveness of sin. See Ex 12:1-14.

Would someone please read Exodus 12:1-14?

1. How would you title this as a short newspaper article? "God commands the sacrifice of the Passover lamb," "The beginning of redemption by blood," etc.
2. What is the significance of God's election to designate this as the beginning of months? Everything starts with redemption.
3. What is redemption? Redeemed from the status of a lost soul, from a destiny in hell. . . to life (spiritual and eternal).
4. What is the significance of the requirement that the lamb be unblemished and a yearling? A lesser animal would not be as much of a sacrifice. Christ, the lamb of God, was unblemished, without sin, died in his prime.
5. Why should the whole congregation participate in the killing of the lamb? So all would identify with the shed blood for their protection.

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6. What is the significance of the blood on the doorposts? By grace we all pass through the blood of Christ. . . the door to salvation.
7. What is the significance of the death of those who were not protected by the blood? Without the shedding of the blood of Christ, we all die.
8. What right did God have to destroy the first born males of Egypt? He created them.
9. What is the Christian's counterpart to Passover? Easter. The resurrection of Jesus is our victory over death.
10. What is the Christian counterpart to the blood on the lintel? Christ's blood.
11. How do we become participants in the sacrifice?. Romans 3:23--we are all in the same sinful condition before God. Ro 6:23--There is no way to earn God's favor--salvation is a gift from God by grace. John 1:12-- We become participants by receiving Christ as Lord (receiving him into our lives by invitation). Rev 3:20--the words of Christ himself, the invitation to come into our lives and abide there as Lord.
12. (Gal 1:5) What is the glory of God? (1 Chron 29:11, Isa 6:3, Mt 15:31, Ac 4:21, Rev 4:11, 7:10, 15:4, 19:1).
13. How does the glory of God apply to us? In our worship. We acknowledge his glory in daily prayers of praise and adoration. We are reminded of our position in worship when we become more aware of his glory. Sunday worship is an event where we are the performers and God is the audience. Our lives should be a continuing act of worship expressing our love, awe, and appreciation for our great God.

How can we apply what we have studied tonight to our lives to increase our spiritual growth? By accepting Christ as Lord, inviting him into our lives to be Lord of our lives. By being more aware of God's glory and practicing walking in worship.

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Galatians Discussion Guide #2.
Galatians 1:6-10.

Introduction: Paul wrote this letter to the Galatians in response to the teachings of the Judaizers--those who advocated a Jewish version of Christianity. To please God, according to the Judaizers, a person had to have been circumcised and then have dedicated his life to complying with the Jewish law. Every time a believer performed a deed of law, he or she earned a credit in a personal account with God. To Paul it was utterly impossible to earn God's favor. The important factor was not what we can do for ourselves, but what Christ has done for us. Paul was teaching that religion was a matter of trying to meet the obligation of the love of the Cross by our faith.

Someone please read Galatians 1:6-10.

1. How would you title this section? "The Galatian Christians are rebuked and the Judaizers denounced;" "No other gospel," etc.
2. What are the key statements of this paragraph?
 - a. Paul is astonished that they are deserting the gospel of Christ and turning to beliefs that lead to death.
 - b. The false teachers are apparently perverting the gospel.
 - c. Anyone who preaches a gospel different than the gospel of Christ should be condemned.
 - d. Anyone who preaches a gospel other than the one Paul originally preached should be eternally condemned.
 - e. Paul says that if he were still trying to please men, he would not be a servant of God.
3. What is the meaning of.
 - a. Paul's expression of astonishment? The Galatians are turning from the gospel. They are essentially turning to no gospel at all.
 - b. The gospel? Good news.
 - c. To turn from Christianity to Judaism (vv. 6-7)? A rejection of Christ. It is turning from faith to law, from grace to works. Paul says this is no gospel at all, and the one who leads others into it should be condemned (to spiritual death and hell). The Galatians were abandoning the position of grace with God (which made them objects of the grace and love of God and participants in its benefits) and placing themselves under law, which could only award them their sad desserts. The major problem is that you cannot turn from grace to law. To do so is to reject God's gift and the work of the Holy Spirit in the person's life.
 - d. V. 9? The message of the Judaizers was opposite or diametrically opposed to the gospel preached by Paul. Paul says that anyone who preaches such a message should be accursed because they would lead others to spiritual death (Eph 2:15). Essentially, through Christ, God revealed his new and ultimate provision for a person's life. The Judaizers desired to maintain the old way, which was superceded by God's new covenant. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me" (Jn 14:6).

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e. V. 10? Why can't Paul be Christ's servant and please men? See J&mes 4:4. Read Romans 8:1-8; discuss the meaning of each verse.

(1) Ro 8:1--The tremendous advantage of having Christ as Lord; result of being the beneficiary of Christ's sacrifice. "In Christ Jesus"--a condition of being in and with, a continuing relationship in the here and now. (see 2 Cor 5:17).

(2) Ro 8:2--The old law was used to judge, condemn, and classify sin. We have a natural propensity to sin. Sin results in separation from God, which is death. To receive Christ as Lord is to receive the person of the Holy Spirit.

(3) Ro 8:3--The law depends on a person's obedience. The new covenant depends on God's grace to forgive my sin and respond to my act of faith. He is waiting for my response of faith (Rev 3:20).

(4) Ro 8:4--If we walk (live, abide) in the Spirit, we fulfill the law through the power of God working in our lives (Acts 1:8).

(5) Ro 8:5--When does sin begin? In the thoughts--the mind.

4. Can someone some look up Gal 1:6-10, and suggest how we might apply it to our lives?

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Galatians Discussion Guide #3.
Galatians 1:11-17.

Introduction: Date of this letter: somewhere between 47 and 55 AD (most prefer 47 AD). Paul wrote Galatians in response to those who would impose Jewish law on Christians as a way to earn God's favor. Galatians repudiates all authorities, institutions, customs, and laws that interfere with the direct access of the individual to God. The only access to eternal life is through faith in Jesus Christ. Rightness with God requires a new nature that is possible only by the action of God through the Holy Spirit when one accepts Christ's sacrifice on the Cross as his or her sacrifice for forgiveness of sins (an exercise of faith). We trust God as the Father who makes us his children as a result of our faith and belief in Christ as Lord.

Would someone please read Galatians 1:11-17?

1. Possible titles of this paragraph? "Paul's Commission as an Apostle," "Paul's Gospel a Divine Revelation," "Paul's Former Life," "Paul Defends his Ministry," etc.

2. Points?

- a. Gospel preached by Paul was a direct revelation from Jesus.
- b. As a Jew Paul had zealously persecuted Christians and tried to destroy the Church.
- c. Paul was a front runner among the most zealous of Jews.
- d. Paul was selected by God even from his mother's womb and called into the missionary ministry through God's grace.
- e. Jesus revealed in Paul's life the person of himself without contact or instruction from the apostles or anyone of flesh and blood.
- f. When called, Paul did not go to Jerusalem to consult with the disciples. He went to the wilderness of Arabia.

3. Read Acts 7:5-8; 9:1,2; 22:1-5; 26:4,5.

- a. Who was Gamaliel (guh-Male-ee-el)? A Pharisee and eminent doctor of the Jewish law; the first of only seven rabbis to be given the title of Rabban (the highest title given to a rabbi).
- b. How did Paul achieve such a high appointment? His father was a rabbi (Acts 23:6), born of the purest Jewish blood (Phil 3:5).
- c. Could it be that God did this (Gal 1:15,16)?
- d. What was the tradition of Paul's fathers (Gal 1:14)? Paul was Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee.
- e. What are the Pharisees? A Jewish religious party. They tried to master the text and teachings of the law in every detail. The scribes of the New Testament were their spiritual descendants. By 200 AD Judaism and Pharisaic teaching were synonymous. The Pharisees were distinguished from other Jewish sects primarily in the belief of the immortality of the soul and God's overruling of fate.

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4. What had Paul done to "lay waste" the Christian Church (1:13)? Acts 8:1-3; 9:1,2.
5. How did Paul's persecution help spread the gospel? Scattered Christians everywhere (Acts 8:4,5).
6. How was Paul converted to Christianity? Acts 9:3-6.
7. How did God reveal his gospel and will to Paul? First, by getting his attention (Acts 9:3,4). Second, by telling Paul the truth.
8. Did Paul choose to become God's servant? No, God called him (1:15).
 - a. What does "called" mean? Paul was called out by God; selected for his unique mission to the Gentiles.
 - b. What does "God's grace" mean? God's unmerited favor towards sinful man as exemplified by John 3:16, John 1:12, Rev 3:20, and Ro 6:23. We are all sinful (RO 3:23).
9. Did Paul have a teaching from man that convinced him that the story of Jesus (the gospel) was true? No. He was convinced by Jesus (Acts 9:4-6).
10. What part did God play while Paul was yet in his mother's womb? Isa 44:2, Jer 1:5, Isa 49:1.
11. How did Paul prepare for his missionary ministry once Jesus had called him? He went to the desert of Arabia as Jesus went to the desert to prepare for His ministry. In the desert there is an awareness and apartness rarely equaled anywhere else which enhances the vertical awareness of God without hindrance from people.
 - a. How did Paul receive the power and authority he needed to accomplish his mission? Acts 9:10-20.
 - b. What part did Ananias play in Paul's commissioning? Acts 9:17,18. The messenger of God himself empowered especially for this mission.
 - c. What happened as a result of Ananias's laying hands on Paul (v. 18)? He was healed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Application of this scripture.

1. Does the seriousness of one's sin before coming to Christ limit his or her service to Christ? Apparently not in Paul's case. Paul was guilty of extreme persecutions of Christians before his conversion.
2. What happens if we let guilt for past sins burden us down so that we are not effective witnesses for Christ? Satan has his way in our lives. The power of the Holy Spirit is blocked in our lives.
3. What is the solution for past sins? 1 John 1:9. Repentance, turning away from the sin; confession, admitting the sin before God; acceptance of forgiveness, letting the sin go.
4. How may we expect to have God's will revealed for us? By seeking the answer directly from God through study of his Word, the Bible; through prayer, asking God's answer; and by seeking the teaching of Godly preachers and teachers.

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5. What happens if one chooses on one's own the way he will serve God without seeking God's direction? A mess. Without the power of the Holy Spirit, we are functioning under our own steam.

6. How do you respond to the statement of a famous theologian that if you take the Holy Spirit out of the modern church, 95% of the work would continue unhindered? This statement explains the problem of the powerless church which is run by man's wisdom rather than seeking God's direction and power.

7. Can we expect God's help and power in our professions and work? Yes. When we receive Christ as Lord, we receive his Holy Spirit, just as Paul did. If God is not with us in our daily lives, who moved? We choose to go our own way and ignore God's availability to us moment by moment.

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Galatians Discussion Guide #4.
Galatians 1:18-24.

Introduction: Galatians, a letter to the Christians living in the Roman province of Galatia in central Turkey, was written as an urgent corrective teaching in answer to those who had been taught that obedience to the Jewish law was necessary to earn God's favor. To date we have discussed: a. Paul's unique calling to a missionary ministry by Jesus, b. The meaning of the grace of God and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our salvation and as the provision to enable us to become the children of God, c. There is no other gospel than the story of Jesus and no other means for the salvation of our souls, d. Paul's message was given to him directly by the risen Christ, and e. The story of Paul's development beginning with his training as a Pharisee to his calling as an apostle by Christ.

Someone read Galatians 1:18-24.

1. What points does Paul make in this paragraph?

- a. For three years after his conversion experience, he remained in and around Damascus and the desert of Arabia; then he went to Jerusalem for two weeks to see Peter and James (the brother of Jesus).
- b. God knows he is writing the truth about his experience.
- c. After this, he went to Syria and Cilicia, an area around his home in Tarsus, Syria.
- d. He did not go to the south to Judea and Samaria, where the other apostles were.
- e. The people in Judea were hearing about and praising God for Paul's conversion and preaching.

2. What is the meaning of:

- a. His statement in v. 20, "God knows that I am not lying." In true Jewish fashion, he appeals to the highest possible court to assure the Galatians that he is telling the truth about his apostolic authority.
- b. Paul's limiting his visit in Jerusalem to Peter and James? Probably because he wanted to know more about Jesus. Peter, James, and John were the closest to Jesus. Peter and James would have known the most about Jesus.
- c. His visit to Syria and Cilicia? Paul's calling was to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. Syria and Cilicia were Gentile areas. They were also in the region of his home, Tarsus.
- d. V. 23? The news pertaining to Christians spread by the spoken word of Christians. They were a minority and often persecuted. The news about Paul spread because of the previous role he had had in persecuting Christians and now he was a powerful preacher of the gospel.
- e. V. 24? They were praising God because Paul's conversion was a miracle. His powerful ministry was also a testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit in the form of a man.

5. How can the following facts of this story of Paul's life relate to our lives?

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a. Paul waited three years to begin his ministry. We all need a time of learning and maturity before we launch into the ministry role God has called us to. Note the times spent in the wilderness by Moses, David, and Jesus.

(1) Why is the experience of Jesus in the wilderness (Lk 14:1-14) important to us? New and serious Christians are often the subjects of Satan's attention because they are a threat to his kingdom. Satan has control of many powerful and beautiful people and he controls much wealth. He has the worldly means to offer us much that we desire. If we make a solid commitment to Christ, we attract his attention.

(2) Do we need to go to the wilderness? It probably would be highly beneficial to our spiritual growth, maturity, and greatly enhance our commitment to Christ.

(3) What could a wilderness experience be for us? Time alone with God in prayer, meditation, and study of the Bible. At one extreme, we could go to a monastery for a period of time. At the other extreme, a daily quiet time can be an important time alone with God in meditation, prayer, and/or study of the Bible.

b. The probable primary channels of Paul's spiritual learning were:

(1) Hearing from Jesus, Peter, James, and his early experiences of the learning in the Synagogue and from his great and famous teacher, Gamaliel.

(2) Study and application of the scripture, particularly as it applied to what had happened to him.

(3) Fellowship with the Christians in Damascus--seeing and experiencing Christ in them, and

(4) Prayer-- communicating with God and listening to answers or direction or the peace that comes over our lives when we know we are in God's will.

c. Paul waited three years to begin his ministry. If Paul had gone out immediately after his conversion without the period of learning and maturing, he would not have been equipped to deal with the many varied problems he experienced. Many Christians are ill prepared to meet daily opportunities for ministry that come our way everyday (1 Peter 3:15).

d. Paul's statement about truth and God's knowing.

(1) God is truth. If Christ is truly Lord of our lives, a primary characteristic of our lives is truth.

(2) God is always present. He knows immediately (now) even what we are thinking (Mt 5-28, Jer 17:9,10, Ps 66:18).

e. V.23. Paul, who once persecuted the Christians, is now powerfully preaching the gospel. The life-changing power of the indwelling Holy Spirit when Christ is truly Lord has had its effect (2 Cor 5:17-19).

f. They glorified God on account of Paul. Paul in his daily life was glorifying God. The first question of the Westminster catechism is "What is the chief end of man?" The answer: "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever." All Christians should walk in the continual act of glorifying God (Ro 6:4, 8:1-4, 2 Cor

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5:7, Eph 4:17, Col 1:10). Things of the Christian community were of primary importance to these Christians living under persecution. They praised God for his actions because His acts and works were of central importance to their hope for life in the now.

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Galatians Discussion Guide #5.
Galatians 2:1-14.

Introduction: In chapter 1, Paul concludes one of the strongest arguments for apostolic authority found anywhere in scripture. Paul claimed divine appointment as an apostle, with full authority to preach and teach the gospel. His message proved it; his conversion proved it; his record proved it; the approval of Christian leaders and laymen proved it. He had never sat under the teaching of the apostles, but he had the same knowledge and authority. Saul the single-minded Pharisee had become Paul, the single-minded apostle. God had transformed him; God had taught him; God had commissioned him; and God was getting the glory.

Someone please read Galatians 2:1-10.

1. What are the major points of this paragraph?
 - a. 14 years later Paul went back to Jerusalem.
 - b. He took Barnabus and Titus with him.
 - c. He went because God revealed to him that he should go.
 - d. He explained the gospel message he preached to the leaders of the church in Jerusalem (the apostles).
 - e. Paul did not want his work of the past and present to be a failure.
 - f. Paul apparently was surprised that Titus, a Gentile Greek, was not forced to be circumcised even though some desired it to be done.
 - g. Apparently some of the Judiazers had slipped into the group and tried to force their position which Paul perceived would make slaves of them.
 - h. Paul successfully defended the truth (freedom) of the gospel.
 - i. The leaders had no new suggestions for Paul.
 - j. Peter, James, and John recognized the legitimacy of Paul's teaching.
 - k. The leaders in Jerusalem asked for support of the needy of their community.

2. Meaning.

a. We don't know what the revelation (v. 2) of Paul contained. Based on what we know from chapter 1 and this paragraph, what appears to be the reason for Paul's going to Jerusalem? Paul was not in doubt about the gospel that he preached. He received it by direct revelation from Jesus. He apparently went to thwart the efforts of the Judiazers and overthrow their influence in the church. If they continued to have their way, the church would return to the law.

b. Why do you suppose Paul took Titus? Titus was apparently "exhibit A." He was an uncircumcised, Gentile converted Christian. He was an outstanding Gentile convert who Paul was discipling.

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He was a problem for those who expounded the law as a requirement for Christians. The letter "Titus" in scripture was to this convert who had at that point assumed his responsibility in the missionary work of the church.

c. What was the significance to the fact that Titus was not circumcised? This most fundamental requirement for a person to become a Jew under the old covenant did not apply to Christians under the new covenant. Acceptance of Titus was an operational recognition of the freedom of Christians from Jewish law and the old covenant. Obviously some wanted him circumcised.

d. Reference v. 5, why didn't Paul "give in?" He knew that he was right and the truth of the gospel was at stake. His role was to get the apostles on the right path regarding grace, freedom from the law, and freedom in Christ. The matter was settled a little later by the findings of the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15).

e. What is the significance of the 14 year delay of going to Jerusalem? Paul is making the point that his gospel came as a direct revelation from Jesus Christ. His previous visit to Jerusalem of two weeks was not significant in terms of learning theology. He had been preaching the gospel in the intervening time. Apparently Paul's message was approved by the apostles.

3. Application.

a. How does God "reveal" (v. 2) His will for us? Through: (1) The revelation of scripture, (2) Prayer, (3) Through other Christians, and (4) Direct revelation from God.

b. How do we avoid being led astray as the Judiazers had tried to do to Paul in v. 4? By knowing what we believe and why we believe it (having a personal theology).

Will someone read Galatians 2:11-14?

4. Major points:

- a. Paul opposed Peter in Antioch because he was wrong.
- b. Peter changed his association with the Gentiles when the Judiazers arrived.
- c. Other Jewish Christians and Barnabus had begun to practice the prejudices, as did Peter.
- d. Paul confronted Peter in the presence of others about the way he was acting.

5. Meaning:

a. Who are the two leading preaching apostles? Peter (Cephas) and Paul. The book of Acts is virtually divided in half, the first half telling the story of Peter, and the second part the story of Paul.

b. What was Peter's offense against the gospel? His conduct. His behavior was a contradiction of the truth of the gospel. The hypocrisy is brought out in the way he acted before and after the Jewish Christians appeared.

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c. How had God only a short time previously dealt with Peter concerning the Gentiles? See Acts 10 and 11.

d. Had Peter forgotten the vision at Joppa and the conversion of Cornelius? No. But Peter was acting insincerely. The same Peter who had denied the Lord to a maid servant before the crucifixion now denies Him by yielding to the pressure of the circumcision party. He lacked the courage of his convictions.

e. What happened as a result of Paul's taking a stand against Peter? The Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians continued as one body. The Jerusalem council (Acts 15) confirmed that Paul was right.

f. Reference v. 11, did Paul have the right to oppose Peter? Yes. Peter's act was an overt act of sin. He was corrupting the gospel, the chief article of Christian doctrine: Sinners, guilty and under the judgement of God, may be pardoned and accepted by His sheer grace, His free and unmerited favor, on the ground of His Son's death and not for any of their own works or merits. The doctrine of justification (which means acceptance before God) is by grace alone through faith alone (v. 16a).

6. Application:

a. What are the contemporary arguments that are parallel to the circumcision argument? Requirements for confirmation (legitimately only by the laying on of hands of a bishop in the historic line of succession), the mode of baptism (sprinkling or immersion), denominational, racial, social acts, etc. (Acts 10:15). The fundamental issue at stake is precisely the same, namely on what grounds Christian believers may enjoy the table of the Lord with one another. The gospel says that the sinner's acceptance with God is by faith only, altogether apart from works.

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Galatians Discussion Guide #6.
Galatians 2:15-21.

Introduction: In this paragraph, Paul turns from his rebuke of Peter for violating the doctrine of justification of faith to a defense against the Judaizers efforts to turn Christian teachings back to law. The Judaizers attempted to destroy the two foundations of the Christian religion: a. The grace of God, and b. The death of Christ. To teach that one can earn salvation by his own efforts is to undermine the foundations of the Christian religion, to nullify the grace of God, and to make Christ's death superfluous.

Someone please read Galatians 2:15-21. Notice how Paul changes his statements from a rebuke of Peter to an argument or defense of the grace of God.

1. How would you title this paragraph? "Jews and Gentiles are Both Saved by Faith," "Justification by Faith Alone," etc.
2. What are the points Paul makes in this paragraph?
 - a. We are saved only by faith; never by doing what the law requires.
 - b. No one is saved by obedience to the law.
 - c. To reestablish the law in his life, for Paul, would be to demonstrate that he had broken the law.
 - d. As judged by the law, Paul is dead, killed by the law to live for Christ.
 - e. Paul no longer lives, but Christ lives in him.
 - f. Paul lives by faith in Jesus.
3. What is the key word of this paragraph? Justified. The verb occurs 3 times in v. 16 and once in v. 17. The noun "justification" occurs in V. 21. What does "justified" mean? In this paragraph, Paul defends the central doctrine of the Christian church: justification by faith. Sinful people (RO 3:23) are brought into acceptance by God, not because of works, but through the act and process of trust/belief/faith in Christ. Where these three Greek words are used in scripture, the meaning (as taken from the Greek), is to "rely on," "adhere to," and "trust in."
4. Why do you think that it is so natural for us to try to reinstate the law in the living of our own lives.
5. What is the meaning of:
 - a. Verses 15 and 16? Read Ro 3:23, Ga 5:1, 2 Co 3:17, and Ep 2:13-15. (The believer is free from the bondage of sin, forgiven, and renewed (justified) by Christ's blood and continued in freedom by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jew and Gentile are alike before Christ in this respect.
 - b. What is the effect of our inadvertently reestablishing the law in our own lives in order to try to earn our salvation? We nullify the meaning of the cross and Christ's suffering for us.

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c. How is the right way to pursue righteousness without reestablishing the law in our lives? The clue lies in Ro 12:2. We must learn to deal with each sin thought as it occurs--rejecting the temptation to even think sinful thoughts and calling on the Lord to empower us to have victory over that sin.

d. Verses 17 through 19? What are the limits of that freedom as revealed in Ga 5:13-14, Jn 13:34, Mt 22:36-40? How can we apply this to our lives?

e. Romans 8:2-4? How are we freed from the law of sin and death?

f. Romans 8:4? What is accomplished by the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit in us? How does the continuing application of Ro 12:2 facilitate the work of the Holy Spirit moment by moment?

g. Verse 20? How do I live this new life to the fullest? Read Ro 12:1. To verbally make a covenant (contract/agreement) with Christ and to thereby live faithfully according to that covenant. The result is to know Christ truly as Lord.

h. Verse 21? With what righteousness will we never be saved? Read Ph 3:9. Whose righteousness does save us? Christ's.

Would anyone like to comment about how you interpret the scripture we have studied tonight to apply to your own life?

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Galatians Discussion Guide #7.
Galatians 3:1-9.

Introduction: In Galatians, Paul uses several arguments to show that faith, not works of the law, puts one right with Jesus Christ. He overtly confronts the Galatians in this letter for their foolishness. Notice the wording. Try to feel Paul's anger, then put yourself in the Galatians' place and read the letter as if it were written to you.

Someone read Galatians 3:1-9.

1. What points are made by Paul in this paragraph?
 - a. The Galatians are senseless or foolish.
 - b. Did the Galatians receive the Holy Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing and believing?
 - c. Are the Galatians going to leave the spiritual relationship with Christ and try to finish their lives based on human effort?
 - d. Are the Galatians going to discount the proof of their spiritual experience?
 - e. Did God generously bestow the Holy Spirit on the Galatians and perform mighty acts among them because of their obedience to the law, or because they heard and believed?
 - f. Isn't the Galatians' past experience of faith similar to Abraham's demonstration on faith which was credited to him as righteousness?
 - g. They who exercise faith are the spiritual children of Abraham.
 - h. The statement of God to Abraham because of his faith--"in you shall all nations be blessed" (Ge 12:3), foresaw that believers of all nations become descendents of Abraham and citizens of the kingdom of heaven by exercising the same faith as did Abraham.
2. What is the meaning of:
 - a. "You foolish Galatians?" They had failed to use their intellectual abilities. The Galatians had high respect for the educational and intellectual level of Greece and Rome as compared with the superstitions of their native religions and customs.
 - b. Verse 2? At the beginning of acceptance of Christ as Lord, God gives the Spirit as evidence of His acceptance and to provide the power to continue in the faith. See Ep 1:13-14 ("pledge" is a down payment or first installment). In the early church, converts almost always received the Holy Spirit in a visible way (Ac 8:14-17, 10:44)--a surge of new life and power that everyone could see.
 - c. Verse 3? Where do good works fit in our lives? See Ja 2:14. This verse refers to the Christian spiritually maturing through the sanctifying process of life in the Spirit. Read Ph 1:6 and Ep 3:16.
 - d. Verse 5? The Holy Spirit does wonderful works among us because of our faith in the message (the gospel/good news).

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- e. Verse 6? Our faith/trust in Christ is imputed to us as righteousness.
 - f. Verses 7-9? By faith we enter the kingdom of God, in a spiritual sense the descendants of Abraham. See Ge 15:6, Ro 4:1-3, 9-12.
3. Discuss the following important points for application in our lives today.
- a. How do we have a close relationship with God? Jn 6:29, 14:21,23. By exercise of our faith and trust in Christ for our salvation and as Lord of our lives.
 - b. Where do works fit into the Christian's life today? As an outflowing of a heart committed to Christ. We are channels of the blessings of God to those around us by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. How is faith acquired? Read Ro 10:17.
 - d. What are the differences between a believer who has a relationship with God by faith and one who is striving to be good by obedience to what they believe to be right:
 - 1) In terms of the source of power? Faith depends on God's power, obedience relies on man's power.
 - 2) In terms of the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is the guide/comforter/translator given to the believer because of faith (Jn 14:16, 26; 15:26). The Holy Spirit does not fit in the law abider's life; there is no freedom for exercise of the Spirit. God's ways are not our ways. If we have faith in Christ as Lord and open our hearts to his leading, He will give us His unique and unusual ways to accomplish His will. We need to have the faith of children so that we can walk freely in God's way.

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Galatians Discussion Guide #8. Galatians 3:10-14.

Introduction: Paul continues his defense of justification by grace and his attack on the work of the law.

Someone read Galatians 3:10-14.

1. What are the key points of this paragraph?
 - a. All who depend on the law are under a scriptural curse (De 27:26).
 - b. We are justified only through grace--not through law.
 - c. Christ became a curse for us (De 21:23) to redeem us from the law.
 - d. He redeemed us so that the blessing of salvation through faith, given to Abraham by God, might be made possible for Gentiles.
2. What is meant by:
 - a. De 27:26--"Everyone who does not do everything written in the law is cursed?" If one bases his salvation on obedience to the law, even minor infractions are labeled as a spirit of disobedience (Ja 2:10). The law is a means of condemnation and the Lord Jesus reserves us from its condemnation through the blood of His cross. See also Jn 5:39-40. The sin of Israel was ignoring the righteousness of God, Christ, and trying to establish its own righteousness (Ro 10:14). One cannot help but be alienated from God through the law because of his violation of the law. Only blood can pay for sin because it means outpoured death, and death is what we earn as a result of our sin (Ro 6:23).
 - b. Verse 12? The two principles of law and faith are opposed. Obtaining justification (1) through the law is human righteousness, (2) through faith is divine righteousness.
 - c. Verse 13--"redeemed?" The meaning from the base Greek word is "to redeem from slavery." This redemption involved a ransom because the law leaves people prisoners unto death. See iCo 6:20, iPe 1:18. Also Ro 6:18--refers to one born in slavery. The one bought by the blood of the Lord Jesus becomes His bond slave for eternity. We are set free by the payment of the ransom (1 Pe 1:18 and Ti 2:14) to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. When we are redeemed by the blood of Jesus, it leaves our holy God free to bestow mercy on the basis of justice satisfied.
 - d. Verse 13--"Accursed is everyone who is suspended upon a tree?" See De 21:23, Ac 5:30, iPe 2:24. Jews who rejected Christ would sometimes shout, "Jesus is accursed!" See iCo 12:3. They did not see that the curse He bore was for them. He did not die for His own sins; He became a curse "for us."
 - e. Verse 14--"the blessing of Abraham?" See Ge 12:3, 18:18, 28:4.
 - f. Verse 14--"The promise of the Spirit?" Ac 1:4, 2:33-39. The promise of the Spirit was the promised Spirit. Christ's suffering removed the hindrances set up by legalism and nationalities, so that "in the last days (Ac 2:17, Joel 2:28-32) all men might receive the Spirit which had been promised from the beginning through faith.

Application.

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1. How can we enjoy the benefit of the great promise to Abraham?
2. How can we avoid being misled (bewitched) as the Galatians were?
3. What did Christ accomplish by His crucifixion for us? (v. 13-14).
4. What does each of Christ's accomplishments on the cross mean to us?
5. Compare verses 5, 9, 11, 14. What benefits come through faith?

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Galatians Discussion Guide #9.
Galatians 3: 15-29

Introduction: In this section Paul launches into a Rabbinical style of argument to show that salvation is a free gift of God and the superiority of the way of grace over the way of the law which is rooted in the Old Testament. He begins by showing the way of grace is older than the way of law. The word study of "offspring" is typical of the Rabbinical style of argument. His style is typical to the Jew, but difficult for us.

Someone read Galatians 3:15-29. Reread 15-18.

1. What points are made in verses 15-18?
 - a. No one adds to a will once it is ratified.
 - b. The promises were made to Abraham and his offspring.
 - c. "Offspring" is singular.
 - d. The law came 430 years later.
 - e. The law did not invalidate the Abrahamic covenant of God.
 - f. Inheritance came by promise.
2. What is the meaning of:
 - a. Verse 15? God made a covenant promise to Abraham (Ge 12:1-2, 17:7-8) that was confirmed to his son (Isaac) and his grandson (Jacob). The promise concerns an heir--Jesus.
 - b. Verse 16? The offspring is Christ.
 - c. Verse 17? The 430 years could be the period of bondage. God has never annulled or modified His will.
 - d. Verse 18? God made a covenant with Abraham concerning an inheritance that would be passed through him. The law which came later does not nullify the promise of God to Abraham's seed.
3. How does the above apply to our lives? We share in the covenant promise to Abraham through Jesus. In that sense we are spiritual descendents of Abraham.

Someone read Galatians 3:19-23.

4. What points are made in this passage?
 - a. The law was added as an interim measure to show that sin is a direct violation of God's direction for our lives.
 - b. The law was not given directly to the people by God as was the promise. The was given first to the angels and then to a mediator (Moses).

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c. The agreement founded on law depends on two people: one who gives, and one who accepts and keeps it. Break the law, and the whole agreement is undone. A promise depends on only one person. The way of grace depends entirely on God.

d. If a person tries to get into a right relationship with God via the law, he will find that he cannot and will be driven to see the wonderful grace that Jesus brought to us.

5. Where does the law apply today? It doesn't. The coming of Jesus completed the usefulness of the law.

Someone read verses 24-29.

6. What are the major points of this passage?

a. The period of the law was a period of confinement until faith came.

b. The law served as custodian until Christ came so that the promise would be completed and we would be justified by faith.

c. By faith we became children of God.

d. The saved person has been baptized into Christ.

e. We are all equal as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven and as children of God.

f. If Christ is our Lord, we are offsprings of Abraham by the promise of God.

7. According to this paragraph, what should the promise mean in our lives? It should mean a fantastic freedom from bondage. We become children of God through faith by His grace.

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Galatians Discussion Guide #10.
Galatians 3:26-4:20.

Introduction: In the ancient world, the stages of growing to maturity were much better defined than they are today. For the Jews, a father took his boy to the synagogue at age 13 and repeated this benediction: "Blessed be thou, O God, who has taken from me the responsibility of this boy." The boy prayed this prayer: "O my God and God of my fathers! On this solemn and sacred day, which marks my passage from boyhood to manhood, I humbly raise my eyes to thee, and declare with sincerity and truth, that henceforth I will keep thy commandments, and undertake and bear the responsibility of mine actions toward thee." In this case, there was a definite dividing line between boyhood and manhood.

Someone read Galatians 3:26-4:7.

1. What points are made?
 - a. We are children of God through faith in Christ (v. 26).
 - b. Baptism is a celebration of the act of accepting Christ as Lord and thereby acknowledging the fact that Christ is in me (v. 27).
 - c. All believers in Christ as Lord are members of one body: the body of Christ--the body of believers (v. 28).
 - d. The minor is much like the slave in his authority, even if he is lord (owner of the estate).
 - e. The minor is subject to guardians and trustees until the time determined by his father (v. 2).
 - f. When we were children, we were slaves of the elemental spirits of the universe (v. 3).
 - g. God sent Jesus in His time to redeem those under the law so they might receive the full rights as children of God.
2. What is the meaning?
 - a. Verse 26? See Jn 1:12. We become members of God's family through faith in Christ.
 - b. Verse 27? Here baptism is an outward sign of those who have accepted Christ as Lord. Confirmation accomplishes this according to those who practice infant baptism.
 - c. Verse 28? We who are in Christ are all members of one body--the body of Christ.
 - d. Verse 29? Faith in Christ is the required act of becoming children of God. That same faith in God exercised by Abraham started a spiritual family, according to God's covenant with Abraham, of which we become members because of Christ's sacrifice for us. We essentially become spiritual heirs as spiritual descendents of Abraham born into the family of God through faith in Christ as Lord of our lives.
 - e. Verses 1-3? Those under law were like children under authority and rule of the law, without freedom of their own, until they became mature spiritual persons by the act of our father, God.

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f. Verses 4-5? God sent Jesus to redeem those held prisoner under the authority of the law so that they might receive their full rights as children of God.

- 1) What are those rights?
 - a) Redemption--John 3:16 Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (Jesus).
 - b) Justification--Gal 3:16.
 - c) Forgiveness of sin--Jn 1:9.
 - d) Members of God's family (born again)--Jn 3:7, 1:12-13.
- 2) Is there any way to God other than Christ? NO. Jn 16:2, Ac 4:12.
- 3) What are the provisions for the indwelling Holy Spirit for the believer? Jn 14:16-17.
 - a) Power Mt 28:18-20.
 - b) Productive lives--signs of spiritual maturity: Gal 5:22-23.
 - c) Special abilities (gifts)--1Co 12-14.

g. Verse 7? What does it mean to be an heir of God? A member of his family. I become a citizen of the "kingdom of heaven" (Mt 8:11, 25:34, Ja 2:5).

3. Application. In what ways do the elements of this paragraph apply to each one of us?
 - a. We become members of God's family through faith in Christ as Lord of our lives.
 - b. Baptism and/or confirmation is important for acknowledging the fact of Christ in me (Mk 16:16, Ac 2:38).
 - c. We need the Holy Spirit in our lives: 1) to be mature Christians in all our lives, 2) to have the power of the Holy Spirit to function as God's children ordinarily ought to, 3) to enjoy the fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace. . . , 4) to be God's witnesses to those who are lost (bound for eternity in Hell).

Someone read Galatians 4:8-11.

4. What ~re the main points of this passage?
 - a. Before salvation, the Galatians were slaves to those who were not gods.
 - b. Are the Galatians seeking to turn back to slavery?
 - c. Their actions indicate an observance of the law's holidays, etc.
 - d. Paul's efforts were to lead them to Christ. Were these efforts wasted?

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5. What is the meaning?

a. What is slavery before salvation? People are made of three parts: body, soul, and spirit. The body is our physical being. The soul is our personality, our uniqueness as persons. The spirit is God's spirit, resident within us when we accept Christ as Lord. When Adam and Eve sinned, the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from them and their descendents. The absence of the Spirit is perceived as an emptiness or void which we try to fill with things, accomplishment, and/or commitment to profession or other persons. A normal testimony of one after receiving Christ as Lord is, "I have never known such peace." This is the result of the person being made complete; the void is filled in the only way it can be. Love and joy follow as one matures spiritually.

b. What happens if I just remain spiritually lukewarm after accepting Christ? Great danger--read Rev 3:14-22.

Someone read Galatians 4:12-20.

6. What are the main points of this passage?

a. Verse 12. Paul begs the Galatians to become as he (in Christ), for he became as them (Gentiles). They have done him no wrong.

b. Verse 13. Paul had an affliction unnamed that was chronic, very painful, repulsive, and humiliating. The illness was the cause of his remaining in Galatia to minister.

c. Verse 14. Even though sickness was thought to be caused by sin, the Galatians had welcomed Paul as if he were Jesus himself.

d. Verse 15. At that time, they had such joy that they would have torn out their eyes and given them to Paul. (Perhaps his affliction was an eye problem.)

e. Verse 16. Has Paul now become their enemy by countering their new beliefs with the truth?

f. Verse 17. The Judiazers were zealous people (much like the zealous Moslems have become today).

g. Verse 18. Being zealous can be good if the purpose is good. The Galatians should be zealous all the time--not just when Paul is present.

h. Verse 19. Paul hurt as in childbirth for them because of their falling away. He was apparently very aware of the consequences of turning away from Christ.

i. Verse 20. Paul confirms that he has spoken harshly and is perplexed about them.

7. What is the meaning?

a. Paul is confident that he has lived a Christian witness such the he begs the Galatians to become as himself. In a sense, he was their spiritual father and he challenged them from that role.

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- b. Verses 14-15. He reminds them that they displayed positive Christian acts in accepting him with his affliction and demonstrating their great joy in his being with them.
 - c. Verse 16. He asks if he has now become their enemy by correcting them.
 - d. Verses 17-18. He diagnoses the zealotry of the Judaizers as directed toward wrong goals. Zealotry is good: all Christians should be zealous.
 - e. Verses 19-20. Paul explains that he bears great pain at their wrongs toward Christ. He recognized that he had spiritual parental responsibility to Christ for those converts that he has led to Christ. They have turned away, and he is perplexed at their sin against Christ as much as if they were his own children. He knows the danger of turning away from Christ: Hebrews 10:26-31.
8. Application.
- a. Do we live a Christian life such that our spouses, children, friends, and acquaintances should want to be in Christ like us?
 - b. Do those closest to us experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives because of our love, joy, peace, etc.? Do they want Christ because of our witness?
 - c. Do we (as Paul did) see our responsibility in correcting our brothers and sisters in Christ when we observe their sin? (Ma 18:15-17, Lk 17:1-4, iTim 5:20.)
 - d. Are we zealous enough in our witness such that if it were a crime to be a Christian, we would be convicted by the testimonies of those that know us at home? At work?
 - e. Do we see others through Christ's eyes such that we see and hurt for their lost souls?
 - f. Are we concerned when we see Christians turning away from Christ such that we will risk bringing them back?

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Galatians Discussion Guide #11.

Galatians 4:21-31. Someone read Galatians 4:21-31.

Introduction: This lesson is more complex than some we have studied. First, it presupposes a knowledge of the Old Testament. Second, the argument of Paul is somewhat like the Jewish rabbinical style: very technical. Third, it is allegorical, but definitely not arbitrary.

According to verse 21, the lesson is addressed to those who desire to be under the law. Technically, Paul meets the Judiazers on their own grounds and refutes them. There are three stages in the argument: historical, allegorical, and personal. Verses 22 and 23 are historical. Verses 24 through 27 are allegorical, in which Paul argues that the two mothers and their sons represent two religions, a religion of bondage--Judaism, and a religion of freedom--Christianity. The personal verses (28-31) are applied to Christians.

1. Analysis of verse 21, the address.
 - a. Who is this section directed toward? Those who desire to be under the law.
 - b. What is the question? Do you not hear the law?
 - c. Note how similarly the stage is set as if we were in a court of law. This could well be the summary statement of a prosecuting attorney. Paul sees the issue to be clearly one of life or death--spiritually.
 - d. If the defendants (Judiazers) are wrong, what is the duration of the sentence? Forever, eternally.
 - e. Does this apply to Christians today who believe their relationship to God depends on adherence to regulations, traditions, and ceremonies? Yes. Many legalistic Christians today would like to be under law; they would like to live out their lives obeying rules. Many professing Christians try to turn the Gospel into law. Many believe their relationship to God depends on a strict adherence to regulations, traditions, and ceremonies. They are in bondage to them.
 - f. How are we really justified? Ro 3:28.
2. Analysis of the historical background (vv. 22-23).
 - a. Read Mt 3:9 and Jn 8:31-44.
 - b. Are the descendants of Abraham that God promised physical or spiritual descendants? Spiritual. On what basis? They believe as Abraham believed and obey as Abraham obeyed: Believers (Gal 3:14). Read Jn 14:21 and 23.
 - c. How does it follow that if I am Christ's, I am Abraham's offspring? Gal 3:29, Ro 4:16. We cannot claim to belong to Abraham unless we belong to Christ.
 - d. What was the difference between the birth of Ishmael and Isaac?
 - 1) Ishmael: Born of a slave because Abraham and Sarah thought they were getting too old. Sarah had long passed menopause at the age of 90 plus. Ishmael was conceived out of a lack of faith in God. Ishmael was born into slavery as a natural course of nature.

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2) Isaac: Born free and supernaturally, through an exceptional promise of God. Born of a father 100 years old and a barren mother who was over 90 years old. (See He 11:14.)

e. How are we all like Isaac or Ishmael? Everyone is a slave by nature, until in the fulfillment of God's promise he or she is set free. So everyone is either an Ishmael, or an Isaac; either still what he is by nature--a slave, or by the grace of God, set free.

3. Analysis of the allegorical argument (vv. 24-27).

a. What are the two covenants of God that the Old Testament and New Testament represent? Old: the law given through Moses. New: Salvation by grace of promises fulfilled through Abraham and foretold by Jeremiah, through the blood of Christ that ratified the covenant. The two mothers represent two Jerusalems (capital cities), that represent our eternal citizenship. Hagar, mother of Ishmael, represents the earthly Jerusalem (the Jews) of the old covenant. Mount Sinai is the mountain in Arabia where Moses received the law. Sarah, the mother of Isaac, represents the new Jerusalem of the kingdom of heaven (the body of Christ--the Church). Hagar's descendents are born into the bondage of the law. Ishmael was born a slave, the son of a slave woman.

b. How can we compare Jesus and Isaac? Both experienced miraculous births. Both represent freedom from slavery. Both were the results of promises from God. Both are of the lineage of Abraham. In a sense, Isaac was the beginning of the promise of God to Abraham, and Jesus was the fulfillment of that promise.

c. Verse 25. How does the present Jerusalem represent slavery? The present Jerusalem is still the principal city of the Jews under the law.

d. Verse 26. How does Sarah represent our mother? Sara represents the new Jerusalem. As citizens of the kingdom, we are "born again" into the new covenant and the promise and are heirs of God, bound to God by the new covenant. A citizenship of freedom, not bondage.

e. Verse 27. Read Isa 54:1. The allegory here switches from Hagar and Sarah to the Jews. Isaiah is addressing the exiles in Babylonian captivity. He compares their state in exile, under divine judgement, to that of a barren woman finally deserted by her husband with their future state after restoration to that of a fruitful mother with more children than ever.

f. Who, then, are the spiritual children who fulfill the promise cited in verse 26? Paul says it is the growth of the Christian church and that Christian people are the seed of Abraham.

4. How does this apply to us as Christians? We are heirs of the promise of God to Abraham and Sarah because of the consequences of two miraculous births. We are purchased out of the slavery of sin by the blood of Christ. Christ paid the ultimate price to free us from the bondage of our sin.

Someone read verses 28-31.

5. What are the points of this paragraph?

a. We are like Isaac: children of promise.

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- b. The children of the flesh (world) will always be in spiritual warfare with the spiritual children of God, as Ishmael persecuted Isaac (Ge 21:9).
 - c. The promise is to the descendents of Isaac (Ge 17:18-21).
 - d. We are children of the free woman.
6. The meaning of this paragraph.
- a. Verse 28? We are the spiritual descendents of Abraham and Sarah.
 - b. Verse 29? Who are the Christians persecuted by? The world. Satan. Religious people.
 - c. Why are we persecuted by religious people? Jesus was. Knowledge of scripture without response is conviction. Examples: The most "religious" people of the day persecuted Jesus. Note how the medieval papacy persecuted all Protestant minorities with ruthless, unremitting ferocity. The fact that you are in the church every time the door opens doesn't mean that you are a spiritual Christian. Being a priest, or pastor, or deacon, or elder, or leader of any kind in the church doesn't necessarily mean that you are a spiritual Christian. Only God knows our hearts.
 - d. Verse 30? We are to reject the way of attempting to find justification under the law. Someone who tries to be justified by law is not inheriting a place in heaven with the believer in Jesus.
 - e. Verse 31? We are the spiritual children of Sarah, not Hagar. We experience the freedom of life in Christ, not slavery to the law.

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Galatians Discussion Guide #12.
Galatians 5:1-15.

Introduction: The remainder of the letter of Galatians is a plea for responsible use of freedom. Salvation is a grace-gift, but receiving it is a process of working it out in life.

Someone read Galatians 5:1-9; someone else read 10-15.

1. Discussion of verse 1.

a. What did Christ free us from? Bondage of law and sin. Why is the law a yoke of bondage? There is no freedom or mercy in the law, only justice.

b. Why did the people desire to go back to the law? Read Phi 2:12-13. What is the burden of the yoke of Christ? (Mt 22:36-40.) Creative self-investment in others for His sake. What is the way to use Christian freedom? Gal 5:22-23. A continuous production of the fruit of His Spirit. What is one measure of success of the Christian's life? I Co 13:1-7 Love (agape). Willing love of God and my neighbors.

c. In what ways might we be legalistic and turn to the law and slavery? By believing that doing good and being obedient to moral rules defines our relationship with God. What does determine our relationship with God? Whether we have Christ as Lord (Rev 3:20). By making a willful decision to let the Holy Spirit rule our lives because Christ is Lord (RO 12:1), by directing our minds toward spiritual renewal (RO 12:2), by storing the word of God in my heart (Ps 119:11), by confessing and turning away from our sins (Ps 66:18), by walking in the Spirit (RO 6:4, 2 Co 5:7, 1Jn 1:9, Col 2:6).

2. Discussion of verse 2.

a. Restate verse 2. "If you conform to one point of law, you are responsible to abide by all of it, and Christ is not your savior.

b. What does the act of circumcision in this context mean? Obedience to the law instead of reliance on Christ's salvation.

c. What must I do to avoid falling in this trap? Rely on Christ as Lord.

3. Discussion of verse 3.

a. Restate verse 3. "If you conform to one point of law, you are responsible to abide by all of it.

b. Why am I a debtor to the whole law by obedience to a part of it? I deny Christ's power and grace in my life.

c. What is the price of obedience to the law? I am responsible to the whole law. It is a point of turning from Christ to law. If we reject Christ in favor of the law, we suffer the consequences of He 10:26. To deny Christ by turning to the law has serious consequences.

4. Discussion of verse 4.

a. Again, the result of He 10:26.

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5. Discussion of verse 5.
 - a. What is righteousness in this context? Being right in the eyes of God.
 - b. What is our hope? By faith we are made right with God--salvation.
 - c. How do we get there from here? Ro 12:1. By yielding to the direction of the Holy Spirit. Mk 1:8--By yielding to Christ as Lord so that we will literally be baptized by the Holy Spirit. We become so yielded to Christ as Lord that He has control (Rev 3:20b).

6. Discussion of verse 6.
 - a. Reword the last phrase of verse 6. "Willed love (agape) builds faith.
 - b. If we want a greater faith, what should we do? Will to love God and our neighbor.
 - c. What will I gain by willing to love? Greater faith and more (Jn 14:15, 21, 23).

7. Discussion of verses 7-9.
 - a. What is the problem? They listened to someone other than Christ and bought a wrong way.
 - b. How do we know what is truth? By testing it against scripture: the gospel.
 - c. How does a little leaven (lie) ruin the bread? It spreads through the whole loaf. Note how in Luke 1-13 Jesus uses scripture to test and defeat Satan.

8. Discussion of verse 10.
 - a. In verse 10a what is Paul using? His position as the Galatians spiritual father in the sense that he had led them to Christ.
 - b. What is the threat to those who had taught wrongly? Judgement--and justice.
 - c. What is our responsibility in response to this verse? Right teaching. Test the teaching of others against scripture.

9. Discussion of verse 11.
 - a. Why did the Jews persecute Paul? Because of his teachings. The cross was an offense to the Jews. Jesus had victory over the cross (death).
 - b. If we live for Christ today, what can we expect from people living outside of the spiritual realm? Persecution. Why? Darkness cannot stand light. The Holy Spirit that indwells the Christian will be rejected by the world.

10. Discussion of verse 12. What does this verse mean? Certain cults would emasculate themselves as a sacrifice to their deity. Paul is wishing such a fate upon them because he knows that if someone turns back to the law, the consequences are very grave.

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11. Discussion of verse 13.

- a. Rephrase verse 13. "Christian liberty is correctly used for love (agape), not indulgence of the flesh.
- b. What is an occasion of wrong use of Christian liberty? To sin. Christian love is powerful and easily used in a wrong way--seduction, etc.
- c. What is a correct use of love (agape)? Service to one another.

12. Discussion of verse 14.

- a. What is this statement form? A command.
- b. If Jesus commanded it, how is it optional? It is not optional. 1Co 13:1-7. Without love, there is nothing.
- c. How do I love my spouse, neighbors, etc.? By will: transforming each negative thought into a love thought or feeling (acceptance) of the other person as they are.

14. Discussion of verse 15.

- a. Rephrase. "If you respond wrongly to another person, you may buy into his or her sinful nature.
- b. What is our natural temptation when intimidated by the crowd? To go along. The danger of buying into wrong teachings? Being forever lost.

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Galatians Discussion Guide #13.
Galatians 5:16-26.

Introduction: Paul has made it clear that one cannot be under both grace and law at the same time. If one is under law, Christ is of no value. If one is under grace, the law is not applicable.

Someone read Galatians 5:16-26.

1. Analysis.

a. Put verses 16 and 18 together and explain them. If you are guided by the Spirit (a process within the mind) you will behave (a process of the body and mind) in a spiritual way.

b. What makes a person "spiritual?" The person functions from an inner perspective. If the Holy Spirit abides in us, He is in our mind. In some sense our minds become linked with the mind of God through the Holy Spirit. A spiritual person's mind is linked with God. That person thinks thoughts originated by God, and his or her thoughts and actions flow from that perspective.

c. What does verse 16 imply about the volitional aspect of spiritual behavior? Being spiritual is an act of the will (see Rev 3:14). Being spiritual is the opposite of being religious (form of religion).

d. Explain verse 17 in terms of the warfare that rages within us. The spirit and the flesh are at opposite poles--like darkness and light. If we permit our natural (flesh) longings to prevail, our acts will be sinful (against God), and we will do what we do, not what we want to do.

e. What are the characteristics of the items listed in verses 19-20? Which are mental? Which are physical? Which are both? All are acts of will and are sins against God.

f. Reference verse 22, what are the characteristics of these items? How is it possible to have a life characterized by these traits? By little acts of will, moment by moment, letting Christ be Lord (Ro 12:1-2).

g. Reference verse 24. How do we crucify the flesh? By Ro 12:2, dealing with each thought in the seed stage. The base decision to be God's person, to hunger and thirst after righteousness (RO 12:1).

h. Analyze verse 25. Isn't this a backward order? No. This verse is directed toward those who wear faces on the outside they look like Christians, but inside they are not directed by the Spirit).

i. Reference verse 26, what is the focus of a person characterized by this verse? On self and others.

1) Where should the focus be? On God. On pleasing God. On being what God wants us to be.

2) What is the problem of a person characterized by this verse? There is no love (agape). See I Co 13:1-4. The criterion measure of the true spiritual Christian is love (agape).

2. How can we apply this portion of scripture to our lives?

a. Do you consider yourself a spiritual person?

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- b. What would you have to do to truly become a spiritual person?
 - 1) As applies to behavior? Apply Ro 12:1-2.
 - 2) As applies to goals of life? Verse 26.
- c. What is the consequence if we do not become a spiritual person? Verse 21.
- d. Why is it important for us to become spiritual beings?
 - 1) For our own relationship with God.
 - 2) Because of our witness to loved ones. We may be the only possible true Christian they know.
 - 3) Our witness to others: to win them to Christ so they may know the promise of eternal life and the fruits of the Spirit in their lives.

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Galatians Discussion Guide #14.
Galatians 6:1-18.

Introduction: In our least study, Paul speaks of the spiritual warfare that ensues between the spirit and the flesh in the life of the individual. An important point is that none of us is sinless (Ro 3:23). If we are under God's grace in Christ the law does not apply. If we buy one portion of the law, we are subject to the slavery of the whole law and Christ is of no use to us. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the father but by me."

Someone read Galatians 6:1-10. Someone else read 11-18.

1. What points are made in verses 1-5?
 - a. If anyone sins, Christians should confront him or her.
 - b. Be careful and don't be tempted by the other's sins.
 - c. Be involved, carry others' burdens.
 - d. Don't deceive yourself by thinking you are something you are not.
 - e. Don't boast. Each has his or her own load to carry.
 - f. Enjoy your own personal satisfaction.
 - g. What is the meaning?
2. What is the meaning?
 - a. Why should we confront another person concerning their sins? We are all members of one body and responsible for the parts of that body. See Ro 12:3-5, iCo 10:15-17, iCo 12:12-13, 20, Eph 2:11-16, Eph 4:1-6.
 - b. How far should carrying others' burdens go? Mt 25:31-46.
 - c. Compare Gal 6:3-4. How do these two verses fit together? Verse 3 relates to false pride (self-actualized). Verse 4 relates to being actualized by Christ. I can enjoy and have personal satisfaction in my personal growth.
3. What points are made in verses 6-10?
 - a. We should support those who teach us.
 - b. We harvest what we sow.
 - c. If we sow for our own flesh, we harvest spiritual ruin for ourselves.
 - d. If we sow for spiritual growth, we harvest for eternity.

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- e. Continue to do right without tiring in order to reap at the appointed time.
 - f. Practice what is beneficial for everyone, but particularly toward members of the faith.
4. What is the meaning of verses 6-10?
- a. How should we use our physical possessions and wealth? Essentially, how we act with our possessions and money is a measure of how we fit into the body of Christ. We were created to glorify Christ. If we are living to glorify Christ our physical possessions are also used to build His body. The law required one tenth: Lev 27:30-33, Nu 18:21-24, De 12:6-7,17,19; 14:22-29; 26:12-15. Jesus' comments: Mt 23:23-24, Lk 11:42, Lk 18:9-14.
 - b. What choices do we have in life? To live spiritual lives or worldly lives.
 - c. From God's viewpoint, why were we created? To glorify God by loving God and our neighbors. The question is, shall we or shall we not live spiritual lives (vv. 7-10)?
 - d. Should we act differently toward Christians? Verse 10, our responsibility toward them is greater.
 - e. Read verse 11. What does this indicate about Paul? His eyes are getting weak and he is writing larger letters.
5. What points are made in verses 12-17.
- a. Those who are forcing the law on others are doing it to prove that Christ was wrong and to escape the results of the cross; i.e., they are trying to justify their treatment of Christ.
 - b. They want to boast about their victories for the law, even though they do not observe the law themselves.
 - c. Paul has crucified his relationship to flesh and the world through Jesus Christ.
 - d. What counts is not the law, but a new creation of a person through Christ's person.
 - e. Paul bears in his body the marks of Jesus.
6. Meaning of verses 12-17.
- a. Why do people try to get others to obey laws that they themselves don't obey?
 - 1) They justify their own ways and actions.
 - 2) They gain the approval and plaudits of others who belong to that group.
 - 3) We believe that strength in numbers also applies to the rightness of what we do.
 - 4) There is great pressure to get others to conform to group norms, so that everyone in the group will not have to deal with abnormal group behavior.

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- b. How do we crucify the flesh and the world? Ro 12:1-2. Our goals are centered on Jesus and the body of Christ.
 - c. What is this new creation that Paul speaks of? Eph 4:24, Col 3:10, Jn 3:3,5,7, iPe 1:23.
7. Application to our lives.
- a. Should I be concerned about correcting other Christians because of their sins?
 - b. Reference verse 5, what load do we each have to carry? We are each members of the body of Christ. We each have a vital purpose and place in the body.
 - c. How should our group represent the body of Christ? We are a microcosm of the body of Christ. We should be one body. We should function as a healthy body, but if one hurts, all should hurt, etc.
 - d. How should our lives be focused? Verses 6-10. Toward spiritual growth. Everything we do has spiritual consequences.
 - e. How do we bear in our bodies the marks of Christ? We are His. We have been ransomed from spiritual death by His blood. We will be persecuted because we have his Holy Spirit. Light cannot come into darkness and darkness remain the same.