

A Study of
The Epistle of Paul to the

Galatians

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The Scripture text used in this booklet is from the New King James Version.

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Introduction

To the Book of Galatians

History of the churches in Galatia: Acts 13-14

“Now when Paul and his party set sail from **Paphos**, they came to **Perga** in **Pamphylia**; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem. But when they departed from **Perga**, they came to **Antioch in Pisidia**, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down...

“So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us: ‘I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.’” Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region. But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to **Iconium**. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

“Now it happened in **Iconium** that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the

Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles. And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them, they became aware of it and fled to **Lystra** and **Derbe**, cities of **Lycaonia**, and to the surrounding region. And they were preaching the gospel there...

“Then Jews from **Antioch** and **Iconium** came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to **Derbe**. And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to **Lystra**, **Iconium**, and **Antioch**, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.” So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. And after they had passed through **Pisidia**, they came to **Pamphylia**. Now when they had preached the word in **Perga**, they went down to **Attalia**. From there they sailed to **Antioch**, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. 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. So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.”

Paul's First Missionary Journey



The Occasion of Writing

As seen in Luke's account of Paul's first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas made extensive travels through the southern region of Galatia in which were located most of the cities mentioned in Acts chapters 13 and 14. The epistle to the Galatians was written to all of the churches in this region (1:2, *"to the churches..."*). Paul's manner in this letter suggests a familiarity and closeness with the Galatians. He was the one who had converted them, *"...we have preached to you..."* (1:8), *"...the gospel that was preached by me..."* (1:11). Their previous love for him is evident in that Paul discusses in chapter 4 how they *"received him as an angel of God"* and would have even plucked out their eyes for him. His love for them is equally evident in that he calls them his *"little children"* (4:19) and brethren. It is no wonder then why he shows great surprise in the fact that shortly after they had received the gospel from him they were turning aside to a *"different gospel"* (1:6).

Judaizing teachers (men who claimed to be Christians but commanded obedience to the Law of Moses) were teaching that men needed to be circumcised to be saved. Luke records one of Paul's encounters with these false teachers in Acts 15:1. *"And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.'"* There were also some men who were bringing into question the validity of Paul's apostleship—saying that he was not a true apostle—and some of the Galatian Christians were believing them. Thus, in his letter, Paul shows great passion and concern for the Galatians as he defends his apostleship and exposes the error of the Judaizing teachers. The climax of his message is found in Gal. 5:1, *"Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage."*

Time and Place of the Writing

The exact date of the writing of this epistle is uncertain. Based on the similarities between this and the epistles to the Corinthians and to the Romans we can conclude with reasonable certainty that it was written during the same time period as the others. That would have been between 56 and 58 A.D. We have no way of determining his location at the time of writing.

The Author

As stated in 1:1, “*Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead)...*” Paul was born a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin (Rom. 11:1). He was very zealous for the traditions of the Jews (Gal. 1:14). In his early years he trained under Gamaliel, one of the greatest Jewish teachers of the day (Acts 22:3). Though Paul was a Jew he was also born a Roman citizen (Acts 22:28), which held significant privilege in the Roman world. Among the Jews Paul was a Pharisee, a sect of Jews that believed in the resurrection (Acts 23:6). He was converted in Acts 9. As a Jew, Paul was known as Saul. The two names mean the same thing; Saul is Hebrew, Paul is Greek. He became known as Paul as he began to preach to the Greek (Gentile) nations in Acts 13:9.

The fact that Paul refers to himself as “*an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ...)*” is of some significance. That Paul was chosen by Jesus Christ as an apostle to the Gentiles can be seen in Acts 9 and 22. He describes himself as “*one born out of due time*” in 1 Cor. 15:8, having been the last apostle to see the resurrected Jesus. To witness Christ after His resurrection was a necessary requirement of the apostles, for they were the ambassadors sent from His presence to bear witness of His resurrection to all the world (Acts 1:8). In order for this to be possible it was necessary for them to see Jesus resurrected with their own eyes. Paul was the last to fulfill this requirement as Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus in Acts 9. He was chosen by Christ Himself to bear witness of Him to the Gentiles. “*Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake*” (Acts 9:15-16).

As an apostle, chosen by Jesus, we know that the words revealed in this epistle are inspired of God. The authenticity of his apostleship has been thoroughly established by evidence which Paul sets forth in this letter, as he does in some other letters as well. “*I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds*” (2 Cor. 12:11-12). Thus, as he reminded the Corinthians, “*If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord*” (1 Cor. 14:37).

For these reasons we study the epistle to the Galatians as it is the inspired word of God.

Lesson One

Galatians 1:1-10

Introduction

1. In this section Paul gives his greeting which is customary in all of his epistles.
2. He then introduces his reason for writing this epistle—his concern that the Galatians were being deceived by a different gospel.

Discussion

I. Paul's Greeting: 1:1-3

A. Paul's apostleship and authority (vs. 1)

1. ***"Not from men nor through man"***: He was not appointed by the authority of men to the apostleship of Jesus Christ. If Paul were merely appointed by men then he would have no authority in the kingdom as an apostle. The word *apostle* means *ambassador*, one sent out from the presence of another. The apostles were ambassadors for Christ, sent out from His presence to bear witness of His resurrection to all the world (Acts 1:8). But if Paul were appointed by men then he would have no authority because he would not have come from the presence of Jesus Christ—he would have been an impostor. Some were claiming this to be true in an attempt to turn the Galatians away from the gospel which Paul preached to them. We know for a fact, however, that Paul was a true apostle, set apart by Christ.
2. ***"but through Jesus Christ and God the Father"***: Paul witnessed of the resurrected Jesus in Acts 9. He was sent by Jesus personally to preach the gospel. Jesus said to those whom He sent, *"He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me"* (Luke 10:16). This same authority was given to Paul, for he was sent by Jesus to be His apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 26:16-19). Therefore Paul had authority to command the things written in this epistle (1 Thess. 4:8).
3. ***"who raised Him from the dead"***: Because of the false doctrine which Paul is refuting in this letter it is necessary to emphasize the source of our salvation and the source of the power unto salvation. The gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16), through which we are saved by Jesus Christ who died and whom God raised from the dead. Therefore it is to Him alone that we owe our lives (Gal. 2:20). He is the One with all authority.

B. Paul's greeting (vs. 2-3).

1. ***"And all the brethren who are with me"***: Paul was often accompanied by companions. They often shared in struggles and in concerns for the Christians that they ministered to in the word of God (1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; et. al).
2. ***"Grace to you and peace from God the Father"***: This was a general greeting which Paul used in his epistles. "Grace" expresses a desire for the Lord's good will to be upon them. Indeed, this should be the desire of all Christians for one another. We know that when we hold to the truth of God's word and remain faithful to Him, His grace will be upon us. "Peace" is a harmonious relationship or quietness. This is a condition that can only come from God and be attained by those who seek such peace in the unity of the Spirit by agreeing in all things according to the word of God (1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:2, 3).

3. ***“and our Lord Jesus Christ”***: Though there be turmoil and persecution on all sides Jesus shows us that we can have a sense of peace through our relationship with God. “Jesus had a peace and quite of soul arising from his union with God and his trust and confidence in him that nothing could disturb (Lipscomb, pg. 187). He gives us this peace as well (John 14:27).
- C. The glorification of the Father and Son (vs. 4-5).
1. ***“Who gave Himself for our sins”***: Paul reminds us of the source of our salvation. Jesus is the one who died for us, therefore it is to Him that we owe our lives (2 Cor. 5:14-15; Gal. 2:20).
 2. ***“that He might deliver us from this present evil age”***: We were under condemnation because we walked according to our own desires and according to the wisdom of this world. It is from those things that Jesus rescues us. He delivers us from the wrath that is coming upon sin (1 Thess. 1:10). He delivers us from the ignorance that is in the world (Eph. 4:18). He delivers us from the consequences of living sinful lives.
 3. ***“according to the will of our God and Father”***: The plan of salvation which has been once for all delivered to the saints was accomplished according to the eternal will of God (Eph. 3:9-11). What we have in Christ has been God’s intention since the beginning. It was according to His will that Jesus was sent to us and Paul was sent by Jesus. We have no power, no authority, and therefore no right to change even one word of the gospel. Rather, we must seek to do all things according to the will of the Father, just as Jesus did when He was on the earth.
 4. ***“to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.”***: Because of who They are (Deity) and all that They have done, They are worthy of all glory *“forever and ever.”* Thus we must always remember to whom the glory is due!

II. Only One Gospel: 1:6-10

- A. Turning away to a different gospel (vs. 6-7a.).
1. ***“I marvel that you are turning away so soon”***: Not long after Paul had preached the gospel to the Galatians, false prophets began deceiving them. Paul was amazed at how quickly they were willing to trade in the truth for a lie; that they were willing to follow these new doctrines when they clearly contradicted the doctrine which Paul had delivered to them in the beginning, by which they had also been saved.
 2. ***“to a different gospel”***: “Gospel” literally means *good news*. The Greek word for “different” is defined, “altered, else, next, other, strange” (Strong’s). The gospel that was being preached to them promised some sort of *news*, but it was not the *good news* of Christ. It was in fact different from the gospel that Jesus established on the cross, and therefore different than the gospel that Paul had preached to them.
 3. ***“which is not another”***: The Greek word for “another” is defined, “another like” (Vine’s), i.e., similar, the same. It was NOT a similar gospel. It was NOT another gospel of the same nature as the one Paul preached. To illustrate what Paul is saying, if someone is cooking with chicken eggs and says, “Hand me another egg,” they are asking for one similar to those already being used. To preach this different gospel would be like handing the person a Cadbury egg instead of a chicken egg. The Cadbury egg resembles an egg, but it is *not another* egg. It will not work. Such was the gospel of the false teachers. It was a fake; completely different gospel from the one true gospel.

- B. Condemnation on anyone who would preach a different gospel (Vs. 7b.-10).
1. ***“But there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ”***: Paul was quick to show that the perverted nature of this *different gospel* could only bring condemnation on those who preached it and upon those who believed it. He describes those that preach such falsehood as troubling the churches. McGarvey points out that the word *trouble* has the force of “revolutionize.” This is similar to Paul’s statement in Titus 1:10, “*subvert whole households*.” This is the affect false doctrine has on the church. “There is not a separate gospel suited to the prejudices or so-called ‘tastes’ of each sect or denomination. There is but one gospel, and hence all church divisions result from perversions of that gospel, and all such secessions or revolutionary divisions are but the beguiling of Satan, drawing disciples from ‘the simplicity and purity that is toward Christ’—(2 Cor. 11:3)” (McGarvey, pg. 250).
 2. ***“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you”***: The gospel as Paul had preached it was complete, whole, perfect, absolute. Should one pervert the gospel by changing any of the truths revealed in it, any of the doctrines established by it, or by adding to or removing any of the commands delivered in it, their gospel would be of no effect and that person would be accursed. It does not matter from whom we receive our gospel, whether by angel or by men, if it is not exactly the same as the one revealed in the Scriptures it is a curse upon those who obey it and/or teach it.
 3. ***“let him be accursed”***: The KJV renders this “*anathema*.” It means, “devoted to destruction” (Vine’s). It is the condemnation from God upon any who attempt to alter His word (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5-6; 2 John 9; Rev. 22:18-19). The point of this statement must be so clearly understood that the Holy Spirit saw fit to repeat it. Do we get the point?
- C. Paul will not bend for the sake of pleasing men (Vs. 10).
1. ***“For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men?”***: Some of Paul’s enemies had accused him of being a men-pleaser. Though Paul did strive to “*be all things to all men*” (1 Cor. 9:22), he did so solely to show brotherly love according to the command of the Lord and to sway men over to the will of God. But not once did he alter the doctrine that he preached. He preached the exact same thing to every church and every person (1 Cor. 4:17). No matter how unpleasant the truth of God was to men, no matter how much it may have offended them, Paul preached it exactly as he received it from God (Acts 20:27).
 2. ***“For if I still please men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”***: Though Paul pleased men before his conversion, he had since become a bondservant of Christ. Therefore his life was given to serve Christ in all things. But if he changed his doctrine in order to please men or if he sought to gain the good opinion of men over Christ’s then Christ would have no longer been his master. For we can only serve one master. Whomever we please is our master, whether Christ or man. From his statements in verses 6-9 we are able to see that pleasing men was not a concern of Paul. From here Paul will go on to prove that his loyalties rest with Christ alone.

Questions

Lesson One

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. From whom did Paul receive his apostleship?
2. When Paul says, “*Grace to you and peace,*” what does he mean?
3. Why did Jesus give Himself for our sins?
4. How many gospels are there?
5. When Paul said “*a different gospel, which is not another,*” what was he talking about?
6. What are false teachers doing when they teach something other than what God revealed?
7. If an angel reveals something to us that is not in the scripture or contradicts the scriptures, should we listen to him because he is an angel? Explain.
8. What happens to people who preach a different gospel?
9. What does “*accursed*” mean?
10. From his statements thus far in his epistle, how can we know that Paul is not seeking to please men?
11. Who should we serve? Why?
12. What happens when we alter our message in order to please other people? Is God pleased? Why/why not?

Lesson Two

Galatians 1:11-24

Introduction

1. Some false teachers had brought into question the apostleship of Paul and the validity of his gospel.
2. Just as many in Galatia were giving heed to the “*different gospel*” (vs. 6), there were also some who were believing the lies that were being spread concerning Paul.
3. Therefore Paul reminds the Galatians that he is an apostle and that his gospel and his instructions in this letter come from God.

Discussion

I. The Divine Origin of Paul’s Gospel: 1:11-12

- A. Paul did not receive it from man (vs. 11).
 1. “***But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me***”: In order to help them to understand the reason for his severity in vs. 8-9 Paul shows them the origin of his gospel. When we know its true source then perhaps we will have a better respect for its unchangeable nature.
 2. “***is not according to man***”: If it were of men then there would be no problems with changing it a little here or there. But it is not according to man or man’s wisdom (1 Cor. 2:13). It is not something that Paul made up; therefore it is not something that he or any man can change.
 3. This instruction is needful for today, for many preach the gospel as if it were a matter of opinion and the Bible the work of men. Thus, they see no problem with changing one or two things. Understanding the origins of the gospel will help us to abide in its doctrine without deviation. “Since the gospel was not composed to suit the wishes of man, Paul could not be true to his call were he to try bending it to suit man in order to win his friendship and good will” (Zerr, pg. 72).
- B. He received it by the revelation of Jesus Christ (vs. 12).
 1. “***For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it***”: This is important for us to understand. Had Paul received the gospel in the same manner as men today (by being taught by someone else) then he would have been in no position to be an apostle. The apostles were eye witnesses of Christ. Their task was to bear witness of Him to the world (Acts 1:8). In order to do this it was necessary for them to have seen the resurrected Christ with their own eyes and receive their doctrine directly from Him. All of the other apostles fulfilled this, being taught by Jesus while He was on the earth before and after His resurrection. But Paul did not become a disciple until after Jesus’ final ascension in Acts 1. Nevertheless, Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus in Acts 9. But where did Paul learn the gospel? If he received it from men then he would have been no different than Christians today, but if he received it from Christ then he would have been a true apostle. He says here that he DID NOT receive it from men. Rather...
 2. “***but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ***”: “He received and was taught by a direct communication of the mind of God through Jesus Christ” (Lipscomb, pg. 193). Revelation is defined, “An uncovering” (Vines). It is a disclosure of truth previously unknown. Paul received things directly from Jesus which he previously did not know. This means that his

gospel came from the same source as that of the other apostles—from Jesus Himself. Therefore Paul had all the qualifications of a true apostle and bore in his words the authority given by God. For that reason, whether we are reading the gospels, the epistles of Paul, or the epistles of Peter, they all carry the exact same authority for they are all the words of God (1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Pet. 3:15-16).

II. Paul Separated as an Apostle by the Will of God (1:13-16)

A. Paul's conduct in Judaism before his conversion (vs. 13-14)

1. ***"For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism"***: Paul had been known to the churches as, *"He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy"* (Gal. 2:23; cf. Acts 9:21). It would seem that his history had also been related to the Galatians, either by him or by someone else.
2. ***"How I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it"***: For more background on this read Acts 7:57-8:4; 9:1-30; 22:3-11; 26:4-18. Paul was exceedingly violent against the church and against the name of Christ before his conversion. Therefore the gospel that he preached to the Galatians was not learned in his early life and he certainly did not make it up. For in all things he was contrary to Christ.
3. ***"And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers"***: He is referring, not so much to his faith, as his zeal for the traditions and practices of the Jews which was in part responsible for his violence against the church. Because of Paul's former zeal for the traditions of the Jews he could not have come up with the gospel which he preached to the Galatians. He was more zealous for Jewish tradition than any of his contemporaries; he was head of the class, so to speak. The gospel was the very thing that his zeal was directed against. It was not possible that he would have made it up or that it could have originated from him.

B. The manner of Paul's separation to the gospel (vs. 15-16a.).

1. ***"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb"***: God knew of Paul's zeal for doing what he thought was right. Paul affirmed that while he was persecuting the church he did it in *"all good conscience"* (Acts 23:1). Such zeal, when set in the right direction, is very useful to God. Therefore, from Paul's birth God had determined to use Paul in His service. There are several instances in the Scriptures where this was the case (Samson, Judges 13:1-5; Jeremiah, Jer. 1:5; and John the Baptist, Luke 1:13-17).
2. ***"and called me through His grace"***: "Called" refers to Paul's conversion. He was approached by Jesus on his way to Damascus and shown that what he was doing was wrong. While in Damascus Paul repented of his sins and obeyed the gospel by being baptized. As seen, Paul's former conduct was in every way contrary to the gospel. There was nothing he could have done to recompense the harm that he had done. But by God's grace Paul was given the opportunity to repent and to turn to the true service of God.
3. ***"to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles"***: That Paul might bear witness of Christ and ultimately that he might reveal Christ to the Gentiles through his words, through the signs done by the power of the Holy Spirit, and through His conduct.

- C. Paul did not confer with flesh and blood (vs. 16 b).
1. This section further supports the fact that Paul did not receive his gospel from men. The revelation of Christ was the only possible source for his knowledge in the gospel.
 2. ***“I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood”***: After his conversion, Paul did not immediately go where he could learn more about the gospel from men. He did not seek council from his former friends or his new brethren. As we read in Acts 9:20, *“Immediately he preached Christ in the synagogues.”* If Paul’s gospel was given to him by other men then he would have needed time to learn it from them. However, he has shown that his only interest before his conversion was in destroying the gospel. Immediately after his conversion he preached the gospel. There was no time to learn it from men before he began preaching. It must have come by revelation.

III. Paul’s Relationship to the Other Apostles (1:17-24).

- A. Paul did not meet the other apostles after his conversion (vs. 17).
1. ***“Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me”***: Paul was called, appointed, and taught by Jesus Christ. For that reason he did not need the approval or instruction of the other apostles (though he still taught the same gospel as they did). As an apostle, the revelation of Christ was the source of his gospel and there was no need for him to be taught by men. Therefore there was no need for him to go up to Jerusalem.
 2. ***“But I went to Arabia, and returned to Damascus”***: Rather than going to Jerusalem he went into Arabia (the exact location of which is uncertain). His activities there and the duration of his stay are not given. Some have speculated that Paul went into Arabia to meditate on the gospel which Christ had revealed to him. But this theory is without foundation. His purpose for providing this information was to prove that he had no need to go where the other apostles were, for he was sufficiently taught by the revelation of Jesus Christ. From Arabia he returned to Damascus. This journey must have occurred sometime between Acts 9:19 and 24.
- B. After three years he went to Jerusalem (vs. 18-19).
1. ***“Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.”***: Most likely three years after his conversion. In Acts 9:23-25 it says that *“after many days”* the Jews plotted to kill Paul, thus forcing him from the city and then on to Jerusalem.
 2. ***“But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother”***: This is to show the brevity of his stay in Jerusalem (only fifteen days). His purpose in Jerusalem was not to learn, but to preach. In Acts 9:29 we see him preaching to the Hellenists (Greeks). His reason for leaving is also revealed in that passage, for Hellenists also plotted to kill him.
 3. During that time the only apostle he met was Peter. James, the Lord’s brother is mentioned here and is described as an apostle. Though he was not properly an apostle (was not called by Jesus specifically to the office), he did have many of the same credentials as the apostles, being a witness of Christ. Again, there was not enough time in this short period for Paul to gain anything further concerning his gospel from the other apostles, thus more firmly establishing his independence of them.
- C. Paul traveled to the regions of Syria and Cilicia (vs. 20-24).
1. ***“Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie”***: Paul wanted them to clearly understand that his accounts of his conversion, the revelation

he received from Jesus, and his travels were the absolute truth. It was important that the Galatians understood the truth of these facts. These things provide proof of his apostleship, and therefore his authority as a spokesman for God.

2. ***“Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia”***: See the maps on pages i and ii of the appendix. In Acts 9:30 we are told that when the brethren in Jerusalem found out about the plot to kill Paul they secretly sent him to Caesarea then on to Tarsus, which is located in the NW Corner of Cilicia. Later, Barnabas found Paul at Tarsus and the two of them went down to Antioch, which is the chief city in the region of Syria (Acts 11:25-26).
3. ***“And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ”***: Judea was the region around Jerusalem and to the SW of the Dead Sea (see the map on page ii of the appendix). Judea and Samaria were the first two regions to have the gospel preach throughout (Acts 1:8). Paul’s purpose here is to further establish his independence of those brethren. Being among the first to receive the gospel, they would have been the most knowledgeable and experience in it. But he did not learn the gospel from them.
4. ***“But they were hearing only, ‘He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy’”***: The churches in Judea knew Paul only by reputation. He had not gone to them to learn his gospel. He had not gone to them to validate his apostleship.
5. ***“And they glorified God in me”***: They glorified God that Paul was no longer persecuting them and that he was in fact helping the spread of the gospel. Though they had never seen him and had no part in his conversion, they had heard of the work that he was doing and showed approval of it. For he preached the same thing that they did, though he never learned his gospel from men.

Questions

Lesson Two

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. What did Paul make known to the brethren in Galatia? Why?
2. What was the source of the gospel preached by Paul? Why is it important for us to know this?
3. Describe Paul's conduct before his conversion.
4. How did Paul compare to his Jewish contemporaries?
5. What was Paul's purpose for providing the information cited in the previous two questions?
6. Who chose Paul to be an apostle?
7. When was he chosen? Explain.
8. What did Paul mean when he said that he "*did not immediately confer with flesh and blood*"?
9. Where did Paul go shortly after his conversion? Where did he go after that?
10. How long after his conversion was it before Paul went to Jerusalem? Who did he meet there?
11. Where did Paul go from Jerusalem?
12. What major cities did Paul visit in the regions of Cilicia and Syria?
13. During his travels, how much time did Paul spend with the other apostles? Explain why this is important to the point of his discussion.

Lesson Three

Galatians 2:1-10

Introduction

1. Having shown that the gospel and his apostleship were from Christ and not men, Paul now shows that he was received as an equal by the other apostles (2:9).
2. Paul proves his authority and stability in the gospel by showing that he will not alter that gospel for any man.

Discussion

I. Paul Travels to Jerusalem with Barnabas (2:1-5).

- A. Paul preached for fourteen years before meeting the other apostles (vs. 1).
 1. ***“Then after fourteen years”***: We can safely assume that this is from the same point as the three year period mentioned in 1:18—Paul’s conversion. This covers the period recorded in Acts 9 through 15. During this time Paul and Barnabas had gone on their first missionary journey and returned to Antioch, which was their base of operation (Acts 13:1-4; 14:26-28). It was during these travels that Paul and Barnabas established the churches in Galatia.
 2. ***“I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me”***: While Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch after their first journey “...*certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, ‘Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.’*” (Acts 15:1). The error of this doctrine had already been made known to Paul, for he had been refuting this teaching while still in Antioch. But that the matter might be settled by all the apostles Paul was sent to Jerusalem (Acts 15:2-6). Titus was a young man who had become a traveling partner and fellow worker with Paul. He is mentioned in 2 Cor. 7, 8, 12, here in Galatians, and Paul addressed one of his letters to him. The fact that Titus was a Gentile is important to Paul’s discussion here.
- B. Traveling to Jerusalem (vs. 1-2; Acts 15).
 1. ***“And I went up by revelation”***: As an apostle sent out by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:4), there were several occasions where Paul was directed in this manner (Acts 16:7). It is evident throughout the New Testament that this type of guidance from the Holy Spirit was restricted to the apostles and prophets as they fulfilled their role in revealing the word of God.
 2. ***“and communicated to them that gospel which I preached among the Gentiles”***: In Acts 15:3-4 Paul and his companions are recorded as relating all that had happened in their first missionary journey to the churches at Phoenicia, Samaria, and finally at Jerusalem. This would have been the first encounter Paul had with all of the other apostles at once. It is important to note that throughout his preaching Paul did not command one Gentile to be circumcised, yet all of the apostles and elders in Jerusalem rejoiced over their conversion. Throughout this section Paul will continue to prove the validity of his apostleship while beginning his arguments against the Judaizing teachers.
 3. ***“but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain”***: This refers to some of the apostles and elders who were of high reputation among the church. It was a wise step to bring this matter to such men privately. This

would give him opportunity to explain the matter thoroughly to them and to give them time to think on it before entering the counsel. “Paul wisely consulted with the apostolic leaders (Acts 15:4) before entering the council, lest, through some misunderstanding, he might encounter their opposition, and so have his work destroyed, for he recognized that if his labors were discountenanced at the fountain-head, all that he had done would be in vain. According to his characteristic use of metaphors, he describes his labors under the figure of the Grecian race” (McGarvey, pg. 256). “If the Jews were to continue in this perverted teaching concerning the Gospel, it would have upset the work of Paul among them” (Zerr, pg. 74).

C. Paul and Titus encounter Judaizing teachers (2:3-5).

1. ***“Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised”***: Titus was a Greek, being of the Gentile nations. By this time the matter of circumcision had been brought before the Jerusalem counsel. If circumcision had been necessary for salvation then Titus would have been compelled to be circumcised. But he wasn’t. If circumcision was profitable for salvation, then this counsel of apostles and elders would have been the time to establish that. But the conclusion of that counsel was the circumcision was not necessary. That Titus came from their not being circumcised was evidence of that.
2. ***“And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in”***: Why would Titus have been compelled to be circumcised in the first place? Because of these false brethren trying to convince Christians to keep the Law of Moses. Possibly Jews pretending to be Christians—to learn of their doctrines in order to seek a way to refute them and turn people away from the faith.
3. ***“who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus”***: These Jews in disguise were spying on the church as wolves in sheep’s clothing in order to learn something of the freedom Christians have in Christ.
4. ***“that they might bring us into bondage”***: Their desire was to find some way by which they could bring Christians back under the bondage of the Law of Moses.
5. ***“to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour”***: Yet, even in the presence of this counsel Titus was not compelled to be circumcised and the true liberty of the gospel was preserved. Through this account Paul showed that his gospel did not change, even while under pressure from these false teachers. In its conclusion the counsel also established the same truth that Paul had been preaching all along. However, as Paul will point out later in his letter, the Christians in Galatia had not been so consistent in their faith.
6. ***“that the truth of the gospel might continue with you”***: Paul was victorious over the false teachers. His labor in preaching the gospel was not in vain. Because he, Titus, and the other apostles resisted the false teachers, the Galatians were able to continue in the freedom that they had in Christ. It is important to note that it was this freedom, which Paul and the other apostles had defended, that the Galatians were now giving up by listening to false teachers.

II. Paul and His Apostleship Received by the Other Apostles (2:6-10).

A. Those who seemed to be something added nothing to Paul (vs. 6).

1. ***“But from those who seem to be something—whoever they are”***: These may be the same people of reputation as in 2:2. They seemed to be something in the minds of other men; i.e. have high reputations. It is a tendency of men (even Christians) to exalt other

men like the apostles higher than they ought to (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4-7). In the world and among those who are worldly minded the best way to spread one's reputation is to be introduced to other men of high reputation. If Paul desired to be validated as an apostle, the Jerusalem conference would have been the best place to do it. He would have been in the presence of the apostles and elders there. However...

2. ***"it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man"***: The position and reputation of men make no difference to Paul as to his apostleship or service to God. Neither their opinion of him nor their validation of his apostleship affected anything, for he was appointed by God and not men and did not need the approval of men. God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11), therefore God did not need Paul to be approved by men in order to use him in His service.
 3. ***"for those who seem to be something added nothing to me"***: Here Paul begins to answer the question as to his relationship to the other apostles. Was he the same as them or was he a "lesser" apostle? He says that they added nothing to his authority or to his knowledge and understanding of the gospel. Paul shows here that "He was himself a pillar of equal altitude [equal to the other apostles], and no more to be measured by them than they by him" (McGarvey, 257).
- B. Paul was appointed to the Gentiles as Peter was to the Jews (Vs. 7-8).
1. ***"But on the contrary"***: Contrary to the thought that Paul was a lesser apostle and needed the approval of the other apostles.
 2. ***"when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter"***: It was clear to the other apostles that Paul was in every way equal to them. The "uncircumcised" refers to the Gentiles. The "circumcised" refers to the Jews. Based on all that Paul had related to the other apostles concerning his conversion of the Gentiles, they were able to see that he had indeed been appointed by God to be an apostle to the Gentiles. They recognized that even though he did not receive his gospel from them, he preached the same thing as they did. His witness of the resurrection and appointment by Christ also made him equal. Thus they were able to see that just as Peter led the way in the conversion of the Jews beginning in Acts 2:14, so Paul was leading the way in the conversion of the Gentiles.
 3. ***"for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles"***: Their apostleship was to bear witness of Christ to men. God was the One who worked effectively in Peter to bear witness of Christ to the Jews. We see the Holy Spirit being poured out in Acts 2:1-4, the boldness and wisdom given Peter and the others by the Holy Spirit in Acts 3-6, God working through Peter to take the gospel to Cornelius in Acts 10, and on the eve before Peter's scheduled execution God enabled Peter to escape from prison with the help of an angel in Acts 12. All the while Peter was performing signs and wonders, even raising Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9:36ff). All this was done to further the spread of the gospel among the Jews. Thus *"God worked effectively in Peter."* In the book of Acts beginning from chapter twelve it is evident that just as God worked effectively in Peter He also worked effectively in Paul as he preached to the Gentiles. The miracles which accompanied the apostles were God's stamp of approval that their gospel was from Him. Thus, God, through the signs which He had done through Paul and the work which Paul had accomplished by that power, showed all men that he was the apostle to the Gentiles (read Heb. 2:4).

- C. James, Cephas, and John give Paul the right hand of fellowship (vs. 9-10).
1. ***“And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars”***: Pillars represent strength and support. When this figure is applied to men it refers to the strength and support they supply to an organization. James, Cephas (Peter), and John were leaders and as such, they seemed to be pillars in the church.
 2. ***“perceived the grace that had been given to me”***: To perceive is “to know by experience or observation” (Vine’s). These men, by observing the works that God had done through Paul, understood that he was the same as them. Paul refers to this as the “grace” that was given to him because this office was not something that he could have earned or attained by his own power. Rather, it was given by God, granted to Paul despite his previous sins against the name of Christ.
 3. ***“They gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised”***: Seeing that he had been appointed by God just as they had been, they gave him the right hand of fellowship. This fellowship is a working together. These pillars agreed that they would continue to preach among the Jews, being in fellowship with Paul as he preached among the Gentiles. They gave the right hand of fellowship because, even though their work was being done in two different spheres, the gospel that they preached was exactly the same. “Fellowship” described their relationship as they worked together as servants of God toward a common goal. This is a great testimony toward the apostleship of Paul, not because he needed the approval of these men, but because these “pillars” were respected even by those who questioned Paul’s authority. Thus, by continuing to question Paul’s apostleship the naysayers would not only find themselves fighting against Paul, but also against the other apostles, and therefore against God because the apostles’ fellowship was with God (1 John 1:3).
 4. ***“They desired only that we should remember the poor”***: Though Paul and Barnabas were set for the preaching of the gospel in other regions, the apostles and elders in Jerusalem requested that they not forget the poor Christians in Judea. Their poverty may have been from natural disaster or persecution. There had been a famine in that area once before, during which Paul delivered aid from the saints in Antioch to the saints in Judea according to Acts 11:27-30. Paul also makes mention of caring for needy saints in 1 Cor. 16 and 2 Cor. 8-9.
 5. ***“the very thing which I also was eager to do”***: Paul had such a love for his brethren that he did not need to be asked to remember the poor. He was eager to help in any way possible and encourage those to whom he preached to do the same. Such completes the unity and harmony between him and the other apostles. He had “a sincere love of the brethren” as all Christians should have (1 Pet. 1:22).

Questions

Lesson Three

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. How many years had passed after Paul's conversion before he met with the other apostles (besides Peter)? Why is this important?
2. In Acts 15:1-2, what was Paul's response to those who taught that circumcision was necessary for salvation?
3. Why did Paul go to Jerusalem from Antioch? Who sent him?
4. Who accompanied him to Jerusalem?
5. What did Paul do when he first arrived at Jerusalem? Why?
6. Who tried to compel Titus to be circumcised?
7. What was their purpose for associating with the Christians at Jerusalem?
8. What did Paul mean by "*bring us into bondage*"?
9. What was the response of Paul and Titus toward these men?
10. How did this benefit the Galatians?
11. What was the response of the other apostles to the apostleship of Paul?
12. Did their opinion affect in any way Paul's authority or apostleship? Explain.
13. Why were the other apostles so willing to accept Paul?
14. What does "right hand of fellowship" mean?
15. What request did James, Cephas, and John make of Paul and Barnabas? How did Paul respond?

Lesson Four

Galatians 2:11-21

Introduction

1. In this section Paul gives an account in which he rebukes Peter for hypocrisy.
2. Paul's response to Peter's hypocrisy served three purposes:
 - a. It showed that Paul was in no way inferior to Peter as an apostle. This will bring his discussion on this matter to a close.
 - b. Paul makes his first point concerning hypocrisy and the futility of Christians keeping the Law of Moses.
 - c. It provides an introduction for Paul to begin his discussion on the relationship between the Law, Christ, and Christians.

Discussion

I. Peter and Others Caught Up in Hypocrisy (2:11-13).

- A. Peter's hypocrisy (vs. 11-12).
 1. **"Now, when Peter had come to Antioch"**: Sometime after the Jerusalem counsel (we do not know how long, possibly sometime between Acts 15:30 and 36) Peter traveled up to Antioch where Paul and Barnabas were.
 2. **"I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed"**: While Peter was in Antioch Paul saw it necessary to rebuke him to his face. Peter had actually been the cause for the hypocrisy that was taking place among the Jewish Christians in Antioch.
 3. **"For before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles"**: James, who was still in Jerusalem, sent a group of Jewish brethren to Antioch. Before they arrived Peter would freely associate with his Gentile brethren. This is significant because according to Jewish tradition it was unlawful for Jews to eat with Gentiles. But in Christ the old law, and therefore the division between Jews and Gentiles, was abolished. The two had become one (Eph. 2:14-16). Therefore it was good and right for Peter to eat with his Gentile brethren and to eat whatever food they put before him.
 4. **"but when they came he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision"**: When the other Jewish brethren arrived Peter ceased from eating with the Gentiles. He separated himself from the Gentiles, as if following again the customs of the Jews. This was especially strange as in Acts 10 Peter was the first person to show that there was no longer a separation between Jews and Gentiles. In Acts 11 he defended this truth to his fellow Jews and continued to do so during the Jerusalem conference in Acts 15. But while in Antioch he reverted back to his prejudicial Jewish customs. Why? Because he *"feared those who were of the circumcision."* Peter played the hypocrite by separating himself from the Gentiles in order to gain the good opinion of his fellow Jews. He contradicted the very truth that he had previously defended.
- B. Barnabas and others carried away with their hypocrisy (vs. 13).
 1. **"The rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him"**: In 2:11 Paul said that Peter *"was to be blamed."* Evidently he was the first one to withdraw from the Gentiles so that the other Jews followed in his example of hypocrisy. The truth about the Gentiles was not a

new truth. As mentioned before, it was something Peter had learned, taught, and defended on several occasions. Thus, by playing the hypocrite Peter not only contradicted the very truth which he had previously defended, but was also influencing others to do the same.

2. **“so that even Barnabas was carried away in their hypocrisy”**: This says something of the power of peer pressure. Barnabas had been Paul’s companion for the past eleven years or so, both converting and associating with Gentiles. He had helped Paul defend the church against the error of the Judaizing teachers in Acts 15. Yet even he was caught up in hypocrisy, following Peter and the others in keeping the traditions of the old law.

II. Paul Withstands Peter In The Presence of All (2:14-21).

- A. The Jews were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel (vs. 14 a.)
 1. Paul’s rebuke in this section shows that Peter was not infallible (contrary to the legends believe about him among some of the denominations today). It also shows that Paul was in no way inferior to Peter. His authority as an apostle before God was such that when his fellow apostles were carried away in sin he was in a position to rebuke them. If Peter (possibly the more prominent apostle in the minds of many) received Paul’s rebuke concerning these things, who were the Galatians to reject his instructions in this letter?
 2. **“But when I saw”**: Though Barnabas and the rest of the Jews had been carried away after Peter’s example, Paul saw the twisted nature of what was taking place (Heb. 5:14).
 3. **“that they were not straight forward about the truth of the gospel”**: *The KJV words it, “they walked not uprightly.”* They knew the truth of the gospel and of the purification of the Gentiles. They knew that in Christ there was no separation between Jew and Gentile. And yet they acted contrary to that knowledge, choosing rather to walk under the bondage of the old law because they feared men rather than God. When we today know what the Bible commands and we choose to do the contrary to that, we are following in this same hypocrisy. When we fear men more than God, seek our own pleasures over the will of God, or do anything contrary to the truth of the gospel we are *to blame* just as Peter was.
- B. Paul publicly rebukes Peter; justification by faith, not by the law (vs. 14a-16).
 1. **“I said to Peter before them all”**: Peter’s sin was a public sin. He not only sinned before all, but caused others to follow his example. In such cases God says that the rebuke must also be public. What Paul does here is a good example of how things should be done in similar situations in the church today (1 Tim. 5:19-20). Thus, Paul rebukes Peter in the presence of all so that *“all may fear.”*
 2. **“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?”**: From Acts 10 onward Peter had been living like a Gentile (no longer seeing the need to follow the customs of the Jews). He was born a Jew, but no longer lived as a Jew. Yet here, while in Antioch, Peter was compelling Gentiles to start living like Jews. Paul asked why. If Peter had been freed from such bondage in Christ, why would he try to put the Gentiles under that bondage for the sake of his Jewish brethren?
 3. **“We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles”**: Paul and Peter had grown up knowing the Law of God. They knew about truth and righteousness, purity and defilement. They understood those things, being trained up by them. But such knowledge had caused much pride in their hearts. They viewed the Gentiles as being beneath them,

seeing that they “*were without God in the world,*” and had no covenant relationship with God (Eph. 2:11-12).

4. “***knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ***”: In spite of their pride as Jews, both Paul and Peter had come to know through the gospel that they could not be saved by the works of the law. Though they were Jews seeking zealously the traditions of their fathers, they learned in Christ that none of that could save them; that only faith in Christ apart from the Law of Moses could bring salvation (Rom. 3:21-22).
5. “***even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law***”: Paul and Peter had escaped the prideful thinking of the Jews. They had seen their need to come to Christ by faith. They had been justified by Christ and had therefore given up their vain attempts to be justified by the law.
6. “***for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified***”: Quoting from Ps. 143:2 Paul summarizes the truth that both he and Peter had come to know so well, that “*by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.*” That is, no man can be saved by doing the works of the Law of Moses. Keeping the traditions of the Jews was worthless for salvation and certainly did not make them righteous.

C. Christ is not a minister of sin (vs. 17).

1. “***But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves are found sinners***”: The Jews viewed themselves as superior to the Gentiles. Yet even they were forced to concede that they were sinners; that even though they had the law they were in fact equal to the Gentiles. “*What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*” (Rom. 3:9, 23).
2. “***is Christ therefore a minister of sin?***”: Peter and the rest of the Jews in Antioch were found to be sinners while under the law; therefore they left the law behind in order to seek justification in Christ. Yet here, after having left the law behind, they were found trying to leave Christ behind so that they may once again seek the law. Is Christ a minister of sin? In His promise to make them righteous, has He in fact made them sinners that they should turn away from Him in order to pursue the righteousness of the law?
3. “***Certainly not!***”: Or as the KJV read, “*God forbid.*” “An expression of strong denial and aversion, rebutting an unjustifiable inference from his teaching” (Lipscomb, pg. 213).

D. Building again the thing that we destroyed (vs. 18).

1. “***For if I build again those things which I destroyed***”: In Christ the old law with its condemnation was destroyed (Col. 2:14). Through His death Jesus “*broke down the middle wall of separation*” between Jew and Gentile (Eph. 2:14). For the Jews, “*that thing*” was destroyed when they came to Christ for their justification. They “*died to the law*” and were made alive in Christ (Rom. 7:4). However, by separating themselves from the Gentiles and following again the traditions of the law, Peter and the rest of the Jews in Antioch were in effect rebuilding the very thing that they destroyed when they came to Christ.
2. “***I make myself a transgressor***”: When a person who has come to Christ seeks the law again, he transgresses against Christ. In Rom. 7 Paul describes it as spiritual adultery. By seeking the law they also became transgressors of that law, “*For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all*” (James 2:10).

- E. I have been crucified with Christ (vs. 19-20).
1. ***“For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God”***: The law was what brought the Jews to Christ. It spoke to them about Christ (John 5:39, 46). It looked forward to the coming of the Christ. It was according to that law that Jesus was offered up and His blood shed in order to provide a means of forgiveness. Therefore Paul was able to say *“through the law.”* But by dying on the cross Jesus fulfilled the law so that there was no longer any need for it. Therefore, any Jew who came to Christ for salvation died to that law—was separated and freed from it. Having died to the law they were no longer condemned by it, their sins were taken away, and they were given new life (Rom. 6:4). Thus they were made alive to God.
 2. ***“I have been crucified with Christ”***: As a result of the above principle, Paul saw himself as having been crucified with Christ. Just as Christ died on the cross, Paul died to the law and to sin. Having been crucified, made dead to those things, he can no longer have anything to do with that old life.
 3. ***“it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me”***: Since Paul had been given a new life, he saw his life as no longer belonging to himself, but to Christ (1 Cor. 6:20; 2 Cor. 5:15). Paul was so committed to this truth that he determined in all things that he would live sin such that way that it would be as if it were Christ living in him. He would accomplish the will of Christ, make the kind of sacrifices Christ would make, and do the works that Christ would do. Thus it would be as if Christ were living in him.
 4. ***“and the life which I now live in the flesh”***: Physically Paul was still alive. But having died to the law and now belonging to Christ, what was he to do with his physical fleshly body?
 5. ***“I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved Me and gave Himself for me”***: The only answer was to live by faith in the Son of God. Not live according to the law or according to his own desires. For Paul to live by faith was for him to live in submission to will of Christ. As he believed Christ was Lord and King so he would live his life by faith in that truth, making Christ the Lord and King over his life.
- F. If righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain (vs. 21).
1. ***“I do not set aside the grace of God”***: By seeking the law one is trying to be justified by its works. By picking up the law, one sets Christ aside along with His salvation. Unlike Peter and the rest of the Jews, Paul was not so willing to *“set aside the grace of Christ”* in order to seek the law.
 2. ***“For if righteousness comes through the law, Christ died in vain.”***: Christ died because the law did not have the ability to make man righteous. If it did Christ’s death would not have been necessary. Paul’s point to Peter, and ultimately to the Galatians, was that any person who turned from Christ in order to seek the things of the law testified by his deeds that Christ was worthless to him. From this point Paul will turn his rebuke upon the Galatians in chapter three.

Questions

Lesson Four

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. Where did Peter go?
2. What did Paul do while Peter was there?
3. What was Peter's character before the men sent by James arrived? Was this a good thing or a bad thing? Explain.
4. What was his character after they arrived? Was this a good thing or a bad thing? Explain.
5. What motivated Peter to act like this?
6. Was anybody else affected by what Peter was doing? Explain.
7. What did Paul mean by "*they were not straight forward about the truth*"?
8. Why did Paul single Peter out?
9. Who was present when Paul approached Peter? Why did Paul address Peter while they were present? Why did he not do it in private?
10. Explain Paul's meaning in Gal. 2:14 b.
11. What did the Jews learn about their own spiritual condition and about the law when they came to Christ?
12. What did Paul mean by "*if I build again those things which I destroyed*"? Is it possible for we who are alive today to do this same thing? Explain.
13. Why did Paul say he had been crucified with Christ?
14. How did Christ live in Paul?
15. If a person can be justified by doing the works of the law, then what necessary conclusion must we make concerning Christ according to Gal. 3:21?

Lesson Five

Galatians 3:1-14

Introduction

1. In this section Paul uses the foundation established in the previous chapter to begin his instruction concerning the futility of following the Law of Moses.
2. Paul has rebuked Peter for returning to the things of the law and has shown the foolishness of such.
3. Now he will show the Galatians that they too have been foolish for attempting to go back to the law.

Discussion

I. Paul's Concern for the Spiritual Condition of the Galatians (3:1-4)

- A. The Galatians were bewitched (vs. 1).
 1. ***"Oh foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?"***: "Bewitched" means to "fascinate by false pretenses" (Strong's), "to mislead by an evil eye, and so to charm, bewitch" (Vine's). Paul showed the Galatians that they were foolish because they allowed themselves to be "charmed" away from the liberty that is in Christ. See Jude 6. Although they knew the truth, they still took more interest in the doctrines of false teachers than in the truth of the gospel.
 2. ***"that you should not obey the truth"***: Note: This statement is not included in some translations. Jesus said in John 8:32 that the truth can make a person free. One cannot obey both truth and error and be accepted. Because the Galatians had foolishly heeded the doctrines of the false teachers they were prevented from obeying the truth.
 3. ***"before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?"***: When Paul converted the Galatians he preached to them *"Christ and Him crucified"* (1 Cor. 2:2). "Christ had been so clearly and forcibly preached unto them, that he had been, as it were, crucified in their very presence, and before their very eyes; so that they had only to look to him to find an antidote to the Satanic poison which was destroying them" (McGarvey, pg. 263). This was what perplexed Paul. He made sure through his preaching that the Galatians knew full well the justification that was in Christ. Yet, knowing those truths, the Galatians still followed after the false teachers.
- B. How did they receive the Spirit? (vs. 2).
 1. ***"This only I want to learn from you?"***: Paul was forcing them to take a good hard look at the manner in which they received the gospel. The purpose of this question was more for drawing certain truths (which they already knew) to their attention than satisfying his own curiosity.
 2. ***"Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?"***: Wherever the apostles preached the gospel the Spirit accompanied them in the working of miracles and revealing of God's word (Mark 16:20). When Paul preached the gospel he did not preach the works of the law. He taught always in every church that salvation comes by faith. Those who receive the gospel and the Spirit of God do so based upon their faith in Christ Jesus, apart from the law. Did they receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law (being circumcised, keeping food laws and feast days, etc.)? The answer is no. The point being made by this question is this: If they were made free through the Spirit by faith apart

from the works of the law, then why would they give up that freedom in order to pursue the things of the law?

- C. They began in the Spirit but were trying to be made perfect in the flesh (vs. 3-4).
1. ***“Are you so foolish?”***: The Galatians were known for their cunning. Yet by going over to the law after receiving justification by faith in Christ shows a level of foolishness that absolutely confounded Paul.
 2. ***“Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”***: As Paul will point out in chapter 4, the law was meant to train God’s people as children, but Christ came that they might grow up to maturity. The Galatians received that maturity in Christ through the revelation of the Spirit. But if they began in the Spirit, why would they try to become perfect by reverting back to the childish things of the law “with its fleshly forms, rights, and ordinances”? (ibid. pg. 264)
 3. ***“Have you suffered so many things in vain?”***: While Paul and Barnabas were preaching in the region of Galatia both they and the new converts were under constant persecution by Jews and idol worshipers (Acts 14:4-6, 19-20, 22). The most constant threat, however, came from the Jews as they would follow Paul from city to city, turning people against him, persecuting Christians, and causing riots in the cities. The Galatians had suffered all of those things with Paul. But if, after they had suffered so many things at the hands of the Jews, they now turn to the law of the Jews, their suffering would have been pointless. Have they suffered so many things only to turn to toward that which caused their suffering in the first place?
 4. ***“if indeed it was in vain?”***: There was still hope. Paul did not seem fully committed to the idea that the Galatians were lost to Christ. They still had opportunity to turn back and cast off the old law so that their suffering would not have been in vain.

II. Justification by Faith (3:5-9).

- A. God supplies the Spirit by the hearing of faith (vs. 5).
1. ***“Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among us”***: God was the One who supplied the Spirit. He sent the Spirit in the name of Jesus (John 14:26). The Spirit revealed the will of God and accomplished all according to the will of God (1 Cor. 2:10). That Spirit was brought to the Galatians by Paul.
 2. ***“does He do it by the works of the Law”***: Did they receive the Spirit of God by doing the works of the law of Moses? Did Paul command them to be circumcised before they could receive the Spirit? Did they have to begin keeping feast days in order to receive the Spirit?
 3. ***“or by the hearing of faith?”***: Or did they receive the Spirit after hearing the gospel preached by Paul and believing in Jesus Christ as the Son of God? The obvious answer here is that they received the Spirit by the hearing of faith. Paul is whittling away their confidence in the law showing that all the good things that they had received were through faith in Christ and not through the works of the law.
- B. Abraham was justified by faith, not by works (vs. 6-7).
1. ***“Just as Abraham ‘believed and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’”*** Abraham came to God because of his faith. By faith Abraham left his home and his family and wandered in a foreign land, fully trusting in the wisdom and power of God. Thus, Abraham’s faith was accounted to him for righteousness. His righteousness had nothing to do with the Law of Moses because the law had not been given at that time.

2. ***“Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham”***: Many of the Jews believed they were Abraham’s seed because of their physical lineage. But of all the people of the Jews, only those who followed in Abraham’s example of faith would truly be his children. For only those who manifested the same faith that he did were made righteous as he was. *“If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham”* (John 8:39). Just as the law had nothing to do with making Abraham righteous, it had nothing to do with making the Jews righteous.
- C. God foretold that He would justify nations by faith (vs. 8-9).
1. ***“And the Scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith”***: The very nature of the promise given to Abraham in Gen. 18:18 and again in Gen. 22:18 shows that all nations would be able to receive righteousness the same way Abraham did and that righteousness would not be limited to the Jews alone.
 2. ***“preached the gospel to Abraham before hand”***: The gospel is the good news of salvation to the whole world. This hope of salvation was preached to Abraham in the promise that was given because, as mentioned above, it showed that all nations would be blessed. Christ would be the one to bring about that blessing.
 3. ***“saying, ‘In you all the nations shall be blessed’”***: This was the gospel that was preached to Abraham, i.e. salvation to all nations. Therefore, just as the Jews were Abraham’s seed by faith and not according to the law, so the Gentiles would become children of Abraham by faith apart from the law. If the Galatians thought they could be made righteous by keeping the law then they were not Abraham’s seed, the promise given to Abraham did not apply to them, and therefore the blessing which came through Christ could not benefit them.
 4. ***“So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham”***: “As Abraham secured the blessing through faith, all who believe as he did, whether Jews or Gentiles, will be blessed with him” (Lipscomb, pg. 224). If this blessing only came to those who were Abraham’s children according to the flesh then not one Gentile could be saved. However, since the blessing comes to those who are of the faith of Abraham and not the physical lineage of Abraham, all men can be blessed. But those who seek the law deny this very truth and therefore nullify the blessing and their own salvation.

III. Freed From the Curse of the Law (3:10-14).

- A. As many are under the works of the law are under a curse (vs. 10).
1. ***“For as many as are of the works of the law”***: Those who choose to live their lives according to the Law of Moses. It did not matter if one tried to keep the whole law as the Jews did, if one was circumcised only for the sake of the law, or if one simply wanted to justify their works by referring to individual parts of the law, they were all under the law. To seek justification from the law in one thing was to be bound to the law in all things (James 2:11).
 2. ***“are under a curse”***: This curse was the condemnation of sin. If a person sought to keep the law they were bound to keep the whole law and no longer had access to forgiveness in Christ. They were cursed because the law could not (and still cannot) make them righteous, therefore they were stuck with no way of escape since they had forsaken Christ. Peter described the law as a yoke which the Jews were unable to bear in Acts 15:10.
 3. ***“for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all the things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.’”***: Just as the Old Testament scriptures

taught justification by faith, they also taught condemnation upon any who seek justification from the law. To “*continue in all the things which are written*” means perfect obedience. There is just one problem, “*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*” (Rom. 3:23). Therefore, Paul’s point to the Galatians was this: if they chose to follow the Law of Moses then they were choosing to live under an unbearable curse from which nothing could deliver them.

B. The Old Testament taught justification by faith, not by the law (vs. 11-12).

1. “***But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident***”: It is clear that no person can be justified by the law. This is a truth that only the hard hearted would be able to miss (2 Cor. 3:14). Why is this truth so evident? Because the scriptures clearly state...
2. “***for, ‘the just shall live by faith’***”: This is found in Habakkuk 2:4. “The full significance of this is as if it said, ‘the law of Moses is not the same system as the faith of the New Testament’” (Zerr, pg. 78). This statement shows justification through faith without any mention of the works of the law, thus excluding the works of the law as providing any merit to one’s righteousness or salvation.
3. “***Yet the law is not of faith***”: Justification by the works of the law and justification by faith are exact opposites; they are mutually exclusive. Where there is one the other cannot be for the law is not of faith. If one were to be justified by the law there would be no need for faith in Jesus Christ. All they would have to do is keep every commandment perfectly. There would be no need for trust or reliance upon God. It is not of faith.
4. “***but, ‘the man who does them shall live by them’***”: The person who would be able to do all the commandments of the law would be able to live by fulfilling those commandments. But he would have to keep them perfectly to avoid the condemnation of the law.

C. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law (vs. 13-14).

1. “***Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law***”: “Redeemed” means “to buy...purchasing, as of a slave...deliverance” (Vine’s). Christians are “*bought at a price*” (1 Cor. 6:20). Paul was showing the Galatians just how foolish they were being. Jesus died on the cross in order to free them from the bondage of the law and of sin and to redeem them from the curse brought about by their inability to keep that law. Yet the Galatians were foolishly going back into the very thing from which Jesus died to deliver them.
2. “***having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’)***”: The curse here is different than the curse placed on those who try to keep the law. Jesus did not become condemnation of sin for us. Rather, it is a figure in which Moses describes anyone who hangs on a tree “*accursed of God*” (Deut. 21:23). Jesus became accursed by hanging on the cross in His physical punishment so that we might be redeemed from the spiritual curse which was brought about by the law.
3. “***That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ***”: Jesus died so that the blessing promised to Abraham could be accessible to men from every nation, not just the Jews.
4. “***that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.***”: When a man from any nation puts his faith in the salvation of Christ as Abraham did he will be a child of Abraham being made righteous on account of his faith. For Jesus has delivered us out from under the law. Those who seek justification by faith in Christ are given the “*Spirit of life in Christ*” (Rom. 8:2) which cannot come through the law.

Questions

Lesson Five

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. What had the false teachers done to the Galatians? Explain what this means.
2. How did this affect their ability to obey the truth? Why?
3. How was Jesus portrayed among them?
4. What was the one thing Paul wanted to learn from the Galatians? What was the obvious answer to his question?
5. What did Paul mean by “began in the Spirit”? What did he mean by “trying to be made perfect in the flesh”?
6. What was the cause of the Galatians’ suffering? Why would they have suffered in vain?
7. Does God supply the Spirit by the works of the law or the hearing of faith? What that mean?
8. What was accounted to Abraham for righteousness?
9. What makes a person a child of Abraham? How does trying to keep the law affect this?
10. What did the scriptures foresee?
11. What is the condition of those who are under the works of the law?
12. How did Jesus become a curse for us?
13. What did the Old Testament teach concerning justification by faith vs. the law? Provide an Old Testament scripture which supports you answer.
14. What did Christ redeem us from? Explain.
15. What is the result of this redemption according to Gal. 3:14?

Lesson Six

Galatians 3:15-25

Introduction

1. In this section Paul continues to lay down the principles of justification by faith.
2. He shows from the scriptures that Christ is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham.
3. The Law of Moses was never meant to bring salvation. Salvation came through the promise given to Abraham and the law was only temporary.

Discussion

I. Christ, the Promised Seed of Abraham (3:15-18).

A. An Unbreakable Covenant (vs. 15).

1. ***“Brethren, I speak in the manner of men”***: To illustrate the sanctity and unbreakable nature of God's covenant with Abraham, Paul uses human covenants as an example. *“In the manner of men”* refers to that which is commonly understood and practiced among men—the nature of human covenants or contracts.
2. ***“Though it is only a man's covenant”***: A covenant that is made between two men is only a man's covenant. There is nothing of God in that covenant. It is made by men, it is sealed by men, and it is upheld by men.
3. ***“yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it.”*** Nevertheless, once that covenant is made or confirmed, it is viewed by men to be unbreakable. If, after the covenant has been established, one of the parties decides he does not like an aspect of that covenant, he cannot change it and he cannot destroy it. The application to be made is that as men view their own covenants as sacred and binding, a covenant with God is more so.

B. Only one Seed (vs. 16).

1. ***“Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made”***: Drawing from his illustration, Paul applies the principles of human covenants to the covenant made to Abraham. God gave a promise to Abraham. That promise was the basis for the covenant which God sealed with an oath (Heb. 6:13-18). Having made such a covenant with Abraham and his Seed, there was absolutely nothing that would stand in the way of God's fulfilling His promise.
2. ***“He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ”***: Here Paul examines the grammar used in the scriptures to show who exactly God made this covenant with. The Scripture quoted is Gen. 22:15-18. In this passage God promised Abraham that He would multiply his seed and make him a great nation. However, the final part of the promise states, *“And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,”* emphasizing the spiritual nature of this promise (i.e. the blessing was for all nations, not just physical Israel). Paul is showing how that spiritual blessing was to come about. By using the singular form “seed” instead of “seeds,” God was showing that the promise would not come through the physical nation as a whole, but through one “Seed”—Christ. Christ, as Abraham's Seed, is multiplied, for when men from every nation come to Christ they become children of Abraham by faith and therefore partakers of his eternal

spiritual promise. Those who come to Christ make up that spiritual nation, the citizens of which have become as the sand of the seashore.

C. The law, which came after the covenant, cannot break the covenant (vs. 17-18).

1. ***“And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later”***: This promise was given to Abraham during his lifetime. The law on the other hand did not come into effect until four hundred and thirty years after Abraham. Thus, when law was established God’s promise to Abraham was already in effect and had been for over four hundred years. Therefore, the law could do nothing to change God’s promise.
2. ***“cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ”***: Since the law did not come into effect until after the promise was given to Abraham, it had no power to change or to annul the promise. God promised to bless all nations through Abraham’s Seed, not through the Law of Moses. Because of the binding nature of covenants, the establishment of the law could not change or annul anything. The promise still remained that the blessing to every nation must come through Abraham’s Seed.
3. ***“that it should make the promise of no effect”***: If the blessing to all nations had come through the law then there would have been no need for Abraham’s Seed. The promise to Abraham would have been worthless. But because of the nature of covenants, that could never happen. The blessing still had to come through the Seed of Abraham apart from the law.
4. ***“For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise”***: The promise given to Abraham became an inheritance to Abraham’s children. An inheritance can only be given by the father to the children. If we are to be Abraham’s children then the inheritance must come through him (via the promise given to him). If it comes through the law then it cannot come through the promise. But if the inheritance comes through the law then we are children of the law and not of Abraham. The two are mutually exclusive. The blessing could only come through one. Would it come through the law or through the promise to Abraham?
5. ***“but God gave it to Abraham by promise”***: Since God gave the promise to Abraham there is no getting around it. The law could not, did not, nor every will be able to bless all nations. It is worthless in that respect. The children of Abraham by faith cannot gain their inheritance by the keeping of the Law of Moses. It can only come through the promised Seed—Christ. Therefore Peter said in Acts 4:12, *“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”* If a person thinks they can gain an inheritance by following the law then they are throwing away the promise and with it the only true source of salvation.

II. The Purpose of the Law (3:19-24).

A. The law was added because of transgressions till the Seed should come (vs. 19-20).

1. ***“What purpose then does the law serve?”***: Having firmly established that the law did nothing to bring about righteousness or the blessing promised to Abraham, some may be forced to ask, “Then what use was the law? If it doesn’t help us become children of Abraham or gain an inheritance then why did God give the law in the first place?”
2. ***“It was added because of transgressions”***: “It was added because of the sins of the people, to train and fit and qualify them to receive the seed to whom the promise was made” (Lipscomb, pg. 232). “It was added by God for the purpose of revealing and manifesting to man his sinfulness...” (McGarvey, pg. 268). Both of these statements accurately describe the purpose of the law. On the one

hand, Israel had shown from the time they left Egypt to when they arrived at Sinai that they could not follow God faithfully on their own. But also, men throughout the generations needed to understand the horrible nature of sin and their inability to be righteous in and of themselves. Thus, the law teaches us about the nature of sin and our need for God.

3. ***“till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made”***: The word *till* suggests that the law was only meant to be temporary. Its purpose was to get the people ready to receive the Seed through whom the promise would be fulfilled. Once that Seed came and the promise fulfilled, there would no longer be any need for the law.
4. ***“and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator”***: Acts 7:53 and Heb. 2:2 speak of the law as being appointed through angels. In Deut. 33:2 it says that the *“fiery law”* came from His right hand with *“ten thousands of saints.”* Thus, the law differed from the promise in that it was not given by God personally, but by angels, and then through a mediator. Concerning this Matthew Henry comments, “It was given to different persons, and in a different manner from the promise, and therefore for different purposes” (New Modern English Electronic Database). We might reasonably conclude that Paul’s point is this: The fact that the law was given through angels and then by the hand of a mediator is an indication of its inferiority and temporal nature when compared to the personal eternal nature of the promise given to Abraham by God Himself. A similar distinction is made between the old and New covenants in Heb. 9:23-26.
5. ***“Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one”***: Where there is a mediator there are of necessity two separate parties. For the mediator is not a mediator for one only, but for two—a go-between. But the promise given to Abraham had no mediator. God is one, and he delivered the promise to Abraham personally. Its very nature as a covenant combined with the nature of its delivery show it to in every way superior to the law: 1) given by God personally, 2) established as a covenant before the law, 3) designed to bless all nations, not just one.

B. The law is not against the promises of God (vs. 21).

1. ***“Is the law then against the promises of God?”***: If the promise of God was to bring a blessing to all nations while the law in fact brought a curse (3:10) does the law actually fight against the promise? Another way of looking at this statement is this: Is a rivalry between the two; a struggle to determine through which means man would be made righteous?
2. ***“Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life”***: God forbid! (KJV) God does not act in such a contrary manner. If righteousness could have come through a law, then perhaps the law would have been a rival to the promise. But there is no rivalry, for it is impossible for any law to give life. There is no law that can bring justification to those who sin. The law only condemns.
3. ***“truly righteousness would have been by the law.”***: If it were possible for righteousness to come through a law then God would have used the law. There would have been no need for the promise. The main point Paul is trying to get across to the Galatians is that no matter how one looks at it, no man can be made righteous by the law. It is an impossibility. Therefore to seek righteousness through the keeping of the law is foolishness and vanity.

C. The law kept all under guard for the faith that would be delivered (vs. 22-23).

1. ***“But the Scripture has confined all under sins”***: Rather than making men righteous or giving a blessing, the Scripture confined or bound them by their sin. It brought

condemnation, for men could not keep the whole law. *“I would not have known sin without the law”* (Rom. 7:7). It showed us the hopeless bondage we were in because of sin, forcing us to realize our absolute need for God.

2. ***“that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe”***: Those who see the need for God’s grace (who realize that they cannot be righteous on their own) learn to look to God for their salvation. Looking to the promise and seeing that it is fulfilled in Christ they believe in Him (and His gospel) as God’s power to save. This was God’s purpose all along: that we should come to Him by faith in His promises (as opposed to trying to be made righteous through the works of the law). If we have faith in the promise of God then we will have faith in Christ who is the fulfillment of that promise. We will seek righteousness through Him and not through the works of the law.
3. ***“But before faith came”***: Paul speaks of time before Christ’s sacrifice. The faith is the truth that must be believed by all who would be saved. It is the system of faith delivered by Christ through His sacrifice and His teachings. It is the gospel.
4. ***“we were kept under guard by the law”***: Before Christ the law kept the Jews under guard from evil and immorality, as if in a spiritual fortress or stronghold. The law was meant to keep the physical descendants of Abraham from becoming as the Gentile nations which Paul described as *“having no hope and without God in the world”* (Eph. 2:13), and again, *“having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God”* (Eph. 4:18). It was because of the law that the Jews were able to understand the nature of God’s righteousness and the need to be righteous.
5. ***“kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed”***: However, the law was only a temporary guard or stronghold. It was designed to keep the Jews in check *until* Christ came through whom they could finally be made righteous.

D. The law was a tutor to bring us to Christ (vs. 24-25).

1. ***“Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ”***: McGarvey describes the duties of a tutor as follows, “...the pedagogue or tutor was usually a slave, whose duty it was to take charge of a boy from his childhood to his majority, shield him from physical and moral evil, accompany him in all his amusement, and, as it were, keep him as a prisoner at large, lest he should in any way injure himself” (pg. 269). The law kept the Jews as “prisoners at large” to instruct them and to restrain them from sinking completely into the ways of the world. It instructed them in righteousness. It prepared them to receive Christ.
2. ***“that we might be justified by faith”***: when the boy has become mature there is no longer a need for the tutor. The tutor has instructed the boy so that when the time comes for him to walk free he knows the right way to go. *“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it”* (Prov. 22:6). The law taught of our need to seek God by faith so that when the time of maturity came we could seek justification by faith in Christ. Christ makes us mature. He removes our need for the tutor.
3. ***“But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor”***: That time of maturity has come. The promise has been fulfilled. Faith has been delivered (Jude 3). Therefore there is no longer any need for a tutor. In Christ we are made free from our bondage and free from our slavery under a tutor. We are able to walk as mature, fully putting our faith in Christ and trusting in the grace of God to make us righteous, and therefore serve Him in righteousness.

Questions

Lesson Six

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. When a covenant is made between two men can it be easily broken? How do God's covenants compare?
2. Who was the *Seed* through whom all nations would be blessed? How can we know for sure?
3. How is it possible for us to become children of Abraham today?
4. Did the law change or affect in any way God's promise to Abraham? Explain,
5. What did Paul mean when he said the law "*was added because of transgressions*"?
6. Did God put a limit on how long the law would be in effect? Explain.
7. What are the differences between the way God delivered the promise and the way God delivered the law?
8. In what way might a person think that the law was against the promise of God?
9. Is it possible for the law to be against the promise of God? Explain.
10. How did the Scripture confine "*all under sin*"?
11. How were we "*kept under guard by the law*"?
12. How did the law act as a tutor?
13. Is one meant to be under a tutor forever? Explain.
14. How does the above answer relate to the Law of Moses and our faith in Christ?

Lesson Seven

Galatians 3:26-4:7

Introduction

1. In the last section Paul showed that justification must come through the promised Seed and that it could by no means come through the law.
2. In this section Paul is illustrating this principle by comparing children with slaves. i.e., those who are free from the law with those who are bound by the law.

Discussion

I. Sons of God through Faith, and Heirs According to the Promise (3:26-29).

A. Sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (vs. 26).

1. ***“For you are all sons of God”***: In order to be an heir one must be a son. Tying into the previous section (24-25), Paul shows here that we have reached maturity. There is no longer any need for the tutor. Emphasis must be placed on the statement, *“you are all.”* The Judaizing teachers sought to make a distinction between those who were circumcised and those who were not. But Paul shows that ALL of the Galatians were equally sons of God, regardless of whether or not they had been circumcised.
2. ***“Through faith in Christ Jesus”***: It is faith that makes us sons of God, not physical characteristics. When we come to Christ by faith we are all equal. By faith in Christ we are able to reach maturity as sons of God. A man is not made mature by following the old law; by continuing to live under the tutor. One must come out from the guard of the tutor and put their faith in Christ, thereby becoming mature children of God.

B. Baptized into Christ (vs. 27-28).

1. ***“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ”***: At what point does our faith result in our being sons of God? At our baptism. Paul says *“For as many of you as...”* This means that only those who were baptized fit this description. Where many today stress faith without baptism, we must see here that Paul combines the two. We are made sons by faith when we are baptized into Christ. *“Into Christ”* implies that having been baptized we belong to Christ and are set to follow Him and not Moses (compare with 1 Cor. 1:12-13).
2. ***“Have put on Christ”***: Spiritually we become sons of God through adoption (4:5). McGarvey notes, “We put on the personality of Christ in the sight of God, and so become, in an individual sense, sons of God” (pp. 269-270). See also Gal. 2:20.
3. ***“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female”***: We do not come to God based upon our own merits. He does not recognize differences in physical attributes. One man is not exalted above another as the Jews believed they were above the Gentiles. Those who kept the law of Moses were not greater than those who did not. In Christ all men are made equal, for we all come to God being tainted by sin, but having faith in Christ to cleanse us of our sins. Paul is not saying here that a man is no longer a man or that a woman is no longer a woman. He is not saying that if a Christian is a slave he no longer needs to serve his master. His point is that in Christ the physical distinctions which are built up in the world which cause one person to look down upon another are taken away in Christ. He made the same point to the Corinthians in 2

Cor. 5:16, “*Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh.*” See also Eph. 2:14-20.

4. “***For you are all one in Christ***”: In Christ all are unified, equally made sons of God. Though common in the world, it was especially characteristic among the Judaizing teachers to look down upon those with weak physical attributes. Slaves and women were severely looked down upon. It may have been the case that the Galatians were making these distinctions as well. Thus Paul instructs them that if they truly are sons of God then they will no longer recognize such distinctions for we are all made one in Christ.

C. If you are Christ’s, you are Abraham’s seed (vs. 29).

1. “***And if you are Christ’s***”: As opposed to belonging to the law of Moses or some other man or organization. If we have obeyed the gospel we belong to Christ. We are in Him, we have put Him on, we are His (1 Cor. 6:20).
2. “***then you are Abraham’s seed***”: Christ is the one Seed to whom the promise was given with Abraham. Therefore, those who come to Him become Abraham’s seed. Here against stressing that those who are of the flesh (circumcision and keeping of the law of Moses) are not Abraham’s seed. Only those who come to Christ.
3. “***and heirs according to the promise***”: Having become Abraham’s children through Christ, we are able to receive the promised inheritance; the blessing that was to come to every nation has come to those who are in Christ.

II. They had been as Children, No Different than Slaves (4:1-3).

A. The heir, as long as he is a child, is the same as the slave (vs. 1).

1. “***Now I say that the heir***”: Paul resumes here the metaphor which he began in 3:24. The heirs were the children of the master.
2. “***as long as he is a child does not differ at all from a slave***”: While they were children there was no distinction between the slave and the master’s son. They were both under the watchful eye of a tutor. One did not have more freedom than the other. They were equally under bondage. Metaphorically this describes those who lived before Christ. It is a comparison of those who thought they were righteous by doing the works of the law (slaves) and those who did the works of the law while putting their faith in God for righteousness (masters). Even though they were both subject to the same law, the difference in their faith was what set them apart.
3. “***though he is master of all***”: Though under the law before Christ, they were receiving the inheritance of the master because they were sons. They walked by faith according to the example of Abraham. Their faith motivated them to be obedient to the law while relying on God for salvation.

B. While a child he is in need of a guardian (vs. 2).

1. “***but is under guardians and stewards***”: Children need training. They need rearing up. The law provided that training for God’s people to teach them about truth, righteousness, sin, morality, their need for God, etc. It kept them under guard with its multitude of regulations and physical punishment for wrong doing to show severity of sin. Men walking by faith learned the manner of obedience that was needed as children through the old law.
2. “***until the time appointed by the father***”: But tutors are only needed for a limited time. When the child is old enough they set out on their own. They are mature. They have been

trained and are now capable of living mature lives without the discipline of the tutor. The father was the one who decided when the time is right for such freedom to be granted.

C. The law was that guardian (vs. 3).

1. ***“Even so we, when we were children”***: This refers to the years before Jesus brought the gospel to mankind. Under the law the Jews were children. Those who lived by faith in Christ (such as David) were heirs according to the promise, but before inheritance could be given God’s people in general needed to grow up.
2. ***“were in bondage”***: Therefore, while under the law they were bound, not only by their sins, but by the commandment of the law for purposes of training, teaching, and rearing. This bondage was a state of preparation.
3. ***“Under the elements of the world.”***: *“Elements”* is defined: “Any first thing, from which the others belonging to some series or composite whole take their rise; an element, first principle” (Thayer’s). “Thus, says the apostle, both Jews and Gentiles, as one common, congregate body, or heirs in God’s sight, were held in bondage either to the law of Moses or some other form of law, which laws are collectively described as the rudiments of the world” (McGarvey, pg. 271). The old law was a rudimentary tool for children. Training wheels, if you will, with its “external rites and ceremonies, pointing beyond themselves to an age of manhood in Christ” (Lipscomb, pg. 238).

III. In Christ they have Received the Adoption as Sons and are No Longer Slaves (4:4-7).

A. With Christ came the adoption as sons (vs. 4-5).

1. ***“But when the fullness of time had come”***: The fullness of time would be when the time was ripe, at the right time. Specifically, this was the time that was *“appointed by the Father”* (4:2). Concerning spiritual maturity this was the time when all things were in place and God was ready to redeem His people from the guardianship of the tutor.
2. ***“God sent forth His son”***: God sent His Son when the time was right. When Jesus began preaching the gospel He said in Mark 1:14, *“The time is fulfilled.”* This Son was that one Seed promised to Abraham which would bless all the nations of the earth. The following statements describe the manner in which the Son was sent.
3. ***“born of a woman”***: Though the Son of God existed before His physical birth (John 1:1), He became flesh (John 1:14) in the same manner men. He was born of a woman. Because of His humanity He is able to sympathize with our weakness and petition the Father as our high priest (Heb. 4:14-15).
4. ***“born under the law”***: When Jesus came into this world He was born under the law as a Jew. He was bound by the same “elements” of that law. He was circumcised and purified according to the law (Luke 2:22-24).
5. ***“to redeem those who were under the law”***: Jesus’ purpose was different from every other man, for He was not only a man, He was *“God with us”* (Matt. 1:23). His purpose was to live under the law perfectly. Being without sin (Heb. 4:15; 1 John 3:5) He was able to offer Himself as a ransom for our sins. From the time the law was given the Jews offered sacrifices year by year as a reminder of sins (Heb. 10:3), but such sacrifices could not take away sin (Heb. 10:1). But Jesus, through His death, did take away sins and thereby redeem men from the law. He did what the law could not do (Rom. 8:3).
6. ***“that we might receive the adoptions as sons”***: Now that Jesus has taken away the childish things we are able to become mature in Him. God the Father is able to receive us as His sons, no longer under bondage, but free to serve Him in maturity as His children. Children do childish things when they are young, therefore they need to be taught. But

when they grow older they do what is right without a tutor to force them. That is that maturity we have in Christ. Thus, we are able to be received by God as His children (Eph. 5:1). *“When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things”* (1 Cor. 13:11).

B. As sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts (vs. 6).

1. **“*And because you are sons*”**: The Galatians received Christ and therefore the adoptions as sons. They began in the mature things of faith as all do who obey the gospel by faith in Christ.
2. **“*God has sent forth the spirit of His Son*”**: Concerning this point Lipscomb’s comments are quite appropriate, “Because they are sons, not servants, God sent the spirit of a son into their hearts. Taken in connection with corresponding passages, this scripture settles the point that the spirit of a son is put into the heart by writing the law in his heart. The promise was: ‘I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.’ (Jer. 31:33)” (pg. 241-242). True Christians have the mind or attitude that is characteristic of God’s children.
3. **“*Into your hearts*”**: We abide by God’s word, not as an outward show, but as a result of having hearts that are likened unto God’s. As sons of God we imitate Him (Eph. 5:1). As sons we are not under a guard which disciplines us when we get out of line. Rather, we seek always to stay in line. We have such a spirit (attitude) that does not desire to depart from the ways of God as Israel did so often in the Old Testament. The law was given because of their hardness of heart, but we are given freedom in Christ that we might manifest true devotion to the Lord as our God and Father.
4. **“*crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’*”**: Jesus used this term while praying in the garden (Mark 14:36). “Abba” is an Aramaic term of endearment that was used only by the children of the master. Vine notes, “it is stated that slaves were forbidden to address the head of the family by this title.” It is a term that is near to a proper name for the father, thus signifying closeness. As servants under the law the Jews could not use this term. But Jesus is able to bring all men near so that we, as children, may refer to the Father with such endearment and closeness of heart.

C. No longer slaves, but sons (vs. 7).

1. **“*Therefore you are no longer slave but a son*”**: In summery and conclusion of the above points, we are no longer slaves under the law, but are sons, free and mature in Christ.
2. **“*and if a son, then an heir of God*”**: Because we are made sons we are able to receive the promises of God as heirs. Only by this means can a person receive such blessings. Servants receive nothing, but children receive all good things.
3. **“*through Christ*”**: And it is through Christ alone that men are able to receive this inheritance. The law only enslaves us. If we seek to be under the law then we are choosing to live as slaves, separate from the blessings of God. But if we choose to be in Christ by faith then we are children of God and heirs of the promises of God.

Questions

Lesson Seven

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. Through what does a person become a son of God?
2. Once a person fulfills the above qualification, what does Paul say they do which puts them “into Christ”?
3. When a person has fulfilled the above two qualifications, what do they do with Christ? Explain what this means.
4. Explain what Paul means by “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female.*”
5. How does one become Abraham’s seed? What are the benefits of this?
6. Is there any difference between the children of a master and the children of a slave? Explain.
7. What was used as a spiritual guardian over God’s people when they were as children?
8. What is the fullness of time?
9. What did God do when the fullness of time had come?
10. How was Jesus “born under the law?”
11. What did Jesus do for us while living as a man on the earth?
12. What does it mean to have the spirit of His son in our hearts? How can we know if it is in our hearts?

Lesson Eight

Galatians 4:8-20

Introduction

1. In this section Paul expresses concern that the Galatians have given up their freedom as sons and have gone back to the things of the law—“*the beggarly elements*” (vs. 9)—which belong to slaves.
2. He urges them to be like him, devoting their lives to Christ.
3. False teachers were “courting” them away from Christ, but Paul says that he labors diligently in order that Christ may be formed in them.

Discussion

I. They were Turning again to the Weak and Beggarly things (4:8-11).

- A. Before they knew God they served other gods (vs. 8).
 1. “***But then, indeed, when you did not know God***”: The majority of the Christians in Galatia consisted of Gentiles. Paul described the gentiles’ relationship to God in Eph. 2:11-12. “*Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh -- who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands -- that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*” Thus, they did not know God, they did not know about God, they had nothing to do with Him.
 2. “***you served those which by nature are not gods.***”: Their condition was even worse than that of the Jews because they were under bondage to false gods. Rather than serving the one true God they were serving false gods. They devoted themselves to vanity.
- B. But now that they have been made free, they were seeking enslavement again (vs. 9).
 1. “***But now after you have known God***”: They had received the gospel from Paul and believed in the one true God and the Savior Jesus Christ. They understood the vanity of their former way of life and started to serve God.
 2. “***or are rather known by God***”: “*We loved Him because He first loved us*” (1 John 4:19). Where it is true that we come to know God in Christ, it is more accurate to say that He comes to know us in that He is the one who purchases us and sanctifies us (Jude 1; Heb. 10:10). He brings us into His family.
 3. “***how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements***”: Having been redeemed from the worthless things of the world and having been brought out of the bondage of serving false gods, by turning to the law they were stepping back into the same sort of bondage from which Jesus had delivered them. They had maturity, freedom, and strength in Christ, yet they were giving up all of that in order to seek the weak childlike elements of the law.
- C. Their enslavement was in the form of keeping the old law (vs. 10).
 1. “***You observe days***”: This is a term that refers to the day-to-day sacrifices and ceremonies and religious days kept by the Jews such as the Sabbath day (Col. 2:16-17). These are the doctrines that the Judaizing teachers had convinced the Galatians to follow.

2. ***“and months, and seasons”***: referred to the Jewish religious ceremonies that were kept from month to month and season to season. These are holidays that were often associated with the harvest and spring time.
 3. ***“and years”***: There were yearly festivals and holidays that the Jews were expected to keep such as the Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Day of Pentecost. Read Numbers 28 for more on these Jewish ordinances. All of these things had their fulfillment in Christ (Col. 2:17), therefore they were done away with. The true value is in Christ.
- D. Paul was afraid for them (vs. 11).
1. ***“I am afraid for you”***: Seeing that they were giving up Christ to chase after these childlike ordinances, Paul expresses fear for them. This is a fear for their souls. Jude 23 describes those in sin as being in the fire. Paul saw these Galatians as children playing with fire and he feared for their lives lest they fall in without any hope of rescue. Their souls were in danger of being lost (Gal. 1:6-9).
 2. ***“lest I have labored for you in vain.”***: A study of Acts 13-14 reveals just how much Paul labored to deliver the gospel to these people. But if they were to give up Christ in order to seek the weak and beggarly things of the law all of his labors and sacrifices would have gone to waste. In 1 Cor. 3:9ff. Paul depicts himself as a builder and those who he taught were the fruit of his labor. The same is true for every person who preaches the gospel. When those who are taught go back into the bondage from which they have been delivered it is like watching a new house go up in flames.

II. Paul’s Desire that they Be Like Him (4:12-16).

- A. A plea for them to be as he is (vs. 12).
1. ***“Brethren, I urge you to become like me”***: Considering his previous comments we can understand his urgency. Paul was not being conceited. Rather, he was using himself as an example. He has already shown in Gal. 1:10 that he sought only to please God and that no man would turn him from that. His desire was for these Galatians to put on that same attitude.
 2. ***“For I became like you”***: Paul, though raised a Jew, became like a Gentile while among the peoples of Galatia that he might win them over to Christ. He did not compromise the truth of God, but merely put himself in a situation so as to most effectively preach the gospel (1 Cor. 9:22-23). His point here is that just as he became as one of them to save their souls, they need to become like him in his service and devotion to Christ. They needed to resist the pressures placed on them by the Judaizing teachers and hold fast their faith in Christ.
 3. ***“You have not injured me at all”***: This statement seems to fit best in conjunction with the proceeding verses. While he was among them they did no personal injury to him.
- B. They received Paul in spite of his physical infirmities (vs. 13-15).
1. ***“You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at first”***: Though it is not recorded in the historical account of Paul’s travels, it would seem that he had come down with some physical illness during his travels through Galatia. Whether providentially or not we do not know. Nevertheless, the delay caused by his infirmity provided greater time and opportunity for him to preach the gospel to the inhabitants of that region.

2. ***“And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject”***: In spite of Paul’s physical infirmity the Galatians did not despise or reject him. Some would see a man of poor health as unattractive and refuse to associate with such. But the Galatians did not act in such a manner. Rather, they were willing to overlook his infirmity and gladly and cheerfully receive the message that he was preaching.
 3. ***“But you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus”***: Jesus said to those whom He sent, *“He who receives you receives Me...”* (Matt. 10:40). Not only were they willing to receive the gospel, but they also received Paul with great kindness and graciousness. They received him as a messenger from God, even as if he were Christ Himself. This says something of their great love for him and their hospitality toward him.
 4. ***“What then was the blessing you enjoyed?”***: After all of the sacrifices that they had made to care for Paul in his infirmity, what reward did they receive in return? Did he make them rich?
 5. ***“For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.”***: The inference here is that they received no physical blessing, indeed they desired no blessing in return. But their desire to help Paul was so great that they were willing to make any personal sacrifice necessary to care for his needs.
- C. Had he now become their enemy for telling them the truth? (vs. 16).
1. ***“Have I therefore become your enemy”***: Paul’s purpose in the above discussion was to remind them of the love that they once had for him. For in rebuking them there was the possibility that they would become bitter against him.
 2. ***“because I tell you the truth?”***: Paul observed the dangers that they were in because of the false teachers and he told them the truth of their condition that they might be saved. Many in the world would become angry at this sort of rebuke. We ought to consider Paul’s point the next time a brother in Christ rebukes us for our sins.

III. Paul’s Labor that Christ May be Formed in Them (4:17-20).

- A. False teachers zealously courted them (vs. 17).
1. ***“They zealously court you”***: The false teachers showed great zeal in trying to attract the Galatians to follow after them. They would try to lure them through various schemes.
 2. ***“but for no good”***: Paul had already discussed the curse that would be upon those who taught a different gospel. The false teachers were luring the Galatians with such a false gospel. Following after them would result in no good.
 3. ***“Yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them”***: The Judaizers would claim that those who had not been circumcised or who were not keeping the old law were not correctly converted, thus making them feel lost and separated from God. The purpose of such exclusion was to create a desire in the Galatians to want what the false teachers were offering—to desire the righteousness which the false teachers were offering through the keeping of the law.
- B. Zeal for the right things (vs. 18).
1. ***“But it is good to be zealous”***: Paul exhorts the Christians to remember that the only good things are in Christ. The zeal that they had while he was preaching to them was good zeal. They needed to continue in that zeal and no longer seek after the false teachers.
 2. ***“in a good thing always”***: This is in contrast with their zeal for the *“no good”* things of the false teachers (vs. 17). It is good to be zealous, but not for the law and not for the Judaizing

teachers. Zeal is needful in Christians and in churches. But we need to make sure our zeal is for the right things. All good things come from God. We must be zealous for that which is from God not man (Rom. 12:17).

3. ***“and not only when I am present with you.”***: The Galatians were very zealous for Christ and the gospel while Paul was there with them. But after he left they turned to seek after the worthless things of the false teachers. He reminded them that they needed to pursue good things always, regardless of whether he was there with them or not. Thus all Christians should be zealous for good whether we are together or alone.

C. Paul labored that Christ may be formed in them (vs. 19-20).

1. ***“My little children for whom I labor in birth again”***: Paul is not establishing the tradition that we see in some denominations where clergy are referred to as “father.” Jesus condemned this sort of title for men (Matt. 23:9). Paul’s statement here is a term of endearment to show to the Galatians his deep love for them. He had taught them the gospel and raised them (so to speak) as children and babes in Christ. Thus he loves them as a father. He likens the sort of pains that he goes through to care for their spiritual needs to birth pangs.
2. ***“until Christ is formed in you”***: The goal of his love and the purpose for his labors and pains was to cause Christ to be formed in them. That is, the maturity of Christ in all righteousness and godliness. He labored that they may learn to live as though Christ was living in them (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 4:12-16).
3. ***“I would like to be present with you now”***: Paul desired to be in their presence so that he could teach them and guide them and help them to learn how to have Christ formed in them. He desired to help them overcome the false teachers.
4. ***“and to change my tone”***: His tone in this letter was that of a rebuke. This was needed for them to fully comprehend the urgency of his message. But had he been in their presence he would have been able to address them in a more gentle tone and still express this same kind of urgency. He may have also desired to deal with some specific things that he could not deal with in his letter.
5. ***“for I have doubts about you”***: Doubts about everything that was going on and that was being taught. Being some distance away from there it was not possible for him to get all of the information. He desired to have the full picture of all that they were dealing with.

Questions

Lesson Eight

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. When did the Galatians not know God? What other verses describe the spiritual condition of those who do not know God?
2. Who did they serve while in that condition? Explain.
3. What was their spiritual condition after coming to know God?
4. What were the Galatians turning to again even though they had come to know God? Explain how people today do this same thing.
5. What do “*days and months and season and years*” refer to? What were the Galatians doing with those things?
6. Why was Paul afraid for the Galatians? Explain.
7. Why did Paul want the Galatians to become like him?
8. How was Paul received by the Galatians when he first preached the gospel to him?
9. What physical blessing did they receive for receiving Paul in such a way?
10. In his letter Paul was telling the Galatians the truth. What was his concern as to how the Galatians would receive him after hearing the truth from him? Why would this be a concern?
11. What did Paul mean by, “*They zealously court you*”?
12. What is it good to be zealous for?
13. If we are zealous for those things, what will our opinion be toward false teachers?
14. What was Paul’s goal in laboring for the Galatians? Explain what that means.

Lesson Nine

Galatians 4:21-31

Introduction

1. Supplemental reading: Genesis 16:1-16; 21:1-19
2. In this section Paul illustrates and compares the freedom in Christ with the bondage of the law by comparing Sarah (the free woman) and Hagar (the bond woman).
3. He shows us that if we want freedom in Christ then we must cast off the old law which puts us under bondage.

Discussion

I. The Promise and the Law Illustrated by Sarah and Hagar (4:21-27).

- A. Those who desire to be under the law (vs. 21).
 1. ***“Tell me, you who desire to be under the law”***: This is a challenge for those who desire to keep the commandments of the Old Testament.
 2. ***“Do you not hear the law?”***: Those who keep the law failed to see that that same law prophesied of its own demise. They desired the things of the old law thinking that it would make them righteous, but they weren’t paying attention to what the law actually said about itself. The Pharisees in Jesus’ day failed in this same way. They were trying to kill Jesus because they thought He was blaspheming against the law, when in fact it was the law that spoke about the works that Jesus was doing (John 5:39).
- B. The two sons and wives of Abraham (vs. 22-23).
 1. ***“For it is written that Abraham had two sons”***: Genesis was included in the law. Abraham’s two wives and sons provided an allegory that showed what was going to happen to the law when it was fulfilled. The first son was named Ishmael (Gen. 16:15), and the second, Isaac (Gen. 21:3).
 2. ***“The one by the bondwoman”***: The first son, Ishmael, was born of Sarah’s handmaiden, Hagar. God had already promised to make a great nation from Abraham’s seed, but Sarah, being childless after many years, became desperate for Abraham to have a son. Therefore she gave Hagar to Abraham that he might bear a son through her.
 3. ***“The other by the freewoman”***: Later, God told Abraham that His promise was going to be fulfilled according to His promise and that Ishmael was not the son that God had promised. Therefore God gave Sarah a child in her old age and they named him Isaac.
 4. ***“But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh”***: Ishmael was born according to the natural order or things with no intervention from God to fulfill His promise. He was also the result of Sarah taking matters into her own hands and not trusting in God to fulfill His promises. He was born by human efforts and not by the grace of God.
 5. ***“And he of the freewoman through promise”***: Isaac was born because God allowed Sarah to give birth even though she was old and past the age of childbearing. Therefore Isaac was a fulfillment of God’s promise and not the result of human efforts.

- C. The two wives are symbolic of the two covenants (vs. 24-26).
1. ***“which things are symbolic”***: God did many things in the Old Testament that we today are able to view as symbols or illustrations of the spiritual things that we have in Christ (Col. 2:17; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; Heb. 8:5; 10:1). Sarah and Hagar provide such an allegory.
 2. ***“For these are the two covenants”***: The relationship between Hagar and Sarah was symbolic of the new and old covenants. The relationships and events that took place between these two women perfectly illustrate the relationship and events that were unfolding in the first century with the establishment of the new covenant through Christ.
 3. ***“The one from Mt. Sinai which gives birth to bondage—which is Hagar”***: Hagar represented the old covenant which was given by Moses at Mt. Sinai. This was the covenant which was based on the Law of Moses. It was the covenant which Paul spoke of in Gal. 3:10-14 which brings a curse upon men because it provides no means for salvation. Hagar was a servant, a bondwoman, therefore those who were born of her could only be bondservants. They can never be free. So it is with those who seek justification through the law.
 4. ***“For this Hagar is Mt. Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children”***: The law was originally given at Mt. Sinai, but by the first century the Jews had come to dwell in Judea with Jerusalem as their capital. Therefore Hagar came to represent the physical Jewish system which was centered in Jerusalem with all of its physical ordinances, statutes, and sacrifices.
 5. ***“but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.”***: While the physical city of Jerusalem was on earth, God had established through Christ a heavenly kingdom with its capital in heaven. Thus, the Jerusalem above is the spiritual Jerusalem of promise which we have in Christ. This was the city which Abraham looked forward to *“which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God”* (Heb. 11:10). It is the home of all who receive freedom through Christ, as opposed to those who are still in bondage because they seek the physical Jerusalem.
- D. The prophesied barren woman would have more children (vs. 27).
1. ***“For it is written”***: Paul now looks to the Scriptures to prove the validity of his analogy.
 2. ***“Rejoice oh barren, you who do not bear! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor!”***: The scripture quoted here is Isa. 54:1. Sarah was barren even into her old age, but she would be given a reason to rejoice. Hagar had become pregnant when Sarah could not. In Gen. 16:4 Hagar began to despise Sarah; to make her feel ashamed because she could not conceive. In spite of her sorrow, Sarah would be given a reason to rejoice.
 3. ***“For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband.”***: Though Hagar despised Sarah because she was barren, God had promised to make a great nation and that nation would come from Sarah’s womb. She would give birth to a son according to the promise of God and through him she would have more children than Hagar could ever dream of. The people that would come through the barren woman would be far greater than those of the slave.

II. The Children of Freedom and the Children of Bondage (4:28-31).

- A. The children of promise are like Isaac (vs. 28).
1. ***“Now we, brethren, as Isaac was”***: Isaac was not born as a result human wisdom or efforts as Ishmael was. He was born as the result of the working of God. For both Sarah and Abraham were old and physically incapable of having children (Gen. 21:1-2; Heb. 11:11).

Even so, the people of God today are not saved by their own strength or wisdom. They are born by the working of God in the same manner as Isaac.

2. ***“Are children of promise”***: For the above reason Isaac was a child of promise. He was the result of God fulfilling his promise to Abraham. Those who are in Christ are like Isaac because they are not born by doing the works of the law; they were not conceived as a result of human efforts and human wisdom. No, those who are in Christ are born as a result of the working of God according to His promise to Abraham, which He accomplished in Christ Jesus (Col. 2:12).
- B. The children of bondage persecute the children of promise (vs. 29).
1. ***“But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit”***: Ishmael was born according to the flesh. In Gen. 21:9 Ishmael “scoffed” at Isaac.
 2. ***“Even so it is now”***: It was the same in the first century when the Jews persecuted Christians. Even Paul had been among those Jews who persecuted the children of promise. Those same Jews were putting pressure on the Galatians to enter into bondage by keeping the law.
- C. The bondwoman and her child were cast out (vs. 30).
1. ***“Nevertheless, what does the Scripture say?”***: Here again Paul looks to the Old Testament scripture to prove his point. The casting out of the old law was not something he made up. This was always a part of God’s plan, even 430 years before the law was given.
 2. ***“Cast out the bondwoman and her son”***: Seeing that Ishmael persecuted Isaac, the son of promise, Sarah asked Abraham to cast him and his mother out. God also instructed Abraham to do so in Gen. 21:12-13. Remember now that the bondwoman represents the old covenant. Here the bondwoman was cast out, so it was done with the old covenant.
 3. ***“For the son of bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.”***: Many people today say that even though we have salvation in Christ, somehow God is going to renew the old law and establish the physical nation of Israel again at a future point in time. We must see in this section that it is just not so. There can be no harmonious coexistence between the sons of promise and the sons of slavery. Sons of Abraham cannot come through the law and through Christ. There can only be one. Paul has already established that Christ is far superior and that there is no room for the law.
- D. Therefore we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free (vs. 31).
1. ***“So then brethren”***: Paul now wants to make his conclusion firmly set in the minds of the Galatian Christians—and in ours as well.
 2. ***“We are not children of the bondwoman”***: We who are in Christ are not children of the bondwoman. If we were then we would be cast out along with her. She represents the law. The law has been cast out. Those who seek to be justified by the law are children of the bondwoman and are therefore worthy only to be cast out. We are not of that nature.
 3. ***“But of the free”***: We have come to God through Christ according to promise and are therefore free. We must therefore seek those things that make us free in Christ. We must strive to be children of Sarah born through the promises of God. Isaac was born because Abraham trusted in God to give him a son. Thus, we must live as those who are born of God according to promise through Christ Jesus and live as free people and not as those who are under bondage through the keeping of the law!

Questions

Lesson Nine

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. Who is Paul speaking to when he says, “*you who are under the law*”?
2. How had they failed to hear the law?
3. How many sons did Abraham have? What were their names?
4. How did Abraham’s wives and sons represent the covenants?
5. How are Christians like Isaac?
6. What does it mean to be “*children of promise*”?
7. What was the relationship like between Isaac and Ishmael? How did their relationship represent the old and new covenants?
8. What happened to the bondwoman and her child in light of the above relationship? How is that applied to the covenants?
9. What point is Paul making when he said, “*we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free*”?

Lesson Ten

Galatians 5:1-15

Introduction

1. In this section Paul will reach the climax of his epistle.
2. He goes on to show the consequences for those who continue to seek to be justified by the law.
3. Finally, he stresses the need for Christians to walk in the spirit and not to fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Discussion

I. Stand Fast in the Liberty of Christ (5:1-6).

A. Stand fast in liberty (vs. 1).

1. **“Stand fast therefore”**: “be stationary...persevere” (Strong’s). “To stand firm, be constant, persevere” (Moulton). The Galatians were being swayed by the false teachers, but Paul exhorts them to stand fast, to not be moved by their doctrines. “...that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting...” (Eph. 4:14).
2. **“In the liberty by which Christ has made us free”**: True spiritual freedom can only come through Christ and the truth that He brings us. If we are to retain that freedom then we must be firmly grounded in the faith and teachings of Christ. We must have such a strong grasp upon His good things that we are not moved by false teachers who try to “court” us away from Christ. “Buy the truth, and do not sell it” (Prov. 23:23).
3. **“And do not be entangled again in a yoke of bondage.”**: The only thing that the false teachers could offer was bondage. The Galatians had found freedom in Christ. They had obeyed the gospel and had been enjoying the blessings of life in Christ. But by giving that up and seeking the things of the law they were going back into the bondage from which Jesus made them free. Paul says don’t let that happen!

B. Christ is useless to those who keep the law (vs. 2-3).

1. **“Indeed, I Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing”**: The Galatians had freedom in Christ. But if they left Christ in order to pursue circumcision and the Law of Moses, then whatever blessings they had in Christ would be gone. If they followed after the law then Christ’s sacrifice would have no longer had any affect on their sins (Heb. 10:26, 29).
2. **“And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised”**: Paul wanted to make certain that these Galatians perfectly understand his point. Thus, we too should take special note of what he is saying. Listen up!
3. **“that he is a debtor to keep the whole law”**: Not only is circumcision useless, but if any man tries to be justified by becoming circumcised he is committing himself to keep the whole Law of Moses. We can only serve one master. If we serve Jesus then circumcision is useless because Jesus did not command it. But if we become circumcised or try to keep any part of the Law of Moses we are showing our allegiance to the law over Christ and are therefore binding ourselves to keep that entire law.

C. Keeping the law severs one from Christ (vs. 4).

1. ***“You have become estranged from Christ you who attempt to be justified by law”***: Paul here continues his line of reasoning in order to show the spiritual pitfall of seeking the old law. Since those who are circumcised are bound to keep the whole law, and they can only serve one master, they are no longer in Christ. They have become *“estranged from Christ”*. “Estranged” means separated so that Christ has no effect for their salvation. The KJV reads, *“Christ is become of no effect unto you.”* All the blessings (the freedom, the forgiveness, the knowledge of truth) that one has in Christ are no longer accessible to those who seek to be justified by the law. They are completely separated from Christ and all the rich blessings that He offers.
2. ***“you have fallen from grace”***: Grace is the means by which we have salvation in Christ. It is a gift of God; His good will to grant us what we cannot earn ourselves. But if we try to earn it by doing the works of the old law then we are in effect rejecting God’s gift; we are rejecting His grace. McGarvey notes, “we are guilty of complete apostasy” (pg. 279). For that reason we fall from grace the moment we seek to be justified by law. God’s gift of salvation no longer applies to us.

D. Attain the hope through faith in Christ and the working of love (vs. 5-6).

1. ***“For we through the Spirit”***: Through the Spirit as opposed to through the law. True Christians do not trust in physical strength and works. Rather, we trust in the promises of God, delivered through the Spirit, fulfilled in Christ (Gal. 3:2, 5).
2. ***“eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith”***: Our eager expectation is that God will make us righteous through Christ. We do not seek to attain righteousness through the law or through our own works. To wait for anything requires having faith that one will receive what they are waiting for. This is the definition of faith (Heb. 11:1). But those who are of the law do not put their faith in the promises of God. True Christians put their trust fully in Christ and wait for the promises being fulfilled in Him (2 Pet. 1:3-4).
3. ***“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything”***: Because righteous only comes through faith in Christ Jesus, it does not matter whether a person is circumcised or not. That has no bearing on their righteousness. The Jew that has faith in Christ is just as capable of receiving righteousness as the Gentile who has faith in Christ. Circumcision does not distinguish the two in that respect.
4. ***“But faith working through love.”***: Christians are obedient because they put all of their faith in Christ. They work because of their love for God and for their fellow man, as Jesus said, *“If you love Me keep My commandments”* (John 14:15). The Jews would have us believe that our works negate any need for faith. But Paul shows us here that when we *believe* that Jesus died for us, we *love* Him in return by offering our lives in service to Him to do good works.

II. Let No One Hinder You (5:7-12).

A. That which hinders us from obeying the truth is not from God (vs. 7-8).

1. ***“You ran well.”***: While Paul was with them they ran well. They were learning, growing, being faithful and were devoted to the faith and zealous for good works.
2. ***“Who hindered you from obeying the truth?”***: But after Paul’s departure the false teachers came in and began teaching things contrary to the gospel. The Galatians were hindered because they were turning away from the truth. They were giving heed to the

false teachings and were being prevented from obeying the truth that is in Christ according to the one true gospel.

3. ***“This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you.”***: The doctrines by which false teachers were drawing the Galatians away from the truth did not come from God. Paul had defended His apostleship in previous chapters. He had shown that his gospel was indeed from God. But the lies with which the false teachers were drawing them away from the truth were not from God. Any man who teaches things contrary to the gospel is not from God (2 John 9-11).

B. A little leaven leavens a whole lump (vs. 9).

1. ***“A little leaven”***: Leaven is yeast or any other element that causes bread to rise. Metaphorically it has been used to refer to sin as in 1 Cor. 5:6, hypocrisy as in Luke 12:1, and here it is used to refer to error or teachers of error.
2. ***“Leavens a whole lump”***: It does not take a great deal of sin and error to have an affect on a group of people. A small amount of error can cause a great deal of harm in the hearts of many people. It only takes one teacher to lead many people astray. Yeast is an active agent in the bread. It is referred to as being “alive” and “active.” It has a way of permeating a whole lump of dough so as to cause the whole lump to rise. It is the same with error. When allowed to continue it will fill an entire congregation and lead many people away from the truth (Titus 1:10-11).

C. False teachers will bear their judgment (vs. 10).

1. ***“I have confidence in you, in the Lord that you will have no other mind”***: He has confidence that after reading his defense of the true gospel in this letter they will hold to what he has written and no longer follow after the false teachers.
2. ***“but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is”***: Whoever was teaching false doctrine (it does not matter who, for all who teach falsehood are equally accursed), he will bear his judgment. That judgment has already been stated in Gal. 1:8-9.

D. Paul faced persecution because of his preaching (vs. 11-12).

1. ***“And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision”***: It may have been claimed by some that when Paul had Timothy circumcised that meant he had began preaching circumcision (Acts 16:3). However, the reason Paul had Timothy circumcised was that Timothy’s mother was a Jew. In order to become all things to all men (1 Cor. 9:22), Timothy was circumcised so that the Jews would be willing to hear the gospel from him (Acts 16:3). But Paul did not command it as a requirement for salvation. Remember that Titus, who was not a Jew, was not compelled to be circumcised (Gal. 2:3).
2. ***“why do I still suffer persecution?”***: Paul’s persecution by the Jews was due, in large, because he turned people away from the Law of Moses—he taught that there was no need for circumcision. Therefore if, after the account with Timothy, Paul began to preach both circumcision and Christ, wouldn’t the persecution have stopped?
3. ***“Then the offense of the cross has ceased.”***: The message of the cross was offensive to the Jews. Paul was being persecuted by Jews because he was preaching the message of the cross to all men. But if Paul had started preaching circumcision then the message of the cross would have no longer been offensive to the Jews. The persecution would have stopped. Paul’s point is that since he is still being persecuted, the message of the cross has not changed and, therefore, circumcision is still worthless for salvation.

4. ***“I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off.”***: This refers to the false teachers and those who were turning the Galatians against Paul. Many today are mistaken in thinking that churches need to have patience when it comes to false teachers. “Give them time to come around.” The truth is, if one is not fighting for God he is fighting against God. Thus, Paul’s desire here concerning those who are fighting against God with their false doctrine is that they “*cut themselves off*”—depart from those Christians. Where false teachers are not willing to cease their false teachings it is up to the leaders in a congregation to “*reject the divisive man*” (Titus 3:10).

III. Use Your Liberty to Fulfill the Law (5:13-15).

A. Liberty in Christ (vs. 13).

1. ***“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty”***: Paul reminds them that God has called them to be free from the bondage of the world which is sin. That freedom can only be found in Christ.
2. ***“only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh”***: Many feel because they are free in Christ that they are free to do whatever they want. Paul shows us that even though we no longer bound by the law of Moses, our freedom in Christ still requires that we walk righteous in this life. McGarvey explains, “Do not think because you are free that you are free to do evil” (pg. 281).
3. ***“but through love serve one another”***: “*Faith working through love*” is what avails those who are in Christ. Therefore, our standard in Christ is love. If we are to live as those who are Christ’s we must follow God’s pattern for brotherly love (John 13:35).

B. The law is fulfilled in love (vs. 14).

1. ***“For all the law is fulfilled in one word”***: Though the Law of Moses did not make man righteous, it did instruct man in how to love one another. Jesus said that the entire basis of the law and prophets was love for God and love for our neighbors (Matt. 22:37-40).
2. ***“even in this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”***: Rather than trying to keep the rudimentary principles of the law, the Galatians needed to learn to love their brethren as Christ loved them. That was the whole emphasis the law. Jesus fulfilled the law by showing the greatest standard of love—giving His life for us (John 15:13). If the Galatians wanted true righteousness they needed to put the rudimentary things of the law aside and start loving one another as Christ loved them (1 John 3:16).

C. Beware of contention (vs. 15).

1. ***“But if you bite and devour one another”***: Those who seek fleshly things and puff themselves up based on their works will war with one another in an attempt to make themselves seem greater (James 3:14-16; 4:1-3). The Judaizing teachers only helped to stir up this sense of combativeness in the minds of the Galatians.
2. ***“beware lest you be consumed by one another”***: Such an attitude was in every way contrary to the love of God. By following the Judaizing teacher the Galatians were actually moving further away from the righteousness taught in the law. If they continued down that fleshly path they would soon devour one another and have no hope at all of attaining the righteousness of God.

Questions

Lesson Ten

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. In what were the Galatians to stand fast? What does this mean?
2. What does it mean to “*be entangled again in a yoke of bondage*”? How would a person do that today?
3. What benefit is Christ to those who want to follow the old law? Explain.
4. What does Paul mean by “*he is a debtor to the whole law*”?
5. What happens to a person’s relationship with Christ when they seek to be justified by the law?
6. What does it mean, “*you have fallen from Grace*”?
7. Does it matter if a person is circumcised or not when they are in Christa? Why?
8. What is important to those who are in Christ?
9. How were the Galatians being hindered from obeying the truth?
10. What does Paul mean by “*A little leaven leavens a whole lump*”?
11. How would a person use their liberty as an opportunity for the flesh?
12. How does a person fulfill the law in true righteousness?

Lesson Eleven

Galatians 5:16-26

Introduction

1. In this section Paul contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit.
2. If we continue in the works of the flesh then we will not enter the kingdom.
3. But God is pleased when we are bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

Discussion

I. Walk in the Spirit Not in the Flesh (5:16-18).

A. Walk in the Spirit (vs. 16a).

1. ***“I say then, walk in the Spirit”***: When we hear and respond to the instructions of God’s word and live within its guidelines we are walking in the Spirit. It is the standard by which we walk. Christians are guided by the Spirit because God’s word is revealed by the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10).
2. ***“And you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.”***: All men walk according to some standard. If we are not walking according to the Spirit the only other standard is the flesh—our personal lusts and desires. If the Spirit is our standard then our lusts and desires can no longer control us. We must no longer make our decisions based upon the impulse of our lusts, but upon the righteousness that is revealed by the Spirit of God.

B. The flesh and the Spirit are contrary to one another (vs. 17).

1. ***“For the flesh lusts against the Spirit”***: Even though we walk by the Spirit we are still tempted by the lusts of our flesh. We are physical beings, this cannot be avoided. Our physical lusts are often in conflict with what we know to be good and right according to the Spirit.
2. ***“and the spirit against the flesh”***: Though we know what is good and right, our bodies sometimes urge us to do what is wrong. Our temptations fight against the desire to do what is right. “I want to help that person but I am reluctant to take the time and energy.” “I want to yell and scream at that person, but I know I should show meekness and godliness instead.”
3. ***“and these are contrary to one another”***: They are complete opposites. They are in constant conflict with one another, each one struggling to sway us to fulfill its will—what is right vs. what feels good at the moment.
4. ***“so that you do not do the things that you wish.”*** “Thus it comes about that ye may not do things that ye would, for there are two wills within you, and one or other of them must be subdued and disappointed” (McGarvey, pg. 282).

C. If you are led by Spirit you are not under the law (vs. 18).

1. ***“But if you are led by the spirit”***: In the conflict described in vs. 17, we choose which side is going to win in our own lives. We are led by the Spirit when we choose to allow the Spirit to be victorious and rule over the flesh. We allow our desire for truth and righteousness to rule over our fleshly lusts by submitting ourselves in obedience to God. As Jesus said, ***“deny yourself...and follow Me”*** (Luke 9:23).

2. “***you are not under the law***”: If we allow the Spirit to be the governing force in our lives, then there is no need for the law to force us to do something. Before, the law was necessary to forbid and condemn. But for those who set their hearts on the things of the Spirit and allow that to be their guide, they no longer need the law of sin and death to bind them and hold them to what is right (1 Tim. 1:9). They do it freely because their hearts and desires are conformed to the Spirit of God.

II. The Works of the Flesh (5:19-21).

A. The works of the flesh described (vs. 19-21 a.)

1. “***Now the works of the flesh are evident***”: It is good to know the works of the flesh so that we can recognize them and cast them off. As one examines the word of God to see what is good and what is not then compares it to the world around them, it will be very clear what sort of works are not of God.
2. “***which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness***”: Sexual sins in which men use their bodies in profane and immoral gestures, movement, and acts.
3. “***Idolatry, sorcery***”: Sins in which one turns away from God in order to give honor to someone or something else. When we serve anything that is not the one true God we become idolaters. This includes things such as Astrology and sorcery—the trickery of men.
4. “***hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath***”: Sins of an evil heart against one’s neighbor (Matt. 5:22).
5. “***selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders***”: Things done out of selfish ambition and desires which cause people to war and fight against one another (James 3:14-16, 4:1-3).
6. “***drunkenness, revelries, and the like***”: Uncontrolled behavior. Whether one be under the influence of alcohol or any other drug it matters not, for when we are controlled by such things the spirit is no longer the controlling force in our lives—we are no longer walking in the Spirit. Notice Paul says, “*and the like*.” He means that the things listed here along with any other thing that causes us to walk contrary to God’s spiritual standard is a work of the flesh.

B. Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God (vs. 21).

1. “***of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past***”: The need to flee the lusts of the flesh was nothing new to the Galatians. Paul taught them to repent of such things when he first converted them (Acts 26:20). Such should be common knowledge who comes to Christ.
2. “***that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.***”: Because they are not of the Spirit those who practice such things cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Abraham did not do such things. Those who do practice such evil things are not the seed of Abraham because they do not do the works that he did (John 8:39). Because they are not his children they cannot receive his inheritance.

III. The Fruit of the Spirit (5:22-26).

A. The fruit of the Spirit described (vs. 22-23).

1. “***But the fruit of the Spirit is***”: “Fruit” here is singular. A person can do any one of the works of the flesh and not inherit the kingdom of God. But the one who is walking according to the Spirit will be doing ALL of the following things.

2. ***“Love, joy, peace”***: Characteristics that concern our heart. When we have these things in our hearts we will be able to fulfill the rest.
 3. ***“longsuffering, kindness, goodness”***: Things concerning our relationship with God and our interaction with our brethren. When we have love, joy and peace, we will be patient toward our brethren, show them kindness out of love and do good to all.
 4. ***“faithfulness, gentleness, self-control”***: Things concerning our personal conduct. Faithful to God in all things, gentleness or meekness in adhering to all of God’s word (James 1:21). Controlling ourselves so that even when our flesh struggles against the spirit we are still in control and choose to do the right thing always.
 5. ***“Against such there is no law.”***: “Neither God nor man makes laws against such qualities and virtues as these, because they work good to all, and ill to none” (Lipscomb, pg. 272).
- B. Those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh (vs. 24).
1. ***“And those who are Christ’s”***: Those who belong to Christ, not only because they have obeyed the gospel (Gal. 3:27), but because their heart belongs to Him as well.
 2. ***“have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires”***: They have so separated themselves from the works of the flesh that it is as if they are dead to those things. As Christ died to the world on the cross so we must die to our lusts and fleshly desires (Rom. 6:8-11). God forgives our sins, but it is up to us to separate ourselves from sinful practices so that the only controlling force in our lives is the spirit. This is the purpose for our consecration.
- C. Let us walk in the Spirit (vs. 25-26).
1. ***“If we live in the Spirit”***: We are born of the Spirit in our conversion (John 3:5-8). Spiritually we have new life in the in the Spirit. “...even so we should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4).
 2. ***“Let us also walk in the Spirit”***: If we are alive and living in the spirit then we must manifest the character of the spirit in our manner of life. All that the spirit reveals to us we do willingly and lovingly as if the Lord’s will is our will.
 3. ***“Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”***: These are the things that are encouraged by those who seek after the law. They are contrary to God. But those who seek true righteousness must avoid such things. While walking in the spirit, our manner of life must always show love and kindness toward our brethren. Therefore, if we are conceited (desirous of vain glory, boastful) then our hearts are not set on the betterment of our brethren or in glorifying God. If we are truly walking in the Spirit then we will lift one another up and seek to humble ourselves (Rom. 12:16). We will not provoke one another (irritate, push buttons), but rather strive to do good to all and be helpful and kind. We will not be envious of what others have but rejoice in their joy and be thankful for all that God has given us. In all things we will seek to have the mind of Christ in us.

Questions

Lesson Eleven

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?
2. How does one fulfill the lusts of the flesh?
3. What is the relationship between the flesh and the Spirit?
4. Why are those who are led by the Spirit no longer under the law?
5. List the five categories of the works of the flesh and give an example for each:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
6. Can a person who practices the works of the flesh inherit the kingdom? Explain.
7. List the three categories of the fruit of the Spirit and describe what part of our lives they affect:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
8. What does it mean to be in Christ?
9. How does one crucify the flesh with its passions and desires?
10. What is the difference between living in the Spirit and walking in the Spirit?
11. What will we not do if we are walking in the Spirit?

Lesson Twelve

Galatians 6:1-10

Introduction

1. In this section Paul gives some general instructions which make application of the principles previously discussed.
2. He shows that our liberty in Christ does include responsibilities.
3. We have responsibilities toward others as well as ourselves.

Discussion

I. Responsibilities Toward Our Brethren (6:1-3).

A. If a man is overtaken in any trespass (vs. 1).

1. ***“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass”***: The word overtaken means, “surprise...of his being caught up by the trespass, through his being off his guard (in contrast with the premeditated practice of evil)” (Vine’s). “The word means a case where a man is brought unexpectedly into contact with a strong temptation and under the ‘spur of the moment yields to sin” (Zerr, pg. 90). Paul is describing a situation where one observes his brother being overtaken by temptation, caught up in the moment, perhaps unaware that has been or is doing something sinful. Such a sin is a trespass “a false step, blunder” (Vine’s). This applies to all trespasses which are of the works of the flesh.
2. ***“You who are spiritual”***: This is in reference to the one who is walking in the Spirit as opposed to the brother who has entered into the works of the flesh. You who have not committed such a trespass, who are still walking in the Spirit. This applies to any and every member of the church that so walks, not just the leaders.
3. ***“restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness”***: Restore means to “repair...make perfect” (Strong’s), “to mend, to furnish completely” (Vine’s). The one who is caught up in the trespass has stumbled, fallen, been spiritually “dislocated” (Vine’s). He needs restoring or mending. Those who are still whole and walking according to the spirit have a duty to mend that brother by making his sin known to him and helping him up out of it. Such an act cannot be done in arrogance where the spiritual brother puffs himself up. It happens so often today that brethren become haughty when they see one another in sin so as to exalt themselves above the sinner. It must not be so. Correction must be done in a spirit of gentleness and meekness.
4. ***“considering yourself lest you also be tempted”***: The person doing the restoring needs to remember that he too is susceptible to temptation and therefore must consider himself before he approaches his brother. He should not feel as if that which overtook his brother could never overtake him. “I would never do such a thing” or “That would never happen to me.” We must recognize our own weakness when helping our brethren with theirs. ***“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall”*** (1 Cor. 10:12).

B. Bear one another’s burdens (vs. 2).

1. ***“Bear one another’s burdens”***: The burden is the sin mentioned in the previous verse, or rather the hardship of overcoming that sin. Some brethren may desire to cast off the sinning brother quickly and so retrain their sense of righteousness (or in this case self-righteousness). On the other hand some may be tempted to simply “let it go” and let the

sinning brother fend for himself. Neither course is the proper one. We must humble ourselves so as to bear the burden, the hardship, and the labor of helping our brother up out of the mire of their trespass. We must not think it beneath us to sacrifice self in order to lift up another.

2. ***“and so fulfill the law of Christ”***: In following the above pattern we fulfill the law of Christ, for He bore our burdens while we were in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1). Thus, when we bear the burden of our brother we are following in the example of Christ. We are humbling ourselves and working to restore such a one in the same spirit with which Christ restored us, as He says of Himself, *“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls”* (Matt. 11:29). In this manner we will love one another just as Christ loved us—the law of Christ is love (John 13:34; 15:12).

C. If anyone thinks himself to be something (vs. 3).

1. ***“If anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing”***: This is in contrast to the meekness we must have while restoring our brother. “...so good that he cannot be tempted, or so strong that he cannot fall, or so perfect that he will never need the patience and sympathy of his brethren, when in reality he is nothing” (McGarvey, pg. 284). We must remember that in ourselves we have no wisdom or power but only by the grace and wisdom of God do we overcome sin.
2. ***“he deceives himself.”***: If we think that somehow we stand on our own strength, that we are great in and of ourselves, we are overconfident and so deceive ourselves. It is God who holds us up.

II. Responsibilities toward Ourselves (6:4-6).

A. Let each one examine his own work (vs. 4).

1. ***“But let each one examine his own work”***: “Our own works” as opposed to our brother’s. We are not to compare ourselves with our brethren and thereby seek an opportunity to gloat over their weaknesses. It is common among men to feel justified when comparing themselves to others. Such was the attitude encouraged by the Judaizing teachers. But Paul commands us to turn our examination upon ourselves. “A man can prove his own work by bringing in the test of God’s word...Nothing is to be taken for granted in the Christian life...He is to prove himself (1 Cor. 11:28), not with the hope of any worthiness in himself, but rather to reassure himself that he is in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5)” (Lipscomb, pg. 277). This is how we are to consider ourselves according to verse 1.
2. ***“and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone and not in another”***: Rather than rejoicing that we are better than someone else, when we have examined our own works we can take joy in the fact that we are doing God’s will rather than rejoicing because we appear to be better than someone else. In so doing we will not exalt ourselves above our brethren. Paul is not encouraging self-righteous joy. His entire point here is to keep us from exalting ourselves against one another; to avoid judging according to fleshly standards of greatness and becoming puffed up toward one another. He commands us to examine our own works against God’s word rather than against our brethren.
3. ***“For each one shall bear his own load.”***: We are accountable for our own work. When restoring a brother in a spirit of meekness we help them bear their burden. But in examination of ourselves we must pay attention to our own load (vs. everyone else’s) for if we are too busy criticizing someone else we are neglecting our own accountability.

- B. Let him who is taught share in all good things with him who teaches (vs. 6).
 - 1. ***“Let him who is taught the word”***: Those who receive the teaching of God’s word from another. Paul is placing those who are taught under obligation.
 - 2. ***“share in all good things with him who teaches”***: “Those who are taught are under obligation to help the teacher by sharing with him all good things...whether money, or food, or clothing, and such necessary things...This does not exclude spiritual fellowship. The true teacher counts this far more sacred, and has this interest far more at heart than the temporal” (Lipscomb, pg. 278-279). See also 1 Tim. 5:17-18; Luke 10:7; 1 Cor. 9:4-7, 14; 1 Thess. 5:12.

III. Do not Grow Weary in Doing Good (6:7-10).

- A. God is not mocked (vs. 7a).
 - 1. ***“Do no be deceived”***: “God is not deceived by false appearances” (McGarvey, pg. 284). This is in reference to those who feel they can shirk their responsibility before God and get away with it.
 - 2. ***“God is not mocked”***: We cannot get away with it. In reference to the next verse, we cannot think that we will sow one thing and reap another. God has set forth His pattern concerning the teaching and receiving of His word. He will not be mocked by those who feel they can “defy him by overriding His plans and arrangements” (Lipscomb).
- B. What a man sows, that he will also reap (vs. 7b-8).
 - 1. ***“For whatever a man sows that also will he reap”***: We sow many things. Figuratively this refers to the efforts and resources that we put into achieving a goal. Like planting seed in order to reap corn, we plant or sow our efforts in order to reap the reward. In the context Paul is still speaking of the need for those who are taught to share in all good things with those who teach. He uses this same analogy in 2 Cor. 9:6.
 - 2. ***“For he who sows to his flesh will of his flesh reap corruption”***: If we sow our time, efforts, and recourses in fleshly things then we will reap the reward (or rather consequences) of living fleshly lives. If we sow into fleshly indulgences and worldly things then we will reap the corruption that comes from such things. “He who sows the actions and thoughts and money and energies of his life to the flesh shall as his harvest reap a corrupted soul” (Lipscomb, pg. 280). We must not be deceived. If we sow to fleshly things we will not reap spiritual benefits.
 - 3. ***“but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”***: But if we desire the things that last, which are the spiritual things, then we must sow our time, efforts, and recourses in spiritual things. What we are taught consists of spiritual things. Thus it is necessary for us to share with those who are taught so that we can continue to reap the benefits of the word. But our sowing must also go beyond that. The Christian must in all things sow his efforts to the work of the Lord and so, in the end, receive the bountiful harvest of the fruit of his labor. “*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*” (1 Cor. 15:58).
- C. Let us not grow weary while doing good (vs. 9).
 - 1. ***“And let us not grow weary in doing good”***: If we are sowing to spiritual things, let us not grow weary in doing that. *Weary* is defined, “to be weary in anything, to lose

courage, flag, faint” (Thayer). Just as the farmer must not grow weary in sowing his crop, we must not grow mentally tired in doing those things which are good.

2. **“For in due season we shall reap”**: When the farmer persists he reaps a bountiful harvest in the appropriate season. In like manner, if we continue on in sowing that which is good then we will reap the benefits of those good things when the season of our harvest has come. Our reward, our harvest, is mentioned in verse 8—everlasting life
3. **“if we do not lose heart”**: We cannot quit, we must continue on. We cannot stop in the middle of planting and expect to reap a full harvest. We must take courage, set our minds on the things above and seek them fervently always.

D. As we have opportunity, let us do good to all (vs. 10).

1. **“Therefore, as we have opportunity let us do good to all”**: As a conclusion of the above line of reasoning, we must sow to the Spirit. We must labor on and not grow weary. We must be opened to every opportunity to sow. Just as the farmer sows seed, we sow our efforts in righteousness: spiritual growth, helping our brethren, good works in general. “Good” is that which is from God. We must seek every opportunity to do that which is pleasing to God. This is our individual responsibility. As having the mind of Christ we must desire and pursue that which is good for all men.
2. **“especially to those who are of the household of faith”**: In our pursuit of doing good we must give special emphasis to doing good to those who are the household of faith. We are seeds of Abraham (his children) by faith. Therefore, those who are of the household of faith are those who have become children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. The house of God, according to 1 Tim. 3:15, is the church. “*Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart*” (1 Pet. 1:22).

Questions

Lesson Twelve

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. What does it mean for a man to be caught up in a trespass?
2. Who are those who are “spiritual”?
3. What does it mean to restore a person?
4. What must our attitude be when we restore a person? Explain.
5. Why must we consider ourselves when restoring another person?
6. How do we bear one another’s burdens?
7. Why is it important that each person examine his own works?
8. What did Paul mean by “God is not mocked?”
9. How does one sow to the flesh?
10. How does one sow to the Spirit?
11. What does it mean for one to grow weary in doing good? Why must we not grow weary?
12. To whom should we seek to do good?

Lesson Thirteen

Galatians 6:11-18

Introduction

1. In this last section of his epistle Paul gives one final rebuke to those who would bind circumcision.
2. He shows us that we have no place to glory in the flesh, but that our glorying should only be in the cross of Christ.
3. He finishes with a final blessing and farewell.

Discussion

I. Final Rebuke of Judaizing Teachers (6:11-13).

- A. Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh (vs. 11-12).
 1. ***“See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand.”***: With this statement Paul seeks to emphasize the importance of his letter in the minds of the Galatians. It was customary for Paul to dictate his letters and for one of his companions to write it down. Paul would then sign the letter as proof of its authenticity (2 Thess. 3:17). Beginning here it would seem that Paul has taken the pen in his own hand. This is meant to create the desired emphasis. The Galatians were in such spiritual danger and the subject matter of this epistle so necessary that they could not afford to take it lightly.
 2. ***“As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh”***: Drawing his letter to a close Paul makes some conclusions about the subject matter and the false teacher mentioned in his discussion. These false teachers desired to make a good showing in the flesh. That is, they wanted to create a scenario that would make them look favorable according to fleshly standards.
 3. ***“these would compel you to be circumcised”***: By compelling the Galatians to be circumcised the Judaizing teachers would gain glory for themselves. When men are converted into Christ they give glory to Him. But those who are circumcised give glory to the one who compels them to be circumcised. Paul is here showing the Galatians that the teachers that promised them righteousness were only seeking their own vain glory. They had no desire for true righteousness or for the salvation of the Galatians.
 4. ***“only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ”***: By compelling the Galatians to be circumcised the false teachers would have been found favorable in the eyes of the Jews and therefore avoid the persecution which had arisen against the cross. Remember that Peter played the hypocrite in chapter two by separating from the Gentiles because he *“feared those who were of the circumcision”* (vs. 12). Paul applies that same hypocrisy to the false teachers among the Galatians, warning them to beware and avoid their teachings.
- B. Not even those who are circumcised keep the law (vs. 13).
 1. ***“For not even those who are circumcised keep the law”***: The false teacher’s motivation was purely for self preservation. It was evident they really had no zeal for the law. They didn’t care about the righteousness of the law. Rather, they were deceiving the Galatians in order to save their own necks. “This obvious insincerity could result only in intensified and extended hypocrisy” (Lipscomb, pg. 284).

2. ***“but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in the flesh”***: The Judaizing teachers only desired to use the Galatians as trophies, as one boasts in the prize of their efforts to be seen by men. “...but they did it that they might boast to other strict and unconverted Jews how they were making Jews out of Gentile Christians. Thus their motives were not religious and holy, but base and selfish” (McGarvey, 286).

II. **Glory Only in the Cross of Christ (6:14-15).**

A. God forbid that I should boast except in the cross (vs. 14).

1. ***“But God forbid that I should boast”***: Paul is contrasting the self-seeking character of the false teachers with the pure motives of true teachers of God’s word. He had converted the Galatians, but he did not seek to boast in them as the false teachers did. The others may glory in their wicked deeds, but Paul had nothing to glory in concerning them. For their conversion was not the result of any strength of Paul, but God (1 Cor. 3:6).
2. ***“except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”***: The power of salvation is in the cross. Only through faith in Jesus Christ can any man be saved. Therefore there is absolutely no fleshly thing a man can attribute to their own greatness. The Judaizing teachers would have given themselves glory for their achievement in converting the Galatian Gentiles over to Judaism. But this is vanity in the sight of God. The only thing worthy of glory is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. If any man seeks glory in anything other than the cross of Christ then his motives are not pure and his desire is solely for worthless things.
3. ***“By whom the world has been crucified to me”***: The world had become dead to Paul—it was no longer a motivating force in his life. As he said in Phil. 3:8, *“I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ”*. There was nothing in the world that Paul held in esteem.
4. ***“and I to the world.”***: Since the world no longer held any value to Paul, he no longer participated in the things of the world but had completely cast them off. His sole desire and effort was for the kingdom of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore no fleshly thing was of any value to him.

B. In Christ fleshly things avail nothing (vs. 15).

1. ***“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything”***: Here he explains his reasoning for the above statement. In Christ, physical attributes are worthless. “Being a Jew or Gentile does not affect a man’s relationship to Christ” (Lipscomb, pg. 287). With the Jews circumcision was everything. In their minds, that was what made them children of Abraham. As a figure, it was the boat that carried them across the river. But in Christ the river has been dried up and now a bridge stands for all to cross. A person can use the boat all the want, but it is not going to get them anywhere. It will not *avail anything*.
2. ***“But a new creation”***: The only thing that matters in Christ is for a person to become a new creation: that they be *“born again”* (John 3:3), that they have *“newness of life”* (Rom. 6:4), and that they put on a *“new man”* (Col. 3:10). How is this possible? Through faith which is obedient to Christ (Gal. 3:26-29). *“Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new”* (2 Cor. 5:16-17).

III. Final Blessing and Farewell (6:16-18).

A. As many as walk according to this rule (vs. 16).

1. **“And as many as walk according to this rule”**: The rule or standard of spiritual things. Separating themselves from the world only to glory in the cross of Christ. This is the rule that is to govern those who are new creatures in Christ.
2. **“peace and mercy be upon them”**: To those who put no stock in physical things, but only seek the spiritual, peace and mercy be upon them. This peace is that which is found only in Christ. It is the peace between man and God for those who have their sins washed away. It is the peace that all men have with one another in Christ, whether they be Jew or Gentile, since the enmity that once divided them has been taken away in Christ (Eph. 2:14-22). It is the peace of mind each person can have as they trust in the living God (Phil. 4:6-7).
3. **“and upon the Israel of God”**: There was a physical Israel still in existence. But that was the Israel of bondage, children of the bondwoman (Gal. 4:25). But that physical nation was no longer of God for they rejected God and His Son (Rom. 9:6). The Israel of God consists of those who have become children of Abraham through faith in Christ Jesus. As they are a new creation, they have the peace of God.

B. Let no one trouble me (vs. 17).

1. **“From now on let no one trouble me”**: Some had troubled Paul concerning his authority as an apostle and the sincerity of his preaching. Concerning these things he has established beyond a doubt in his letter that his authority and gospel are from God. Let them not trouble him any more.
2. **“for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.”**: “We have here a figure taken from the life of a slave, who, in that day, was often branded with his master's name, so as to insure his recovery should he attempt to escape” (McGarvey, 287). Paul belonged to Christ; that was where his loyalties were (Gal. 1:10). He bore in his body the marks of a slave. The physical stripes that he received through persecution were evidences of his complete devotion to Christ as an apostle. Read also 2 Cor. 11:23-27.

C. Farewell (vs. 18).

1. **“Brethren”**: In spite of their being led astray and the fact that they had brought his apostleship into question, Paul bore no resentment of them. He shows here a continued love and desire for them as his brethren. Such is an example of the attitude he commanded of us in Gal. 6:1-2.
2. **“the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.”**: “He has exalted the spirit as above the body, the flesh, and emphasizes that he prays that God’s favor may be with their spirit” (Lipscomb, pg. 289). So we must learn to view the spirit as greater than the flesh that we may walk according to the spirit and seek after spiritual things. This flesh will be done away with, but the spirit is forever. As we have spiritual life in Christ we must desire that God’s favor be with our spirits.
3. **“Amen.”**: “So be it”, let it be done. What he had written was the word of God. It expressed God’s will for man. It expressed judgment upon those who would turn and fight against God. It expressed blessings upon those who lived for God. So let all of those things be done according to the will of God.

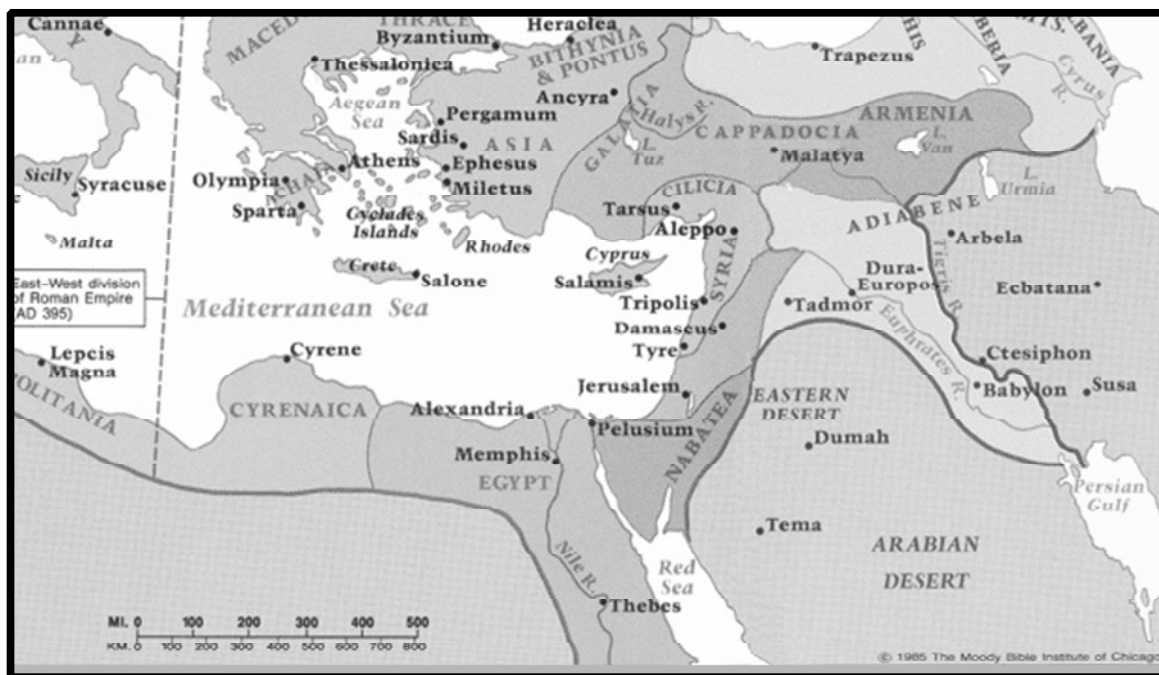
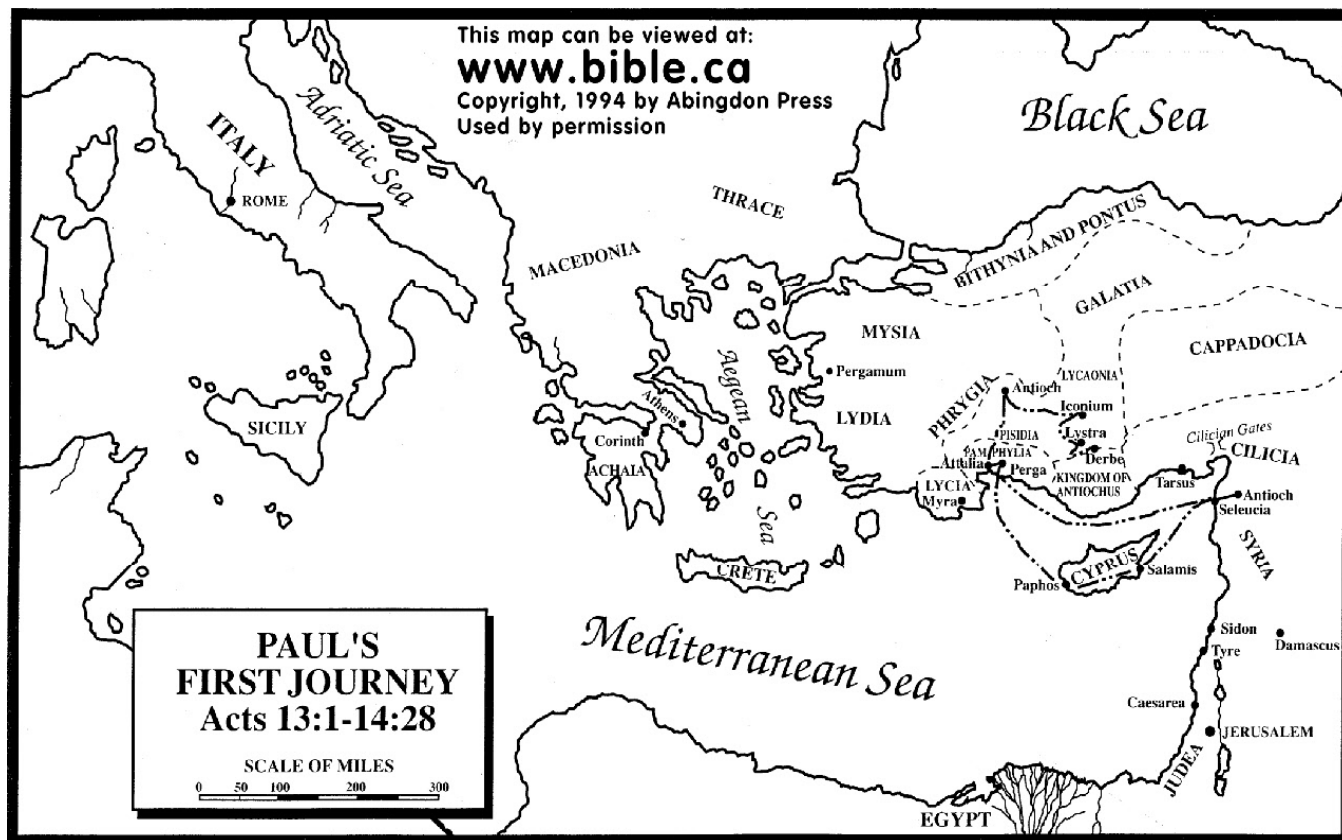
Questions

Lesson Thirteen

Provide scriptural references where possible.

1. What was Paul talking about in 6:11?
2. What does it mean to “*make a good showing in the flesh*”?
3. How would this good showing have helped the false teachers to avoid persecution?
4. Did those who compelled the Galatians to be circumcised really keep the law? Explain.
5. What did Paul boast in? Explain.
6. How was the world crucified to Paul?
7. How was Paul crucified to the world?
8. Are physical attributes such as circumcision of any value in Christ? Explain.
9. What is important in Christ?
10. What rule was Paul talking about in 6:16?
11. How had men troubled Paul?
12. What nature (physical or spiritual) did Paul emphasize in 6:18? Why is this important?

APPENDIX



Paul's Early Travels



Outline of the Book of Galatians

Chapter One

- I. Paul's Greeting (1:1-3).
- II. Only One Gospel (1:6-10).
- III. The Divine Origin of Paul's Gospel (1:11-12).
- IV. Paul Separated as an Apostle by the Will of God (1:13-16).
- V. Paul's Relationship to the Other Apostles (1:17-24).

Chapter Two

- I. Paul Travels to Jerusalem with Barnabas (2:1-5).
- II. Paul and His Apostleship Received by the Other Apostles (2:6-10).
- III. Peter and Others Caught Up in Hypocrisy (2:11-13).
- IV. Paul Withstands Peter In The Presence of All (2:14-21).

Chapter Three

- I. Paul's Concern for the Spiritual Condition of the Galatians (3:1-4).
- II. Justification by Faith (3:5-9).
- III. Freed from the Curse of the Law (3:10-14).
- IV. Christ, the Promised Seed of Abraham (3:15-18).
- V. The Purpose of the Law (3:19-24).
- VI. Sons of God through Faith, and Heirs According to the Promise (3:26-29).

Chapter Four

- I. They had been as Children, No Different than Slaves (4:1-3).
- II. In Christ they have Received the Adoption as Son and are No Longer Slaves (4:4-7).
- III. They were Turning again to the Weak and Beggarly things (4:8-11).
- IV. Paul's Desire that they Be Like Him (4:12-16).
- V. Paul's Labor that Christ May be Formed in Them (4:17-20).
- VI. The Promise and the Law Illustrated by Sarah and Hagar (4:21-27).
- VII. The Children of Freedom and the Children of Bondage (4:28-31).

Chapter Five

- I. Stand Fast in the Liberty of Christ (5:1-6).
- II. Let No One Hinder You (5:7-12).
- III. Use Your Liberty to Fulfill the Law (5:13-15).
- IV. Walk in the Spirit (5:16-18).
- V. The Works of the Flesh (5:19-21).
- VI. The Fruit of the Spirit (5:22-26).

Chapter Six

- I. Responsibilities Toward Our Brethren (6:1-3).
- II. Responsibilities toward Our Selves (6:4-6).
- III. Do not Grow Weary in Doing Good (6:7-10).
- IV. Final Rebuke of Judaizing Teachers (6:11-13).
- V. Glory Only in the Cross of Christ (6:14-15).
- VI. Final Blessing and Farewell (6:16-18).

Outline of Paul's Pre-Missionary Activities

Introduction

1. Paul is most well known for his missionary journeys which began in Acts 13.
2. However, we are first introduced to Paul in the final verses of Acts 7 (he was still named Saul) where we find him holding the coats of those who stoned Stephen.
3. From there his journey is eventful and includes some details about his life that are not well known.
4. In the first chapter of his epistle to the Galatians Paul describes his life before his missionary journeys in order to prove his apostleship. It is here that we learn the significance of those events.

Discussion

I. Paul's Conduct in Judaism Before his Conversion (still named Saul, Gal. 1:13-14).

- A. Saul was well educated as a Jew.
 1. He studied under Gamaliel, one of the great teachers of his day (Acts 22:3).
 2. *"And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers"* (Gal. 1:14).
- B. Saul consented to the death of Stephen and held the coats of those who stoned him (Acts 7:57-60).
- C. Saul was one of the most active persecutors of the church (Acts 8:1-3).

II. Saul's Conversion.

- A. God had plans for Paul when He separated him from his mother's womb (Gal. 1:15).
 1. This does not speak of any predestination for salvation. It simply means that God had a specific purpose for him.
 2. This same thing was said of Samson (Judges 13:1-5), Jeremiah (Jer. 1:5), and John the Baptist (Luke 1:13-17).
- B. Saul was called through the grace of God (Gal. 1:15).
 1. He had greatly persecuted the church for the name of Christ, but God had grace upon him.
 2. When he was on the road to Damascus Jesus appeared to him.
 3. Three days later, Ananias was sent to Saul and at that time he was baptized (Acts 9:17-18).
 4. It is important to note that nothing was ever said about Ananias preaching the gospel to Saul. Paul makes this clear in Gal. 1:11-12.
- C. God purposed that Saul would be set as an apostle.
 1. The conversion of Saul was unusual because he was meant to be an apostle.
 2. It was required of apostles by the very nature of their commission (Acts 1:8) that they bear witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and receive the gospel directly from Him.
 3. Saul's conversion was so different from the others that we read about in Acts because it fulfilled these very qualifications.
 4. He bore witness of Christ when he saw Him on the road to Damascus, and received the gospel by the revelation of Christ from that time on. The truth of this is seen in his post-conversion travels.

III. Saul's Post-conversion/Pre-missionary Journey Travels.

- A. In Gal. 1:16 Paul emphasizes the fact that he did not confer with other men to learn about his gospel. As an apostle, he received the gospel directly from Christ.

- B. Rather than going to Jerusalem to the other apostles, Saul went up to Arabia and then returned again to Damascus (Gal. 1:17, this probably took place between Acts 9:20-23 before he was force to flee Damascus).
- C. Three years after his conversion Saul went up to Jerusalem where he met Peter and James for the first time (Gal. 1:19; Acts 9:23-26).
 - 1. He was in Jerusalem for only fifteen days.
 - 2. While there he met none of the other apostles, save Peter.
 - 3. These combined with the fact that his time was mostly spent in preaching to the Hellenists (Acts 9:29) provide greater evidence that Saul received nothing in the way of teaching from the other apostles.
- D. After fifteen days in Jerusalem and being in danger from the Hellenists, Saul was sent by the brethren to Caesarea (Acts 9:30).
- E. From Caesarea Saul traveled to Tarsus in the region of Cilicia (Acts 9:30; Gal. 1:21).
- F. After Saul had been Tarsus for some time, Barnabas went there to find him (Acts 11:25), then the two of them traveled together to Antioch of Syria (Acts 11:26).

IV. Saul in Antioch (Acts 11:25-26; 12:25 ; Gal. 1:21)

- A. Saul and Barnabas remained in Antioch for one year working with the church there (Acts 11:26).
- B. At that time the disciples sent Saul and Barnabas with financial aid for the churches in Judea who were affected by the famine in that region.
- C. After fulfilling their ministry Saul and Barnabas were joined by John Mark and returned to Antioch where they continued to teach in the church there (Acts 12:25-13:1).
- D. From Antioch Saul and Barnabas were commissioned by the Holy Spirit and the church to take to the gospel to the Gentile nations. They also took John Mark with them (Acts 13:1-4).
- E. During the early part of this first missionary journey Saul became known as Paul.
 - 1. They are the same name.
 - 2. Saul is Hebrew, Paul is Greek.
 - 3. The Greek name would allow him better opportunity to preach among the Gentiles (1 Cor. 9:22).