

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, February 28, 2018 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

freedom
THE GRACE OF CHRIST IN GALATIANS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF GALATIANS The Before and After of Faith *Galatians 3:23-29*

REVIEW: Just for review and to get back into our study of the book of Galatians, let's briefly remind ourselves of some of the background material to the book. These are important background facts to keep in mind as we navigate this important and strategic book in the Bible.

4 Important Background Facts on the Book of Galatians:

(1) **Written by the Apostle Paul** – Paul wrote a large portion of the New Testament. This particular book/letter may have been his first letter. Also interesting to note is that some scholars believe that Paul have penned this letter himself, with his own hand (all of his other letters/writings were done through/with a personal amanuensis [scribe, secretary, recorder]).

(2) **Written as a circular letter** – Most of Paul's letter that we have in the New Testament were written to individual churches (i.e. Ephesians, Philippians) or to individuals (i.e. Timothy, Titus). This letter is different because it was written to a number of churches, and was meant to be passed/shared or "circulated" to each of these churches.

(3) **Written to churches in the region of Galatia** -Galatians is written to a number of different churches that Paul established during his first missionary journey in the region of Galatia in Asia Minor, which would be located in present day Turkey. This area was particularly important in the advance of the gospel and the New Testament church because it represented the movement of the good news/gospel further toward the west and to the rest of world, something Jesus had commanded from the very beginning of the New Testament church in Acts 1:8, "8 *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*"

(4) **Written to oppose and expose false teaching of the Judaizers** – After Paul had left the region of Galatia, following his first missionary journey and the establishment of these new churches, false teachers came in and began to expose these churches and new believers/Christians to false teaching. These false teachers were known as "Judaizers" and they taught a "work-righteousness" system of salvation. Their teaching essentially said that in order to become a Christians you must first be circumcised and become a Jew, by obeying and following Jewish laws and customs. This was in direct contradiction to the good news/gospel Paul preached, which was salvation by grace, not by works.

A GALATIANS QUIZ

Test your knowledge and how much you have learned and retained so far in our study of Galatians. Check [✓] the appropriate response(s) for each question.

1. Who is the author of Galatians?
 - The Apostle Peter
 - Timothy
 - Paul's travel companion, Silas
 - The former persecutor of the church known as Saul

2. The Author wrote Galatians when?
 - On his first missionary journey
 - On his third missionary journey
 - On his second missionary journey
 - None of the above

3. What kind of literature is Galatians?
 - Hebrew Poetry
 - A Letter
 - Wisdom Literature
 - A Parable

4. Who is Galatians written to?
 - Jews in Antioch
 - The Author's Travel Companions
 - Christians in the region of Galatia
 - Early Church Leaders in Jerusalem

5. What makes Galatians unique to its author? (Check all that apply)
 - The author received the letter on golden tablets transmitted from God
 - The book contains special codes concerning the end of the world
 - The author actually wrote the book by his own hand
 - The book is the only book written by the author that appears in the Bible
 - The author is one of the half-brothers of Jesus
 - The author is the only New Testament author that wasn't one of the disciples
 - The book is the first of its kind written by the author

6. Where is the region of Galatia located today?
 - South Austin
 - The Coast of South Africa
 - Southeast Asia
 - Turkey

7. What was the main reason the author wrote Galatians?
 - To give a detailed description of Heaven
 - To refute the false teaching of Joadizers
 - To give a map of the Holy Land
 - To describe Jewish life in Asia Minor

8. The book of Galatians is divided into what two main parts?
 - A defense of the messenger and his message
 - An attack on false teachers and those who believe them
 - A parable and its explanation
 - A psalm and a proverb

9. The book of Galatians refutes what claim?
 - That the principle of tithing is evil
 - That Christians are under no obligation to go to church
 - That a person may be saved by works
 - That it is not possible to lose your salvation

10. Why did the author have a special love for the people to whom he wrote Galatians?
 - They were his kin-folk
 - He needed their vote to become an Apostle
 - They had paid him a lot of money
 - He had led them to the Lord

CLAIMS THAT MUST BE MADE IF WORKS-RIGHTEOUSNESS SALVATION

3 Claims for A Salvation by Works-Righteousness: For those who may attached some type of works-righteousness for salvation, be that the Law, good works, morality, religious duty, etc., there must by necessity be some claims that must be made... if one is to be saved by “works” in any way.

1. **Salvation must be conditional** – That is, our salvation must be based on something that we do or have done. It makes... even must make... salvation conditional. Conditional on what you do or do not do... i.e. keeping the law, obeying customs and standards, being good enough, doing enough religious duty, not breaking certain codes or laws,
2. **One must maintain he or her own salvation** – If salvation is a matter of what we do (i.e. law keeping, rule following, adherence to a moral code of good) the onus (responsibility, burden, obligation, duty) fall us to keep ourselves saved and in good standing with God by adhering to the standard. Further, it may indicate that since God has saved us, we will maintain our salvation as we continue to match up with God’s required standard.
3. **Salvation must by implication become losable (capable of being lost)** – If it is conditional and up to us to maintain it, the implication must be that if we don’t live up to the condition and fail to maintain it we will no longer possess it. Therefore, a works-righteousness system of salvation automatically make salvation a losable proposition, at least possibly.

A Rebuttal of the 3 Claims for a Salvation by Works-Righteousness:

Claim 1: Salvation must be conditional –

Rebuttal: Scripture teaches that salvation is “unconditional” in nature and indeed doesn’t depend on anything that we do or have done.

Scripture:

(1) **Ephesians 2:8-9** - *“⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith —and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.”*

(2) **John 3:16** - *“¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

(3) **Romans 6:23** - *“²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Claim 2: One must maintain his or her own salvation -

Rebuttal: Man could never match up or be good enough to match up to God’s Holy standard according to Scripture.

Scripture:

(1) **Isaiah 64:6** – *“⁶ All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.”*

(2) **Romans 3:10, 23** – *“¹⁰ As it is written: ‘There is no one righteous, not even one’ ... ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*

(3) **Matthew 7:21-23** - *“²¹ ‘Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out*

demons and in your name perform many miracles?’²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”

Claim 3: Salvation must by implication become losable (capable of being lost)

Rebuttal: This claim would be in direct violation of Scripture. Scripture clearly teaches that once saved it is forever and cannot be lost in the doctrine of “the eternal security of the believer.”

Scripture:

- (1) **John 10:27-30** - *“²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one.”*
- (2) **Titus 3:5-7** - *“⁵ He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”*
- (3) **1 Peter 1:3-4** - *“³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”*
- (4) **Jude 24-25** - *“²⁴ Now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling away and will bring you with great joy into his glorious presence without a single fault. ²⁵ All glory to him who alone is God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord. All glory, majesty, power, and authority are his before all time, and in the present, and beyond all time! Amen.” (NLT)*
- (5) **John 3:16** - *“¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*

“²³ But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. ²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” – Galatians 3:23-29 (NKJV)

Galatians is a liberating letter. In bold, broad strokes it announces our freedom in Christ. It proclaims the truth of the Gospel of grace by denouncing the presence of ‘works’ in God’s plan for our redemption. Furthermore, the Mosaic Law is dealt with in Galatians as in no other New Testament letter except Romans. Our consideration of the Law continues in this study. Clearly and briefly the apostle Paul spells out the precise purpose of the Law. In doing so, he uses a rare Greek term, “paidagogos, which is translated “tutor” (vv.24-25). As we shall see, when Christ Jesus comes into one’s life by faith, the “tutor” is no longer needed. It is preempted once-and-for’ all by the Person of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

THE PLACE TO BEGIN: “Shut Up All Men Under Sin” (Galatians 3:22)

The last few verses of Galatians 3 include slavery images and terms which are somewhat uncomfortable and foreign to us living today in a free world. In verse 22 Paul writes, *“But the Scripture has confined (literally, “shut up”) all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.”* What do you think Paul is telling us about when He says, *“But the Scripture had confined all under sin...”* Let’s listen to it in some different translations and see if we can’t get at what he is saying.

NKJV – *“But the Scripture has confined all under sin...”*

NIV – *“But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin...”*

NLT – *“But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin...”*

NASB – *“But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin...”*

KJV – *“But the scripture hath concluded all under sin...”* < maybe the poorest translation of the Greek word

ESV – *“But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin...”*

Living Bible – *“For the Scriptures insist we are all its (sins) prisoners...”*

In verse 22 this description begins with the words “confined” or literally “shut-up.” The Greek words translated “confined” means “to enclose on all sides.” In other words it traps us, hems us in, imprisons us, we can’t get away from it. Paul portrays all mankind as hopelessly trapped in sin, like a school of fish caught in a net. That all people are sinners is the express teaching of Scripture.

2 Inescapable Truths Confirmed in Galatians 3:22: (in Galatians 3:22)

1. **This is a universal dilemma (problem)** – Listen to Paul again in the first part of **verse 22**, *“But the Scripture has confined all under sin...”* Let me ask, “Who is confined (shut up, imprisoned) under sin?” Answer: “all.” Wow! This is a principle truth taught throughout Scripture.

Romans 3:10, *“There is none righteous, no, not one.”*

Romans 3:23, *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*

Romans 5:12, *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”*

2. **This is a final and factual decree** – Here it is again in verses 22... notice it one more time, *“But the Scripture has confined all under sin...”* What did Paul say has confined all us under sin? *“Scripture!”* That is an interesting and peculiar statement don’t you think? Scripture has confined, imprisoned, shut-up, locked us up! What do you think Paul means by this? He is telling us that the universal delima that we all face... that we are all condemned sinners and we can’t get away from it is the express, inescapable, factual, and final decree and teaching of Scripture. “The Scripture” has done the shutting up... the confining... has set forth the decree. The rods of the Law reinforced this finality... “Thou shalt... through shalt not...” These served as reminders that man lived behind bars... condemned before God.” The law can and does condemn us, but it can’t free us!

UNDER THE LAW: “In Bondage” (Galatians 3:23-24)

Notice verses 23-24 of our passage. Paul says, ²³ *But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.* ²⁴ *Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* Verse 23 of our passage begins with four words that help us see the problem... *“But before faith came...”* While mankind was under the Law, the Law was two things to us...

2 Things the Law Is to Us According to Paul (in Gal. 3:23-24):

- 1. The Law is/was a prison** – Here is Paul again in verse 23, *“But before faith came, we were kept guard by the law...”* The New American Standard says, *“But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law...”* The idea is that of being surrounded and protected by military guards. We could also say “hemmed in” or “cooped up.” Paul personified the law as a jailer of the guilty, condemned sinners, on death row awaiting God’s judgment.
- 2. The Law is/was a tutor** – The second picture that Paul gives us of what the Law is to us is in verse 24 notice it in context... look at verses 23-24, ²³ *But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.* ²⁴ *Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* Verse 24 says, *“Therefore the law was our tutor...”* It’s the Greek word “paidagogos” An older translation which renders this “school master” is inappropriate. Most affluent Greek and Roman families had an older slave to whom they entrusted the care of their children. The “tutor” became the child’s disciplinarian, and was in charge of the youth’s moral welfare. He was a harsh and firm guide. Though he did not teach the child as would a teacher (“didaskalos”), he would accompany him or her to, at, and from school. In ancient art the “paidagogos” was depicted with a rod or a cane in his hand. J.B. Phillips termed such a person a “strict governess.” NOTE: Paul says that the Law became our “paidagogos” (tutor) *“to lead us to Christ”* (v.24). Why? *“... that we may be justified by faith”* (v.24)

IN CHRIST: “Sons Through Faith” (Galatians 3:25-29)

Notice verses 25-29... here is what Paul says, ²⁵ *But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.* ²⁶ *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.* ²⁷ *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* ²⁸ *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.* ²⁹ *And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”* Notice the contrast between who verse 23 starts and how verse 25 starts. Verse 23 says, *“But before faith came...”* And verse 25 says, *“But after faith has come...”* See the contrast? It’s before and after! Strong contrast between the two... days before Christ... days after Christ. When Jesus Christ came He unlocked the doors for those who put their faith in Him... He lifted the bondage. Christ’s coming preempted the “paidagogos” (tutor), and the need for such was dismissed. Whereas under the Law we were imprisoned and under a tutor, in Christ everything changed.

What We Now Have in Christ:

- 1. In Christ we’re now in the family (vv.26-27)** – Notice what Paul says in verse 26-27 ²⁶ *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.* ²⁷ *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* The key phrase there in verse 26 is *“For you are all*

sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.” Paul identified the family members as “... as many of you as were baptized into Christ...” (v.27). For clarification here, there are six different kinds of baptism mentioned in Scripture. This particular baptism spoke of by Paul in verse 27 is a dry one (as opposed to wet) and speaks of “identification with Christ”. In other words, to be “baptized into Christ” is to be identified with Him... brought into the Body of Christ... and into union with Christ. Paul calls this reality “clothed with Christ” or “have put on Christ” as a garment is put on in verse 27

3 Scriptural Understanding of Being Baptized into Christ: (What it means?)

- (1) **To be identified with Him** - 1 Corinthians 12:13, “³For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”
- (2) **To be brought into the body of Christ** - Ephesians 4:4-6, “⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”
- (3) **To be in union with Christ** - Romans 6:3-4, “³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

2. **In Christ we claim a unity with Him as well as with each other (v.28)** - Here is Paul in verse 28... notice it, “²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Before Christ all are completely equal. What is seen with great emphasis around the world... class consciousness... has not place in the family of Christ. Poverty and affluence are irrelevant in the family of God. Although difference like these are present between us, they don’t matter. In God’s eyes there are no distinctions as to importance.

3 Distinctions that Don’t Matter in the Family of God:

- (1) **The distinction of race** – Paul said, “*There is neither Jew nor Greek...*”
 - (2) **The distinction of rank** – Paul also said, “*... there is neither slave nor free...*”
 - (3) **The distinction of sex** – And Paul added, “*... there is neither male nor female...*”
3. **Christ we hold a favored identity (v.29)** – Paul says in verse 29, “²⁹And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” We are recipients of a promise. If we belong to Christ, we are Abraham’s offspring... his heirs. That means that in Christ we are members of a blessed family with a spiritual heritage that’s traceable back to the man who walked by faith... the one to whom the promise was originally made.

REASONS TO PRAISE GOD

3 Reasons to Praise God:

1. **Praise God for the prison** – Reason to praise God for the prison... it closed off all escape routes so that we would be forced to see ourselves as we really are. Can you recall a prison or two in your life? Do you find it tough to give God praise for these circumstances? What did

it feel like to “come to the end of yourself”? What evidences of value have you observed in your life as a result of these events?

2. **Praise God for the tutor** – Reason to praise God for the “tutor”... it puts the clamps on us and wouldn’t let us dodge the issue. We’ve been pretty hard on the Law thus far. But it did play a vital role in our lives, didn’t it? Can you see how the Law was instrumental in leading you in Christ? Reflect on that for a few minutes and offer praise to God.
3. **Praise God for the Savior** – Reason to praise God for the Savior... without question, He met us... He loved us... He forgave us... He accepted us... He liberated us (set us free). If you know the Savior, you have no better reason to praise Him than the fact that He is your Savior. If you don’t know Christ, will you accept Him now? Will you escape the bondage of sin? Join believers in praise God for your new-found Savior.