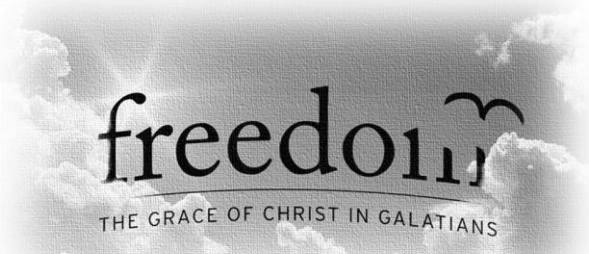


# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, November 8, 2017 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



freedom  
THE GRACE OF CHRIST IN GALATIANS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF GALATIANS  
Confronting the Uncomfortable Subject of Confrontation – Part 2  
*Galatians 2:11-16, 17-21*

*CASE STUDY: Ever heard of “church discipline.” I have and my family was hurt by it... as a matter of fact I have never been able to get my grandfather back in church because of something that happened to him before I was born. He told me about it himself, and when I questioned my grandmother about it she affirmed that his story was accurate. It seems my grandmother and grandfather were active in the local Baptist church. They were very involved, and they both loved the church and served wherever they were asked. I have no doubt that my grandparents are Christians. We’ve talked about it, and I know that they know the Lord. They were very faithfully serving Him in the church. My grandfather was even being considered to become a deacon. My grandparents happened to be friends with another couple in the church. The wife was a regular church attender, but the husband didn’t go, and according to my grandparents the couple sometimes fought about it. My grandparents said that while they were their friends, they always tried to stay out of their friends business. My granddad and that other man use to go fishing together a lot. One day while fishing together the other man offered my grandfather a beer, he wasn’t really a drinker. Said he had been in his earlier years, but he didn’t really like the stuff, but that day he drank a beer with the friend, just because. Months later the man and his wife got in an argument, again about his going to church, and when my grandfather name came up as an example of someone he liked that went to church... the husband blurted out he was just as good as my grandfather, and that he had even seen him drink a beer now and then. That’s all it took. That word got out at church that my grandfather had been seen drinking and the story even grew and some were even saying that my grandfather was an old drunk and an alcoholic. The pastor and a deacon showed up and my grandparent’s house and told my grandfather that he would not only no longer be considered for deacon, but they were considering church action, because of his drinking. My grandfather told them that he had one beer with the friend while fishing and that the truth is that was the only beer he had in years. But that didn’t matter to them. The church never had to take action on my grandfather. He just told them it wouldn’t be*

*necessary because he would not be back. And he hasn't been, and I've tried and, my parents have tried, and my grandmother has tried, but he was so hurt by that whole thing, that I don't honestly know if we will ever get him back in church.*

*“<sup>11</sup> Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; <sup>12</sup> for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. <sup>13</sup> And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. <sup>14</sup> But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? <sup>15</sup> We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, <sup>16</sup> knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”*  
– Galatians 2:11-16

Confrontation smacks of harshness, standing nose-to-nose, the creating of an offense. That need not occur. Confronting someone can be one of the most beneficial and helpful experiences in all of life, but it must be carried out correctly and carefully. Confrontation is direct and it is often painful. But when it is handled under the control of the Spirit of God, it is ultimately a tool used of the Lord to shape us more into His image. The book of Galatians contains a classic illustration of this, as Paul writes about a time when he rebuked Peter in public. He did so to his face, “... because he was to be blamed.” (v.11) Strong, tough words... however, true and needed.

### **WHY ARE THESE VERSES IN GALATIANS?**

Why are these verses concerning Paul confrontation of Peter included in Paul's letter. Well as previously stated, Paul's credibility and apostleship was being called into question by the false teachers he is confronting with this letter... the Judaizers. Paul, again, in the defensive mode of the messenger of the gospel, is letting us see that he is as authoritative as the other apostles. So here are a couple of reasons this may have been included in Paul's letter:

### **2 Reasons Paul Included these Verses in Galatians: (these verses that chronicle his confrontation of Peter)**

1. **HISTORICALLY** they prove that Paul's **AUTHORITY** is equal to that of the other apostles - Even Peter.
2. **PRACTICALLY** they illustrate that we are all **ACCOUNTABLE** to one another when we do something wrong and that impacts the body of Christ.

### **WHAT OCCURRED, AND WHEN?**

A critical analysis of Paul's encounter with Peter yields significant insights for relationship-building. Apart from such counsel we tend to insulate, even isolate, ourselves from those who openly compromise their Christian walk.

1. **The CONTEXT** (Acts 14:24-28) – *“<sup>24</sup> And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. <sup>25</sup> Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. <sup>26</sup> From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God*

for the work which they had completed. <sup>27</sup> Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. <sup>28</sup> So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.” –Acts 14:24-28

Though no one can say for certain, it’s possible that Paul’s confrontation happened sometimes between the events of Peter’s vision (Acts 10) and the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). If this is so, Paul and Silas had just returned from the first missionary journey (approximately the fall of 49AD) to report their activities to their sending church in Antioch. Luke, in Acts 14:28, indicates that they spent a “long time with the disciples” there. If this chronology is accurate, the Galatians 2:11-16 fits with Acts 14:28.

2. **The CIRCUMSTANCES (Galatians 2:12-13)** – *“For before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. <sup>13</sup> And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.”* – Galatians 2:12-13 Two important, recognized leaders were in the same place. For an unspecified time Peter had been in Antioch. He had come to believe that his Jewish scruples would not enhance the message of grace in God’s new family... the church. According to Acts 10, God had earlier proved to Peter that what he had always considered unclean... religiously off-limits... was no longer so. If God said something was clean... then indeed it was clean. Old taboos were no longer acceptable, particularly if they affected the message of salvation through faith alone. Peter’s practice had become that of eating freely with Gentiles without feeling uneasy. In Christ all were equal... Jew and Gentile. However, Paul tells us that Peter reverted to old customs, (v.12) *“For before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision.”* Why the change? What had happened? Men associated with James (in name only) had come in from Jerusalem, steeped in Judaistic traditions. Apparently, they applied much pressure on Peter to cease eating with those who were “unclean” (a term identifying those non-Jews who failed to comply with Jewish ceremonial cleanliness and circumcision) Peter gave in to them “... fearing those who were of the circumcision.” This was clearly a case of peer-pressure. Paul indicates that all the other Jews present joined Peter in what he termed “hypocrisy” (literally, play-acting or pretending)... even Barnabas. Quite surprising, when you recall his character. The pressure apparently was too much and they compromised with the false teachers. Peter was clearly in the wrong, and others were hindered by his compromise.
3. **The CONFRONTATION (Galatians 2:14)** – *“<sup>14</sup> But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?”* – Galatians 2:14 Believing Peter was in error, Paul called his hypocrisy to his attention. Peter had not been straightforward regarding the truth of the Gospel. His actions confused his verbal message. Paul spoke to Peter “...before them all.” In other words, publically and in front of everyone. It was that important. With Paul, everything was right up front... no game playing. This was that important to Paul and it was that important to the purity and integrity of the gospel. Peter’s actions were actually giving assent to the false teaching of the Judaizers who taught that a person was saved by works... particularly circumcision and obedience to Jewish laws and practices. Although, I have no doubt Peter didn’t believe that, his actions said otherwise.

4. **The REASON (Galatians 2:14-16)** – <sup>14</sup> *But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? <sup>15</sup> We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, <sup>16</sup> knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”* –Galatians 2:14-16 Paul didn’t resort to busy language at this point. His words were carefully chosen and pointedly addressed, *“If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? ...<sup>16</sup> knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ...”* In other words, “You are confusing both Jews and Greeks.”
5. **The OUTCOME (Acts 15:7-11)** - <sup>7</sup> *And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: “Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. <sup>8</sup> So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, <sup>9</sup> and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. <sup>10</sup> Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? <sup>11</sup> But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.”* – Acts 15:7-11 When the Jerusalem Council later debated the matter of faith verses works, Peter’s message indicated that he had squared his thinking with the original vision God had given him in Joppa. His message should be given careful attention. Note how he canged, *“Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. <sup>8</sup> So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, <sup>9</sup> and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. <sup>10</sup> Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? <sup>11</sup> But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.”*

## WHEN SHOULD A CHRISTIAN CONFRONT ANOTHER CHRISTIAN?

As we said earlier confrontation may smack of harshness, standing nose-to-nose, the creating of an offense. It just sounds bad and negative and maybe even destructive to the heart and soul of another. Confronting someone can be very detrimental to and harmful to them spiritually if not handled correctly... and I’ll go so far to say that some should never be given this task given their lack of tact and grace. However, as we have previously the right kind of confrontation can be one of the most beneficial and helpful experiences in all of life, but it must be carried out correctly and carefully. Confrontation is direct and it is often painful. But when it is handled under the control of the Spirit of God, it is ultimately a tool used of the Lord to shape us more into His image. Now with that said, the question lingering from this passage is when is this ever right? Was Paul right to do this? And if so what does that say to us in the church today concerning when is it right to confront another Christian?

### 5 Initial Wise Thoughts on Confronting Another Believer:

1. **Remember this can be a very delicate subject and should be handled with delicacy -** That is you are dealing with another redeemed child of God, be courteous, kind and edifying.

If you can't approach the situation this way then don't approach it at all. This doesn't mean that you can't be firm and direct, but be respectful and merciful (gracious). Your goal is restore and redeem not to destroy. If you have any other inclination than these don't do it.

2. **It is always wise to spend much time in prayer first before even attempting to have such an encounter** – If you have a check in your spirit, check it out before proceeding. It could simply be the uncomfortable position of having a difficult conversation, but if the Holy Spirit is giving you a halt then HALT.
3. **Be humble and contrite yourselves** – When confronting another always keep in mind the grace of God that has been extended to you. If you are dealing with a fallen brother or sister in Christ, approach the situation remembering that “there but by the grace of God go I.” In other words, you could easily have fallen into the same sin or been in the same place that other person is... don't ever think that you are above falling and falling hard. If you can't have a difficult conversation like this without a sense of empathy and humility don't have it.
4. **Check your own motives carefully** - Why are you the one to have this conversation at all? Why would you want to? What is at stake? Why is this important to me? These are all some of the types of questions we should be asking ourselves prior to ever approaching the other. Some people, even Christian, are by nature “confrontational.” That is not good, and not what we are talking about here. Such a disposition should be brought fully under the control of the Holy Spirit and surrendered to Him. Never enter these types of difficult situations with a “confrontational” spirit, looking for a fight, or with an uber-aggressive mentality. You will do more harm than good both your own Christian witness and testimony and to the other person and his or her walk.
5. **Always seek guidance** – Ultimately the guidance of the Lord... always! Ask Him to give you the words to say and the heart... right spirit with which to say it. Ask Him to prepare the heart of the other person and I also pray to soften and make their spirit open to the conversation. Also it is always advisable to seek the wise counsel of trusted and seasoned believers that you know.

There are times when Christians are called upon to "talk to" or try to correct a fellow Christian. Assuming we are talking about a matter of sin in a believers' life, our motive and intent should always be to bring about repentance and restoration to the erring brother or sister in Christ... for their building up and edification.

**3 Biblical Guidelines on Confrontation of Another Christian:** So, when should Christians talk to or try to correct a fellow Christian... Biblically speaking?

1. **It should be done only when we have talked to the Lord first (1 Timothy 2:1-8)** – Not only for permission but for preparation of our own heart and the heart of the one we will be speaking with. Paul writes in 1 Timothy 2:1-8 of the importance of prayer for others especially, *“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, <sup>2</sup>for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. <sup>3</sup>For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, <sup>7</sup>for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. <sup>8</sup>I desire therefore that the men pray*

*everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.*” There is much here that Paul is telling us about the subject of pray, but pay particular attention to the preparation prayer makes in our own heart in relationship with others. This may be taken as a guideline for how we properly relate not only to those within the body of Christ, but those outside as well. Those relationship should be bathed in prayer. Jesus, Himself, gave us this command in Matthew 5:44, *“<sup>44</sup> But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.”* A rather confrontational sounding verse, but a reminded of the primary pray focus that need be present. Jesus’ words remind us to “pray for those who spitefully use us and persecute us.” That is those we have a problem with or a grievance with. Here prayer paves the way for our heart to be right and for a confrontational conversation that would be edifying rather than stoking the fires an already raging furnace. And James, the half-brother of Jesus said in James 5:16, *“<sup>16</sup> Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”* This speaks not only of prayer by the effects of it on us and others.

2. **It should be done only when we have an attitude of submission and concern for the other person (Galatians 6:1-5)** - Our attitude is very important always Biblically. Paul says in Ephesians 4:31-32, *“<sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>32</sup> And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”* It is then that we are more able to *“speak the truth in love”* as Paul calls us to in Ephesians 4:15. In his epistle to the Galatians (the letter we are looking at), Paul had a similar warning about attitude in Galatians 6:1-5, *“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. <sup>2</sup> Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup> For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. <sup>4</sup> But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. <sup>5</sup> For each one shall bear his own load.”* Here we see that those who are “spiritual,” meaning walking in the Spirit in faith and obedience, should gently restore someone who is in sin, being always aware of how easily we can all be tempted by Satan who wants to ensnare everyone in his traps.
3. **I should be done only when we are committed to following the procedures outlined in His Word for such a situation (Matthew 18:15-17)** - In other words, follow Biblically prescribed procedures. The Bible prescribes the procedure for confronting a sinning brother or sister in an extensive passage on church discipline in Matthew 18:15-17, *“<sup>15</sup> Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ <sup>17</sup> And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.”* Again, this is the Biblically prescribed procedure for confronting a sinning brother, not someone whose behavior you feel needs modifying in some way or someone who merely irritates or annoys you.

On a different slant, one of the most often quoted scriptures is "Judge not, lest ye be judged" (Matthew 7:1 KJV). Taken out of context, the verse has been used to incorrectly justify never taking a stand on anything that would require a judgment to be made. Rather, the verse is

referring to hypocritical, self-righteous, unfair kinds of judgment, especially where the confronter is guilty of the same sin as the one being confronted.

So, when should Christians talk to or try to correct a fellow Christian? When we have talked to the Lord first, have an attitude of submission and concern for the other person, and are committed to following the procedures outlined in His Word for such a situation.

## HOW DOES ALL THIS APPLY TO YOU AND ME?

### **3 Things to Remember Based on Galatians 2:11-16:**

1. **We are to be accountable to one another** – No one is an island. None of us have the right to live as we please. We are obligated to embrace a life-style with consistently conforms to the Gospel.
2. **What we do does have an effect** – Our sour pattern can soon affect a whole group... be it in a marriage, family, Bible study, or church fellowship.
3. **Our commitment to the truth cannot be merely intellectual or apologetical** – It must be applicational... We have little justification to talk about the truth until we're ready to apply it ourselves.
4. **No one is exempt from upholding a life standard marked by God's holiness** – For most of us, the difficulty is not in knowing how or where to walk. Our problem is simply that of choosing to walk the way we know we should.

### **PRINCIPLES FROM PAUL ON THE EXCHANGED LIFE (Galatians 2:17-21)**

The Apostle Paul slugs it out in his Galatians letter. Determined to win back his believing friends from the strong grip of legalism, he declares his authority, defends his apostleship, and denounces all other alleged "gospels." He even mentions a confrontation he has with the Apostle Peter to illustrate the clout he carried. But in no way did this mean he ran his own life, which this section of the letter declares. Paul wrote what all Christians must often admit... it isn't us, it is Christ; it isn't the life of the flesh that counts, it is His life lived through us by faith. Let's call it "the exchanged life." This is the one that make our life worth living.

The battle that went on between Paul and his critics (the Judaizers) revolved around an important theological conflict... a very important theological question for the young, New Testament church, and that is how a person is saved. Jewish doctrine taught that justification with God would take place at the Last Judgement... that is, if one's good works exceeded those which were bad. Jews who had come to faith in Jesus Christ had to deal with this theological teaching immediately. Paul's presentation of justification was hard for them to accept because their traditional understanding was deeply rooted. The essence of the new converts' confusion can be summarized in this question: "If God justified bad people... sinful people, then what is the point of being good?" But contrast, Paul's message was basically this: "We don't wait until eternity to find out whether or not we're justified; we know at the moment of conversion. God declared us righteous before Himself as that time, in our own standing with Him." Let's close out the second chapter of Galatians by looking carefully at Paul's presentation

*<sup>17</sup> "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!" <sup>18</sup> For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I*

make myself a transgressor. <sup>19</sup> For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. <sup>21</sup> I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.” – Galatians 2:17-21

### **3 Principles from Paul on the Exchanged Life in Galatians 2:17-21:**

- 1. Regarding justification before God (vv.15-17) –** <sup>15</sup> We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, <sup>16</sup> knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. <sup>17</sup> “But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!” We should settle on a definition for justification so that Paul’s words have the greatest meaning.

#### **3 Definition for Justification: “Being made right or set right with God”**

(1) **An acronym type definition...** “Being made just as if I’d never sinned.”

(2) **A dictionary definition...** “The action of showing something to be right.”

(3) **A theological definition...** “At the moment of salvation, God sovereignly declares the sinner righteous from then on.” - By way of application, this means that as the sinner stands before God in faith (in the Son of God), that sinner is seen and declared righteous in his stand or position before God. From that moment on, right up to his death, the believer sinner is always right before God... acceptable to Him.

A word of caution here... take great care in understanding the words you’ve just heard. It is quite easy to hustle past them without grasping their significance. These words describe profound truth about our life in Christ. In light of the preceding comments, look at the text... especially in verse 16, <sup>16</sup> knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”

Here is the implication from all of this... this necessitates a change in a believer’s behavior and life-style, because from the moment of his or her conversion, his life is made different by God. Now you and I cannot live in the same way. Because we have been made righteous (rightly related to God) by God, any sin we commit is done so by choice. As a matter of fact, from conversion to death there is a constant battle between the new nature (result of justification) and the old one (inherited from birth) which knows nothing but sin. By choice, we must allow God to control our lives so that His righteousness becomes the trademark of our character. Our justification through Christ is not a matter to be taken lightly.

- 2. Regarding death to the law (vv.18-19) –** <sup>18</sup> For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. <sup>19</sup> For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God.” Today we don’t really know what it is like to have lived day-in, day-out under the Mosaic Law. Legalism as we know it today (as a perversion of God’s grace), cannot be fully compared to life before the cross. Paul, however, knew life on both sides of Calvary.



Note his comment in v.19, “<sup>19</sup> For I through the law died to the law...” The Law, with all of its demands, expected perfection both inwardly and outwardly. Those demands were too high and impossible to fulfill. If ever a man could have been saved by keeping the Law, that man would have possibly been Paul. He saw that if he was to be righteous, it had to happen some other way.

**Dangers of Legalism: Legalism: In its most basic sense legalism believes that we can earn or keep God’s favor by what we do.**

- (1) **Legalism promotes unbiblical standards (self-authority)** – To elevate any other standard outside of the work of Jesus Christ is to promote an unbiblical standard... it is to make a law that is not binding. It may be what you do or do not eat or drink, what you do on Sundays, or it may be what you wear for clothes, what kind of music you listen to, or whether you have piercings or tattoos, wear a suit or don’t on Sundays, or home school or not, or whatever. It is to take something that cannot be or keep your favor with God and make it binding on yourself and others. This is dangerous, but it is so prevalent.
  - (2) **Legalism promotes performance (self-righteousness)** – Legalism says, “I do or do not do.” The Gospel says, “I can’t do, but Jesus did.” There is a big difference. Legalism promotes the earning and keeping of God’s pleasure based on what I do or do not do. When legalistic thinking is prevalent you are always trying to cut a deal with God or your conscience. You may feel guilty about what you have done instead of running to Christ you run to Sinai, the Law, and look for something to do to make yourself feel better about yourself.
  - (3) **Legalism promotes division** – Legalism is a system that thrives on “personal performance, personal supremacy, and sadly, the trampling of others. It relentlessly pushes others out of the way so that you may advance. Someone must always have the upper-hand, do it better than other, be more Holy, more Spiritual, more moral... etc. If we are saved and made right by what we do, that what I do must be better than what you do or I will not be as favored and as liked as you are... it always promotes division in this way. It cannot unify. It must by necessity divide.
  - (4) **Legalism demotes Jesus (and His sufficient righteousness)** – This at its core, the real offense of legalism. To maintain that you can merit God’s favor by what you do and outside of the work of Christ is to say that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ was not necessary or was not sufficient. To cling to personal merit through doing things (however good or biblical they may seem) is to demote Jesus from his place of supremacy.
3. **Regarding Christ in our lives (vv.20-21)** – “<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. <sup>21</sup> I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.” When Paul penned these words... “I have been crucified with Christ...” he spoke of the precise moment of his own justification. Literally, his words were: “With Christ I have been crucified.” This is not a play on words. Essentially he said, “At the moment I was so unified with Christ... linked to Him... so much a part of Him, that His crucifixion became my crucifixion. My “old man” was slain at the cross with Him.” IN other words, an exchange occurred. The life

Paul was living “in the flesh,” he lived by faith in the Son of God. Paul traded his life for Christ’s life in him. No other way could his life have been different... nor can ours.

Perhaps our interest in the exchanging lives can be highlighted by the following guidelines:

**3 Important Truths Concerning the Exchanged Life:**

- (1) Our greatest need is acceptance of God**
- (2) Our only hope is salvation through Christ**
- (3) Our only power source is the Holy Spirit**

*\*It is never, never, never, in what we do or our own merit; it is always, always, always in what Christ has done... the finished work of Christ!*