

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

May 28: Galatians 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Galatians 1 - 3 ~ May 28, 2017

This is a little commentary I found in the history of Galatians before we get started with the chapters.

Galatia was a Roman province in Central Asia Minor. Paul traveled here on each of the three journeys he made to spread the message about Jesus. The Galatians received both Paul and his gospel announcement warmly. Later some people Paul calls agitators came and challenged Paul's leadership as well as the foundation of his teaching. So Paul wrote to answer the threat to his status as an apostle and to reaffirm the core message that faith in the messiah is the basis of membership in God's new community.

Ch 1

After Paul's greeting, he doesn't waste any time!! "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." (6-7)

Paul goes on to tell them that if someone is preaching another form of gospel, let them be accursed by God.

Paul continues to validate his gospel he preached as not being from man, but from a revelation from Christ Jesus.

Paul then reminds them of his previous life as a devout Jew who persecuted the Christians until he was informed of his need for change from God.

Paul really makes note here how he did not really have any time with the other apostles...meaning his message was truly coming from God.

Paul reminds us here as we finish up this chapter how important it was for God to use Paul.

Paul was such a fearless leader he tried spreading the message as best as I could. He persecuted the Christians as he felt they weren't following God's doctrine but following false teachings.

Ch 2

Paul meets with the other apostles in Jerusalem finally. He brought with himself Titus and Barnabas. Paul presents the gospel to them to show that his message was truly from God and that he was not preaching this message falsely.

"James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised." (2:9)

Paul makes note of calling out Peter's hesitation to the new law of accepting the Gentiles when he was around Jewish friends. This "pulling back" from the Gentiles hindered the Jews in their acceptance of the new law. Even Barnabas was led astray.

Verse 12 here links to Acts 15:24-26, "We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul is a true warrior here by standing up and proving his commitment to the new gospel! Paul continues in verses 15 & 16 that just because Jews were accepted under the old law and not the (sinful) gentiles, the new law is based on faith in Jesus Christ, and not only based on obedience to a part.

Paul continues to go on and state that Christ came to change the law by the forgiveness of all. The faith in Christ is paramount to the new law and the forgiveness of our sins.

Ch 3

Paul starts in on this chapter showing his displeasure with how the Galatians had so quickly forgotten Christ's message and His death; to which many of them witnessed personally. Paul goes on to say we receive the Spirit through our faith in Christ and not by the works of the law. The Galatians had allowed their eyes to be blinded by false teachings. Paul states that faith is critical in the walk with Christ. "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?" (3:5)

"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." So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith." (8-9)

It gets difficult at times for us to keep our minds focused on God and having faith he will help us through our trials. The Galatians were having this issue as well with their faith. Often I have heard it said, if only we could have been there to see Christ 'a death, it would be proof enough to believe whole-heartedly in our religion. Look at the Galatians, they had it and still struggled with their faith.

Vs 10 - 15

Paul makes the point that the law is not what saves a person but that the law is the curse. Christ was the redeemer from the law for man. "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." (3:14)

God promised Abraham vast amounts of descendants. Gentiles were now able to be saved as well though their faith in Christ. Not just the Jews who obeyed the old law. Christ brought salvation to all people, therefore the law was no longer needed. The law was needed until Christ came to this earth and His death for all took place.

The law was in place to protect them until Christ brought faith into play. Now that faith is needed for salvation, the new law is no longer needed. Now all who share in faith have the promise.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Yes, thank you, Ryan Ingle! What a blessing for congregations to receive a letter from an apostle. This weekend Murray Road asked John Lee to write a letter to the church and present it during the Memorial Day meeting. He had excellent insight on strengths and weaknesses we can work on. One from tonight's reading was hold fast to doctrine! Keep the zeal, brothers and sisters! Reading the Word daily will keep the church growing.

Replies:

Ryan Ingle:

Sounds like an excellent lesson. I have often thought that would be beneficial for us now to hear a "letter" written to various churches in today's time. I pray that everyone who was able to attend came away spiritually edified!!

Ginger Hermon:

A lot of very edifying lessons! They are online here: <http://murrayroadcoc.org/Flyer2017.pdf>. Each speaker is hyperlinked to an audio of their lesson. Saturday is available but Sunday is a WIP.

Joanne Caffie:

Your idea sounds exciting Ryan but I'm afraid that many churches are not able to receive such a letter these days. Remember that not all of Paul's letters were edifying. Some of them had to deal with correction. I think it would be more awesome if churches accepted more redirection from an apostle. Great job!

June 4: Galatians 4-6 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, June 4th ~ Galatians 4 - 6

Last week we read about the law and how it was limited on those who were able to take part in it. They were held captive under the law, imprisoned...(3:23-24) Then when Jesus came, the new law was implemented with faith being a key part (3:26-29). Christ death freed all men to be eligible for salvation. Verse 29 ended in saying, "And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."

Ch. 4

The first three verses start out here describing a young boy who is no different than a slave, even though he will be the heir of the estate, until he has matured and received full rights from his father, so also was it from God to the people before Christ.

Paul continues to define the benefit of Christ being born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, so that we no longer are slaves under the law, but God's child; and since you are His child, God has made you also an heir (vs 7).

Now Paul has established his thesis that all of God's people, the Jews as well as the Gentiles, came to the inheritance of salvation in Christ out of a similar situation of slavery. Paul views the Gentile Christians' attempt to observe the Mosaic law as a return to slavery under "weak and miserable principles." By their subjection to Mosaic law they are returning to their preconversion slavelike condition. The slavery of Gentiles under "weak and miserable principles" (v. 9) before their conversion and the slavery of Jews under the Mosaic law (the basic principles of the world [v. 3]) before Christ were certainly not similar in all respects. The pagan Gentiles were not enslaved to the Mosaic law; Jews were not enslaved to pagan idolatry. But these two situations of slavery were the same in one respect: Jews and Gentiles were enslaved to something less than the immediate knowledge of God.

Vs 12 - 20

Paul continues to share his concern for the Galatians as well as showing how perplexed he was regarding them. They were so hospitable towards him when he had physical ailments they some of the, would even given of their physical self to help Paul.

The Galatians are struggling to follow after Paul's message as there were false teachers spreading false teaching to them and Paul is calling them out on it.

Vs 21 - 31

Paul reminds them of Hagar and Sarah. Hagar was Abraham's servant and Sarah obviously was his wife. Hagar gave birth the natural way (to Ishmael), and Sarah (to Isaac) through divine intervention.

“Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written: “Be glad, barren woman, you who never bore a child; shout for joy and cry aloud, you who were never in labor; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband.”” (25-27)

“But what does Scripture say? “Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman’s son.” Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.” (30-31)

Paul wants them to remember his message and understand this new law was much better for all people. Don't fall victim to the old ways!

Galatians 5

Paul tells them if you chose to follow the old law of with being circumcised, your efforts are pointless and you have no part in Christ. Why would you Galatians want to be under slavery when you have the freedom Christ has brought to you?

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.” (5:6)

Paul is wanting to know who is causing them to stray from the truth. “A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough.” (5:9)

Paul states he has no doubt the person who is causing the confusion will pay the penalty for it. He goes on to state if he was preaching the old law still, why would he be being persecuted.

“For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Paul goes on to say that if they walk with the Spirit, they will go a long ways in following Christ. Do away with the selfish desires of the flesh as they will only destroy you.

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.” (5:14, 16-18)

Galatians 6

Paul's final instructions to the Galatians...are great for us to read and remind ourselves of how we should be towards others!! Don't get caught up in pointing out other people's faults, but instead, help them! Be careful not to fall victim to the sin as well.

Continue in Christ love with helping others in their burdens. Don't become arrogant in yourself.

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” (6:9-10)

We should be willing to share our good news with those who have helped us. This encourages everyone, especially those (your instructors) who are trying to do good in training others.

“From now on, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.” (6:17)

Paul here is I think demonstrating his exhaustion with regards to the petty little issues he has had to deal with. He is also tired I believe of people doubting his commitment to Christ and the false teachings that were happening at this time.

What a true example Paul was for everyone! He was truly fearless and a dedicated individual towards God!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, brother Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan Ingle! We're flying through the epistles now! Richard and Jeannie Owens edified brethren who attended Prince Road congregation Sunday morning on "time had fully come."

Very timely with our reading on Sunday! 😊 I appreciate Paul's affection to Galatian converts.

"My dear children!" I often think upon Gal. 6:9-10.