

Galatians

True and False Chapter 1:1-10



University of Michigan

Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

Hints and Highlights

1. The book of Galatians is the first letter written by Paul to one of the churches. The churches of Galatia were struggling with the simplicity of the gospel. Many were trying to add a list of do's and don'ts to the simplicity of faith in Christ. They wanted to add the Law of Judaism to the message of grace. These churches were located in a Roman province in central Turkey that Paul visited in Acts 13-14. The cities include Iconium, Derbe and Lystra.
2. In the beginning of a new semester always go back and see those who expressed interest last semester but did not regularly attend.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Create a plumb line (you can use string and anything heavy like a lock or keys). Ask what the plumb line does? Why do you think it is necessary to use a plumb line when you build a house? What do you think the house would look like if you neglected to use one?

Option 2:

Play true or false. Have each person give two true statements about themselves and two false ones. Have the group guess which are true and which are false. How do you think you can tell if something is true? Why do you think that is important?

Option 3:

What do you think are the do's and don't of Christianity (spoken or unspoken)? List them out as people share. What do you think would happen to someone who failed to follow them?

- Why do you think many people want to add do's and don'ts to the message of the Gospel?
- Why do you think so many students struggle with performance?

The Galatian Christians like us struggle with performance. They wanted to know what a good Christian ought to do. Let's see how Paul clarifies what is really true.

Diving In

Read 1:1-5.

1. Who wrote the letter? What are some things that we know about the apostle Paul? (be careful to not make those who know nothing of Paul feel uncomfortable) How would you say Paul described Himself here?
2. How would you describe an apostle? (one who is sent) Why do you think Paul emphasizes who sent him and who did not send him?
3. Who received the letter? What kind of people were they? You could have them find the Galatian cities on a map and share some things from the sidebar or even look at a highlight from Acts 14. (Remember, this is a letter, so the more you know about who wrote it and who received it the better.)
4. What kinds of things does Paul wish for the Galatians? What are some places both we and our friends look for peace and grace? Where does Paul say the source of these things are?
5. What are some things you notice about Paul's description of Jesus? Why do you think he starts with this?
6. How would you describe "this present evil age"?
7. Normally after Paul's greeting he includes a prayer for the recipients, often mentioning how thankful he is for them. Why do you think he left this part out? (This is a read between the lines question that you may wish to omit.)

Hints and Highlights

1. The structure of Paul's letters usually includes a prayer or some form of thanksgiving for the believers he is writing (Rom. 1:8, 1 Cor. 1:4, Eph. 1:16, Phil. 1:3, Col. 1:3, etc.) The fact that he left this out shows how serious he treats the subject of this letter. Compare his tone to other letters as well. He is much more blunt and direct here than elsewhere.
2. The basic problem the Galatians faced is that some were adding things to the Gospel, i.e. that a Christian still needed to follow the Jewish law.
3. Paul's apostleship is unique in that he is not one of the original 12. But the word "apostle" means "sent one" and Paul makes it clear that he was personally sent by Jesus.

The point is that Paul wants to get right to the point—this is a blunt letter and he seems upset).

Read 1:6-10

1. How would you describe this paragraph? What themes or ideas does he pick up? How would you describe the tone? Why do you think he is so blunt?
2. Why do you think Paul is so amazed? What do you think would cause them to turn away to a different gospel? What clues might Paul's description of them give us?
3. How would you describe this other gospel? (remember the word "gospel" means "good news") Why do you think he calls it "no gospel at all"?
4. How does Paul feel about those who preach a different gospel than the one Paul preached? Why do you think he repeats it? Why do you think this is such an important issue?
5. How does Paul know he is right and the others are wrong? (Look back to verse 1 for insight.)
6. How would you describe Paul's heart behind such a strong condemnation? What do you think it looks like to please God rather than please other people? Which do you think is easier?
7. What are some ways UM students please people over God? Why do you think you cannot be both a people-pleaser and a bondservant of Christ?

In Summary:

1. Why do you now think Paul opened his letter with these ideas?
2. How would you summarize the problem the Galatian churches were facing?
3. Why do you think that Paul was so strong in his condemnation of those preaching another gospel? Why do you think this such an important issue?

Making Application

There is only one true gospel, the Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus alone. Yet it is so easy for us to add or change it to fit our whims or needs.

1. How do you think most people at UM feel about the idea of salvation through faith in Jesus alone? How do you feel about this?
2. What would be some implications of not having one true gospel?
3. Paul did some difficult things because of Christ's calling? Think for a moment of what might some difficult things God would want you to do.
4. What are ways I try to please people over God? How does this affect the depth and intimacy of my relationship with God?

Let's thank God for one true life-changing Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus alone.

Galatians

The Power to Change—Paul's Story - 1:11-24



Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
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Hints and Highlights

1. The context of Galatians is very important. After rebuking the Galatians for quickly abandoning the true Gospel, Paul shares his own story of his conversion. Remember, the question Galatians is answering is whether you need to add anything to the Gospel (in this case adding the Jewish Law)? So Paul's Jewish background plays a key role as he sets up this issue in chapter 2.
2. These worksheets contain a lot of questions. Look them over and use the ones that best fit your group.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Who would you say is the biggest and worst opponent of Christianity? Have them describe why they picked that particular individual? What would people say if that person claimed to have a sincere conversion to Christianity?

Option 2:

Have several people tell their story of how they came to Christ. You may want to ask several people in advance rather than put them on the spot.

Option 3:

Have people share the most amazing thing they have ever seen. What are some things that made it so amazing?

- What are some things that influence our lives for the better? For the worse?
- Why do you think life change can be so difficult?

Imagine a story of the most hostile enemy of Christianity, one who has educated to be a top leader in another religion, becoming its greatest missionary. This is the story of Paul's life. Let's see what we can learn about the power to change.

Diving In

Read 1:11-17:

1. What are some things that we learn about the Gospel here? How does that make it "good news"?
2. Why do you think Paul emphasizes the fact that this message originated from God and not man? How do you think this ties into the pleasing men vs. pleasing God idea in verse 10?
3. What are some examples of man-made Gospels or man-made "Good News"? Why do you think we can get so focused on our own ideas of Good News?
4. How did Paul learn about the Gospel? (You could look at Acts 9:1-19)
5. How would you describe Paul prior to his conversion? Why do you think he so intensely persecuted the church? How do you think the early Christians felt about Paul during this time?
6. Why do you think Paul calls it his "previous" or "former" life? What does this idea show us about the power of God's salvation to change our lives?
7. How would you describe Paul's Judaism? (You could also look at Philippians 3:4-7 and see a further description of Paul's zeal.) What do you think it cost Paul to follow Christ?
8. How would you describe Paul's call to faith? What strikes you as unique about

Hints and Highlights

1. Paul places a lot of emphasis on his conversion experience. According to Acts 9, Paul was on the road to Damascus to persecute the church when he was blinded by a bright light and Jesus Himself spoke with him. This placed in a category like the disciples who had personally been called by Jesus into a ministry.
2. God had called him from birth. While this is not the place to argue predestination, it is interesting to note that God's plan was in motion even while Paul was a great enemy of the church.
3. Jerusalem was the capital of the Roman province Judea, where most Jews lived. Again most believers in Judea had very little contact with Paul. God was preparing his ambassador to the Gentiles by having him spend little time with the most Jewish part of the church. Paul's apostleship is unique as he is not one of the 12. But the word "apostle" means "sent one" and Paul makes it clear that he was personally sent by Jesus.

this calling? What does the fact that God called him from birth tell you about God?

9. What do you notice about Paul's relationship with the leadership of the early church right after his conversion? Why do you think Paul is focusing on that fact here in this letter?
10. Why do you think that God raised up a topnotch Jewish scholar and leader who was an enemy of the church to be His key minister to the Gentiles? Why do you think this was such a dramatic event in the history of the church? (it meant that faith in Christ could be global regardless of race or ethnicity, not just a reformed version of Judaism).

Read 1:18-24

1. How would you describe the rest of Paul's story? What things do strike you as significant?
2. Why do you think he shares this? (note Paul is establishing his independence from the apostles—Paul is not just repeating what Peter & co. told him, he learned it himself).
3. Why do you think this independence from the apostles is so significant? Why do you think Paul did not need to spend time with the disciples?
4. How would you describe his relationship with the believers in Judea? How would you describe the church's response to Paul? How do you think they felt about his conversion?
5. Why do you think Paul's conversion would be so significant to the church? What does tell you about the power of God?

In Summary:

1. How would you summarize Paul's story? How is his life different? What part of his story is most meaningful to you?
2. Why do you think Paul's story would be so significant to the Galatian church? (think about their struggle in 1:1-10)
3. What are some things that we can learn about the Gospel from this story? What are some things that we can learn about God?

What does Paul's independence from the apostles show us? (God can work in any situation— Paul was not a brain-washed robot)

Making Application

Salvation is more than just "fire insurance", it possesses the power to change even the most hostile of lives.

1. Paul talked about his "previous" life as being completely gone. What are some areas of our "previous" lives (I.e. before we came to Christ) that we still cling to?
2. Who are some of the people I know that I think are least likely to come to Christ? Write down their names and begin praying for them to come to Christ.
3. What are some examples of God's power that I have seen? What are some things I could glorify God for right now?

Let's thank God for the power to change people who were hopelessly lost—Paul, the Galatians and you and me.

Galatians

The Inside is what Counts Chapter 2:1-10



University of Michigan

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Hints and Highlights

1. Here is the context for this part of Galatians. Paul just finished telling the story of his conversion. He emphasized that his views on salvation came from Jesus Himself, not through the ideas of men (even the apostles). Here Paul explains the heart of the problem he is writing to address. Some “false brothers” were encouraging non-Jewish Christians to follow the Jewish Law and be circumcised. Paul and the apostles are unified that this is wrong. External ways of following the Jewish law do not accomplish salvation. This means that the Gentiles Paul is preaching to could come to Christ without becoming a Jew.
2. Take some time to pray for each person in your Bible Study. Prayer is essential to leadership because God is the one who brings growth into their lives.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Play a spy game like Clue or even Assassin (the game where the assassin kills by winking at people). Then ask what makes a good spy. Why do you think spies are so intriguing?

Option 2:

Do a “Pepsi Taste Test”. Blindfold people and have them drink out of a can of Coke and Pepsi and guess which one is which.

Option 3:

Wrap up some presents. Wrap up some nicely but put junk inside. Wrap up the nice things in an ugly way. Have everyone take one before anyone opens, then talk about how the inside isn’t always as it seems.

- Why do you think we focus so much on the outside?
- Why do you think this might be a problem for believers?

The bad guys, spies were coming in and making the Galatian church focus on the outside, rather than their hearts. Let’s see how Paul and the church leaders responded to this big problem.

Diving In

Read 2:1-5.

1. What are some things you notice about Paul’s experience? Why do you think it was so long before Paul went to Jerusalem again?
2. Why did Paul bother to go to Jerusalem? Why do you think his visit was so important? Who did he go to see? (the prominent men or leaders must be the apostles)
3. What do you think Paul was afraid of? Why do you think he went to them privately? What might have happened if he done this publicly?
4. How would you describe the example of Titus? Why do you think this was a problem? (the issue is that Titus did not need to be circumcised to be a Christian—he was not becoming a Jew—this was a big realization for the early church) Why do you think this is so important?
5. How would you describe the “false brothers”? What do you notice about the kind of language that Paul uses here? What kind of images or word pictures does Paul use here? How do they make you feel about the “false bothers”?
6. What do you think it looks like or feels like to live the Christian life under bondage?
7. How would you describe Paul’s response to the “false brothers”?

Hints and Highlights

1. Titus is a Gentile believer who was falsely compelled to be circumcised after he came to faith. He travels much with Paul and eventually leads the church in Crete.
2. Circumcision for men is the mark of being a Jew. It is the sign of the covenant made between God and His chosen people, starting with Abraham in Genesis 17. But it was no longer necessary to follow the Jewish Law. Salvation was for all—Jew and Gentile. Romans 2:28-29 makes clear that it is what is on the inside that counts, because the Spirit circumcises the heart.
3. Notice the unity on the essence of the mission. All needed to hear salvation through Christ alone, both Jew and Gentile. By giving Paul the “right hand of fellowship” the apostles were endorsing his mission to the Gentiles without circumcising them. This meeting is probably the Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15.

8. Why do you think that Paul emphasizes this so much? What do you think would have happened to the church if it had required circumcision?

Read 2:6-10

1. How would you describe this paragraph? What themes or ideas does he pick up? How would you describe what happens?
2. How would you describe Paul’s relationship with those of “high reputation”? Why do you think he responds in a way that once again reinforces his independence from the apostles?
3. How would you describe Paul’s mission? What are some ways it is different than Peter’s mission? How would you say it is the same?
4. How would you say Peter and the other apostles responded to Paul’s ministry? What do you think they mean by the “right hand of fellowship”?
5. What are some things this shows you about the leadership of the early church? Why do you think unity on this point was so important? What do you think would have happened if the apostles had not endorsed Paul’s mission to the Gentiles or had compelled all new believers to be circumcised?
6. How would you describe the extra thing they reminded Paul to do for the Gentiles? What do you think that this shows about their hearts? (Remember the early church from the outset helped each other out in times of need—see Acts 2:45)

In Summary:

1. How would you describe the problem facing the Galatian church?
2. Why do you think Paul went to see the apostles? Why do you think he brought Titus along?
3. How would you describe the Christian view of leadership? How does it differ from the world? (God values all equally—leadership then becomes service rather than power)

Why do you think it is so essential that the apostles and Paul were unified in support of his ministry to the Gentiles?

Making Application

We live in a world dominated by external appearances.

1. What are some ways that we are ruled at UM by external appearances? What are the things that are important to be viewed a success at UM?
2. What are some ways that we place ourselves in bondage (possibly because of the need to perform or impress)? What are some outside spies that encourage this bondage?
3. How do you think this focus on externals affects my relationship with God?
4. How does my view of leadership differ from Paul’s idea of all being equal in God’s eyes?
5. How would God describe the inside of my heart?

Let’s thank God that He cares more about the inside than the outside.

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Going along with the Crowd Chapter 2:11-21



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Hints and Highlights

1. Here is the context for this part of Galatians. In the first half of chapter 2 Paul shows the unity that the apostles and he shared in his mission to take the Gospel to the Gentiles, and in the fact that following the Jewish Law, especially circumcision was not necessary for salvation. Now Paul shows how wrong the Law is by telling how he confronted Peter.
2. Bible study is more than just an hour a week event. Plan together some form of party, perhaps along with another Bible study nearby.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Have everyone share about a time they “went along with the crowd” because of peer pressure. Then talk ask them why peer pressure has such a strong impact in the lives of students.

Option 2:

Role play a situation of peer pressure. Get a couple of guys to convince someone to not go to church because they are college students. Then talk about the impact such peer pressure can have on our faith at college.

Option 3:

Give every one two choices (go to Wendy’s or McDonald’s after Bible study, play one of two games Friday, etc.) Have the group decide. Argue one way or the other. Then ask if anyone made the decision because of peer pressure.

- Why do you think there so much temptation to go along with the crowd?
- Why do you think going along with the crowd usually ends up in doing the wrong things?

Peer pressure can be a difficult thing, even for the leaders of the early church. Peter was even drawn into following the crowd. Let’s see how Paul handled a situation where nearly everyone else was doing the wrong thing.

Diving In

Read 2:11-14.

1. How would you describe the action that takes place here? What do you think Peter was feeling in this situation? What do you think Paul was feeling?
2. How would you describe Peter’s behavior when he first came to Antioch? (notice he was not in Jerusalem where he was well known—Antioch was the center of Gentile Christianity)
3. How did Peter’s behavior change? Why do you think his behavior changed? Why do you think the men from James caused Peter to change his behavior? (these men were Jewish while much of the Antioch church was Gentile—it was Jewish custom to not eat with Gentiles for fear the food may not have been prepared according to the Jewish dietary Law)
4. Why do you think his change in behavior was so wrong?
5. What kind of impact did Peter’s behavior have on the rest of the church? Why do you think that happened?
6. How would you describe Paul’s confrontation of Peter? Why do you think he did it publicly?
7. How would you say that Peter’s actions were not in line with the “truth of the Gospel”? (just like circumcision, they were asking Gentiles to follow the Jewish Law—this time over diet—to have fellowship with church leaders)

Hints and Highlights

1. Jewish custom was to not eat with Gentiles for fear of their not following the Jewish dietary Law. In Antioch there were both Gentile and Jewish believers who evidently set this custom aside. When believers came from the all-Jewish church in Jerusalem Peter reverted back. This would have made the Gentile believers like second class citizens. To eat with their Jewish leadership they would need to adopt Jewish dietary Law.
2. "Justification" is a legal term which means the act of declaring righteous or innocent. It is the opposite of condemning or declaring guilty.
3. Paul's argument is similar in style to Romans 6.
4. The Law shows you that you are sinful. If Paul rebuilds the Law he finds out only that he has broken it.
5. When we come to Christ we are "crucified", i.e. we give over our lives to Jesus. This is the key answer to the question about "cheap grace" asked rhetorically in verse 17.

Read 2:15-21

1. How would you describe this paragraph? What themes or ideas does he pick up? How would you summarize Paul's argument?
2. Why do you think he starts out by saying "we who are Jews"? (the Jews needed to reject the Law, not Gentiles embrace it)
3. How would you explain his main point in verse 16? How would you define or explain the word "justification"? (see side bar)
4. How would you explain the fact that someone who is guilty can be justified or declared righteous? Why do you think that our deeds cannot help us attain justification? (you cannot on your own erase your guilty offenses)
5. What are some subtle or not so subtle ways that we try to earn our justification? Why do you think many people believe that verse 16 is the most important verse in this book?
6. What do you think that Paul is saying in verse 17? What argument do you think he is trying to answer? (if salvation is not based on what you do, then people can sin all the time)
7. How would you describe his answer? How would you say he continues to develop his argument? Take a moment and have them outline the points of verses 16-21 if that helps.
8. How would you explain verse 18? What is he referring to rebuilding? (the Law). How would rebuilding the Law make him a lawbreaker? How did he die to the Law through the Law?
9. What do you think it looks like to be crucified with Christ? What difference does that make in your life?
10. Why do you think Christ's death would be unnecessary if righteousness could come through the Law? Why do you think Paul closes his argument with this?

In Summary:

1. How would you describe Paul's disagreement with Peter? Why do you think it was so important?
2. How would you summarize Paul's argument?

What would you say you learn about salvation here?

Making Application

It is often so tempting to "go along with the crowd".

1. What are some areas in which we are tempted to compromise, to do something everyone else does? What impact might our decisions have on others? How can we help each other from being tempted to go along with the crowd?
2. Peter's actions caused a wedge or even cliques to form in the Christian community at Antioch. What are some things we might do that inadvertently may contribute to forming cliques or causing problems of unity.
3. What are some subtle ways we try to obtain righteousness through what we do? How can we balance this against the idea that sin does not matter?
4. How should my life look differently if it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives through me? How do I live that out?

Let's thank God that He lives within us and keeps us from going along with the crowd.

Galatians

Just Prove it! Chapter 3:1-14



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Hints and Highlights

1. Here is the context for this part of Galatians. Having finished with his argument for salvation by faith alone based on his personal experience, now Paul switches to a more doctrinal approach. He switches back his focus to the Galatians and looks to the Old Testament for support.
2. Don't forget when you ask questions in your group to give them time to answer them. Sometimes leaders can be tempted to fill the silence by answering their own questions. Remember students will learn far more through what they themselves discover, not through what you as a leader say.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Make a list of outrageous claims, the more outrageous the better (like the Lions are a great football team). Then ask them how they would go about proving these claims to be true.

Option 2:

Ask them to prove that the grass is green. Really challenge them to prove it. How do you know that that color is green?

Option 3:

Have a contest, maybe give them 5 minutes to make the best sandwich or the best ice cream sundae or the best cookies. Then ask them how they know theirs is the best. Assign someone to judge. Then ask them how they decided.

- How do you prove that something is true?
- Why do you think giving proof can be important?

The Galatian church held a wrong view of the relationship between salvation and the Law or works. Paul wanted to prove to them that they were wrong. Let's take a look and see how he did that.

Diving In

Read 3:1-5.

1. How would you summarize what Paul is trying to tell the Galatians here? How would you describe his tone? Why do you think he starts out by calling them foolish? What do you think it means to "bewitch" someone? What do you think the Galatians felt when they read this?
2. How would you describe the one thing Paul wants to know? Why do you think he asks that one question? Why do you think this question is so important? (The answer is obvious, the Holy Spirit only rarely came in the Old Testament to those who followed the Law but came to all who believed through faith in Jesus Christ)
3. How would you describe the next few questions Paul asks? How would you answer the questions that Paul asks?
4. How does the Christian life begin? (by the Spirit) Then how do we grow? (through the Spirit's work in us, not through our actions)
5. How would you say God provides the Spirit? Why do you think Paul brings this up?

Read 3:6-14

1. How would you describe this paragraph? What themes or ideas does he pick up? How would you summarize what Paul is doing here? Why do you think he

Hints and Highlights

1. Verse 6 quotes Genesis 15:6, the passage where God makes His covenant with Abraham. Even at the very beginning of the people who would possess the Law it was Abraham's faith which saved him.
2. Verse 8 quotes Genesis 12:3. This verse shows the relationship between Abraham's descendents and the Gentiles. Coming out of the Tower of Babel where God created nations, here God shows how He will save all nations.
3. Verse 10 quotes Deut. 27:26, showing that those who do not do all the Law is cursed.
4. Verse 11 quotes from Habakkuk 2:4 showing clearly that the righteous live by faith. Paul concluded then that no one is justified by the Law.
5. Verse 12 quotes from Leviticus 18:5. Paul's point is that it does not require faith to just follow a list of rules.
6. Verse 13 quotes from Deut. 21:23. Paul's point is that all the Law did for us is curse us. What Christ did for us is become our curse in our place.

quotes so many Old Testament passages?

2. One thing you could have them do is make a sheet and write down "quote" and "conclusion". Go through verses 6-14 and write down each (there are 6 quotes). This should help follow Paul's thinking.
3. What are some things you notice about the first example of Abraham? What do you think is Paul's main point here? Why do you think he starts with Abraham? (see side bar—you can look at Genesis 15 if you want)
4. How would you describe Paul's conclusion from the first example of Abraham? (those who are of faith are Abraham's sons)
5. What are some things you notice about the second example of Abraham? How is this related to the first example? (see side bar—you can look at Genesis 12 if you want) How is this the Gospel being preached to Abraham?
6. How would you describe Paul's conclusion from the second example of Abraham? (all of faith are blessed with Abraham the believer)
7. How would you describe the next claim about the Law (v. 10)? What do you think his point is? Why is this so important in making Paul's argument?
8. How would you describe the next quote Paul gives (v. 11)? How would you describe Paul's conclusion from this quote?
9. How would you describe Paul's next claim (v. 12)? How does Paul back this claim up? Why do you think that following the Law does not require faith?
10. How would you describe a curse (v. 13)? Why do you think Paul quotes what he did? How would you describe what Christ did to the curse?
11. How does Paul summarize his conclusions from all of his Old Testament proofs? What do you think he means by the blessing of Abraham coming to the Gentiles? How would you describe the promise?

In Summary:

1. How would you describe Paul's frustration with the Galatians? Why do you think he uses such strong language?
2. Why do you think Paul spends so much time proving his points from the Old Testament? What do you think Paul proves?

How would you describe the relationship between Law and Faith?

Making Application

Paul needed to prove even the Old Testament showed that salvation is through faith alone.

1. How well do I know the Bible? Would I be able to prove to others the truth of my faith from multiple books of the Bible? What kind of plan could I make to become more informed about the Scripture?
2. What are some ways that I try to perfect myself through my own effort? How can I rely more on the Holy Spirit for my growth?
3. What would be a step of faith for me to take right now to rely on the Spirit?
4. What do these verses tell me about the trustworthiness of God? How does that impact my relationship with Him?

Let's thank God that He is trustworthy and worthy of our faith. He's proven it!

Galatians

Promise Made, Promise Kept Chapter 3:15-29



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1. Here is the context for this part of Galatians. Paul just showed the difference between Law and Faith by walking through the Old Testament. He used Abraham as an example of faith and showed how the Law brought along a curse. He continues here with the example of Abraham and brings up the idea of a Promise. Paul also answers two key questions about the Law. Why do we have it? Is it contrary to God's promises?
2. Food can add a fun component to any group. Get someone in the group to bring snacks.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Have everyone share a promise they broke. Then ask them why they think promises are so difficult to keep.

Option 2:

Get out a warranty from your computer or CD player. Why do you think there are so many conditions on a warranty? What do you think happens if the company goes out of business? In warranties you have to read the fine print, and they often can change.

Option 3:

Have each person share about a time someone broke a promise to them. How did that make them feel? Ask them if anyone had ever kept a promise to them? How did that make them feel?

- Why do you think so many people break their promises?
- What would you think about someone who always kept a promise, even over many years? Would you trust them?

Before there was the Law God had made a promise. This promise was not based on what we did, but on His own initiative. Let's see what we can learn about that promise, how God kept it, what our part is and how that affects our relationship.

Diving In

Read 3:15-22.

1. How would you summarize what Paul is trying to tell the Galatians here? How would you describe his tone? Why do you think he calls them "brothers" (compare to "foolish Galatians" in 3:1)?
2. How would you describe the example Paul uses from every day life (v. 15)? How would you describe a covenant? (agreement) How would you describe what Paul is trying to explain?
3. How would you define a "promise"? What makes a promise true? How would you explain what Paul means about Abraham's "seed"? (see side bar on the back)
4. Why do you think he mentions that the Law came 430 years after Abraham? How would you describe the relationship between the Law and the Promise? What would you say the inheritance depends on? What does the Law have to do with the inheritance (v. 18)?
5. Why would you say that God gave Moses the Law (v. 19)? (because of our sin) How long was it to last? (until the Seed should come) When did this happen? (when Jesus came) What are some conclusions we can make about the Law? (it was to be temporary)
6. What does a mediator do? (goes between 2 parties) How does this make a

Hints and Highlights

1. There are many promises made in Genesis about Abraham's "seed", referring to his offspring (v. 16). Paul shows that the fulfillment of the promises came in Christ.
2. A covenant is a binding agreement between 2 parties. The prototype of a covenant is found in Genesis 15:12ff.
3. In v. 19 and 21 Paul answers 2 possible questions about the Law. The purpose of the Law was to be a temporary agreement until Jesus came, showing us how we should live and how we fall short. The Law does not contradict the Promise, rather it shows the need for the Promise.
4. There are 2 word pictures for the Law shown in verses 23-25. The first is the Law as a prison warden, putting us in custody. The second is that of a tutor or guardian. In their culture children often were given guardians who tutored them into adulthood.
5. Verse 27 does not mean that baptism saves us. Rather it makes the point that baptism shows our whole identification with Christ, like being clothed with Him.

promise better than the Law? (Promise is unilaterally initiated by God)

7. How would you answer the objection that the Law is opposed to the Promises of God? (It is not—the Law shows the need for the promise as it shows we are prisoners of sin) What do you think would have happened if the Law had brought life? How would you describe what happened in reality?
8. What do you think it means to be a "prisoner of sin"?

Read 3:23-29

1. How would you describe this paragraph? What themes or ideas does he pick up? How does he build on what he started in the previous paragraph?
2. How would you describe the situation "before this faith came" (v. 23)? Why do you think we were held prisoners by the Law? How do you think this is different from being a prisoner of sin? What are some things we learn about the Law from this word picture?
3. How would you describe the other word picture of the Law shown in verses 24-25? (have them read NASB translation if it is unclear from the NIV—see side bar) What are some insights we gain about the Law from this word picture?
4. How would you describe the impact of faith in Christ in someone's life (v. 26-29) What do you think it means to be a "son of God"?
5. What do you think are some of the implications of all being one in Christ (v. 28)? Why do you think Paul brings this up here? Why do you think the Galatians needed to hear this truth?
6. If this is true why do you think some Christians are prejudiced?
7. What do you think it means that we are Abraham's seed (v.29)? What does it mean to be an heir? What are we heirs of?

In Summary:

1. How would you describe God's promise? What is its relationship to the Law?
2. How would you explain the purpose of the Law? Why do you think God gave the Law to Israel?

How do we receive the Promise? What impact does receiving the Promise through faith make in our lives? What are some things we learn about God in this passage?

Making Application

God always keeps His promises, even over thousands of years.

1. How much do I really trust God? Why don't I trust God? How does this Bible study affect my view of God? What are some areas of my life in which I hesitate to trust God (future, relationships, school, etc.)?
2. How do I view the Law? How should I properly view these commands and not use them as a way to try to earn favor with God?
3. How do I view every believer? Do I see them as all equal regardless of race or background? What are some subtle ways I exhibit prejudice? What are some ways I can live out the unity between races and ethnic groups?

Let's thank God that He always keeps His promises.

Galatians

Child or Slave? - Chapter 4:1-11



University of Michigan

Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

Hints and Highlights

1. Here is the context for this part of Galatians. Paul argues from his personal experience about salvation being through faith alone (ch. 1-2). Then Paul argues (ch.3) the same point through the Old Testament. Here Paul finishes up his argument and transitions into a personal appeal for them to reject the Judaizers (those who wanted all believers to follow the Jewish Law).
2. Pass around a list and find out favorite things, like favorite snacks, cookies, or even favorite movie. You can bring their favorite snacks the next week or have them guess each other's favorite movie.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Talk about your family. Have everyone share about their brothers and sisters. Then ask, "What are some ways my parents treated me differently than the neighbor kids on the street?"

Option 2:

Have everyone discuss the idea of slavery. What kind of rights do slaves have? How do you think a slave owner would treat his son or daughter differently than a slave?

Option 3:

Have everyone brainstorm a list of movies that talk about slavery. Think broadly, from Amistad to Star Wars: Phantom Menace. What are some things we learn about the rights that slaves have as depicted in these movies?

- Why do slaves have no rights?
- How do you think a parent treats their son or daughter differently than another child or even more so, a slave?

Under the Law we were in bondage, no better than slaves. But through Christ, God offers us so much more. Let's take a look at what God has done to make us His child and what difference it makes in our lives.

Diving In

Read 4:1-7.

1. How would you summarize what Paul is trying to tell the Galatians here? How would you explain the example he is using? Why do you think he uses this example?
2. How would you define an heir? What kinds of things do heirs receive? What happens if a minor receives an inheritance? (see side bar on opposite side to further explain this)
3. Why would he say that a minor is no different than a slave in regards to his inheritance? How would you describe the role of the guardians and trustees?
4. How would you say that Paul applies this example of a minor child who owns everything but can't touch it (v. 3)?
5. What do you think Paul means by "basic principles" or "elemental things of the world"? How do you think we were held hostage by them? (see side bar on back page)
6. What do you think he means by "when the time had fully come" (v. 4) Why do you think Paul emphasizes the fact that Jesus was born of a woman? ...under the Law?
7. How would you say that Paul contrasts our situation to Jesus (v. 4-5)?

Hints and Highlights

1. In ancient cultures passing into adulthood had much more significance than today. The child had no say about his fortune and no rights to decide anything. The guardians did that for him. That is why he was no different than a slave.
2. The “basic principles” or “elemental things” (v.3) probably refers to the Law. In v. 9 Paul uses the same word, but he also harkens back to the legalistic pagan religion the Galatians used to follow. Both the rules of the Jewish and the pagan religions held the Galatians in bondage. Paul is expressing amazement that having been freed from slavery to one thing would go back to another.
3. The word “know” used in v. 9 implies an intimate, relational way of knowing God, not just knowing information about God. Paul is flabbergasted that they would leave this relationship with God to go back to the ritualism they just left.

8. What do you think it means to redeemed? (bought out of slavery) What do you think it means to be adopted? How do you think these truths impact our relationship with God?
9. What are some things that are true in our lives because we are sons? Why would you say we have the Spirit of God in our hearts? Why do you think that makes such a big difference?
10. What do you think he means that we can cry out “Abba Father!” (v. 6)? (Abba is the Aramaic word for “Daddy”. It is very intimate and is the word Jesus used for God the Father)
11. What are some things that Paul concludes as he sums up (v. 7)?

Read 4:8-11.

1. How would you describe this paragraph? How would you say Paul switches his emphasis here?
2. How would you describe the Galatians before they came to Christ? What do you think he means by being a slave to things that are not gods?
3. How would you describe the tone of Paul’s question in v.9? How would you describe the point behind Paul’s question? What do you think it means to be known by God? How do you think someone could abandon this for slavery to rules? What comparison does Paul make between the Law and Paganism?
4. What do you think Paul is implying by the observing days and months and years? (that the Galatians were following the Jewish calendar) Why would this be such a bad thing?
5. How do you think the Galatians felt when they read verse 11? Why do you think Paul wrote this? What do you think he meant?

In Summary:

1. How would you describe our situation before Christ came? What kind of role did the Law play back then?
2. How would you describe what Christ did for us? What things are true of believers now that Christ has come?

How would you describe Paul’s frustration with the Galatians? How does he describe the things they are doing?

Making Application

God offers us freedom from slavery and adoption as sons and daughters.

1. What are some of the “basic principles of the world” that I enslave myself to?
2. What do you think it means to be a son or a daughter of God? What do you think the significance is of being adopted? How should this impact how I view myself? How do you think this impacts how I live my life?
3. How well do I “know” God? What are some things that I can do to develop my relationship with God? What are some subtle rituals or rules I cling to that keep me from knowing God more personally than I do?

Let’s thank God that He has freed us from slavery and adopted us as His son or daughter.

Galatians

Born Free - Chapter 4:12-31



University of Michigan

Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

Hints and Highlights

1. Here is the context for this part of Galatians. After challenging them with the need to back away from following the Law in the first part of this chapter Paul gets more personal here. He switches from cold challenging doctrine to personal pastoral care. Then he closes with another example that he builds his thoughts around—the life of Abraham as exhibited through Isaac and Ishmael.
2. Have the group plan an outreach together—maybe a “Bring a Friend” Bible study or a program or movie. The goal is to help the group think together about reaching out to others.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Have them play a game like basketball or even just something involving the use of their hands in the room. But tie their hands together to inhibit their play. Then have them play again with their hands loose.

Option 2:

Ask everyone to tell about times they have been lost. How many times was it because we took a shortcut? Why can shortcuts be so hazardous?

Option 3:

Play a game of cards or any other quick game where all can play. Ask someone to cheat so they can win. Then discuss how that made everyone else feel.

- Why do you think we value freedom so much?
- Why do you think we are so tempted to take shortcuts, to try to get things done in our way and in our timing?

Paul deeply cared for the Galatians. He did not want them to try to take shortcuts that would ultimately limit their own freedom. Let's see how he shares his heart with them as he lovingly challenges to lives as children “born free”.

Diving In

Read 4:12-20.

1. How would you describe Paul's tone here? Why do you think he becomes more sensitive and caring? How would you describe Paul's heart for the Galatians?
2. How would Paul describe his history with the Galatians (v. 12-14)? How would you describe Paul's experience there? How would you describe their treatment of Paul? Why do you think he is writing this letter?
3. Why do you think Paul asks about that sense of blessing (v. 15)? What do you think he means by that? How do you think the Galatians lost it? How does he describe their former opinion of him when he was there?
4. How does he hear that may have changed (v. 16)? Who do you think the “they” is in v. 17? (the Judaizers). What are some things that Paul warns them about these people (v. 17-18)?
5. How would you describe Paul's tone in v. 19-20? Why do you think he calls them “his children”? How do you think the Galatians felt as they were reading this? How would you describe the word picture he uses? Why do you think Paul wants to be with them now?

Read 4:21-31.

1. How would you describe this paragraph? How would you say Paul switches

Hints and Highlights

1. There are several theories about the sickness or condition Paul mentions in v. 14, including this being his “thorn in the flesh”. More likely this is a result of the stoning he received in Galatia reported in Acts 14:19.
2. In verse 17 the “they” must refer to the Judaizers, those who were trying to draw them back into following the Law.
3. God had promised Abraham a son but when his wife Sarah was barren Abraham took his wife’s servant as a concubine. Hagar gave birth to a son, Ishmael. But Abraham did not show faith in God here, this was an attempt to fulfill God’s promise on his own. He tried a shortcut with disastrous consequences. Many years later when Sarah was far beyond child-bearing years God fulfilled his promise. She gave birth to a miracle son, Isaac (Gen. 16, 21).
4. Verse 27 quotes Isaiah 54:1. Paul is showing that the formerly spiritually barren Gentiles like the Galatians now can rejoice.

his emphasis here? Why do you think he goes back to an application of doctrine from the life of Abraham?

2. At this point you could have them make a chart of the 2 sons and what they represent. Have them write down the contrasts. When finished it could look something like this:

<u>Hagar</u>	<u>Sarah</u>
Bondwoman	Freewoman
Ishmael	Isaac
Born according to flesh	Born through Promise
Old Covenant (Sinai)	New Covenant
Judaism	Christianity
Present Jerusalem	New Jerusalem

1. What are some things you notice about the contrast Paul is setting up here? Why do you think he chooses to contrast his two sons? Why do you think he introduces this by being under the Law?
2. How would you say the son of the slave (Ishmael) was born according to the flesh? (see side bar about the story of Ishmael—you may want to go through Genesis 16 with them or at least review the story with them)
3. How would you say the son of the freewoman (Isaac) was born according to the promise? How does Paul figuratively apply these 2 situations to believers (v. 24 ff)? How are the Galatians living like sons of Hagar, the slave?
4. What do you think it means to be a child of promise (v. 28)? How do the children of flesh respond to the children of promise (v. 29)? Why do you think they respond that way? How would you say we are to respond?

In Summary:

1. How would you describe Paul’s heart for the Galatians? How would you describe their history together? Why do you think he writes the way he does?
2. How would you describe the contrast between the child of the freewoman and the child of the slave? How would you say that this illustration is relevant for the Galatians?

What do you think it means to be a child of promise?

Making Application

God has made us children of freedom and promise, not children of slavery.

1. What are some things that hold me back from caring enough to tell others the truth like Paul did? Are there some ways I have lost my sense of blessing?
2. What are some ways I try to shortcut God, like Abraham through Hagar? What are some things that I do in my own power and not through relying on God? What keeps me from being willing to trust God and His timing?
3. What are some areas that I am living as a child of a slave, trying to manipulate God? What are some areas of my life I need to trust God with? Take a moment silently and talk to God about those areas of your life.

Let’s thank God that He has made us children of freedom.

Galatians

Living Free: Faith & Love - Chapter 5:1-15



University of Michigan

Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

Hints and Highlights

1. Here is the context for chapter 5. In chapters 1 & 2 Paul made his case against legalism through personal examples. In chapters 3 & 4 Paul used doctrinal examples from the Old Testament. Now Paul switches to practical application in real life.
2. It can be tempting to leave out the application section as you are rushing to finish a Bible study. The goal of any Bible study is that students learn and grow, so we should not miss this most important part. If some of the questions are too personal to be shared then have them write down for themselves the answers. But do make sure to help apply the Scripture to their lives.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Get out a Nintendo (or any other game). Ask if anyone is an expert on that particular game. Have them demonstrate to everyone (but don't take too long). How often do people claim to know something but don't live like it?

Option 2:

Make a list of the top 10 hypocrites of all time. What do you think it means to be a hypocrite? (make sure it comes out not just saying something, but living out what you say). Why do you think living out what you say is so important?

Option 3:

Make a list of commercial slogans, like "Be young have fun drink Pepsi" or "Just do it!" What do these things teach us about how Americans live their lives? How well do you think we live out what we say is important?

- How do you feel about people who say one thing and do another? Why?
- How important is it to live out the things we say are important?

It wasn't just enough for the Galatians to know intellectually that they were free. They had to choose to live like it. Let's see how Paul challenges them to live out their freedom in faith and love.

Diving In

Read 5:1-12.

1. How would you describe Paul's tone here? What do you think he is trying to say? How is this different than earlier parts of the letter?
2. How would you describe verse 1? Why do you think Christ died for us? What do you think he means by freedom? How were the Galatians putting themselves under the yoke of slavery again? How do you think one would stand firm against this?
3. What are warnings that Paul gives about circumcision? Why do you think Christ would be of no benefit if they were circumcised (v. 2)? (they would be trusting in following the Law, not in Christ)
4. Why do you think those who were circumcised would be obligated to follow the whole Law (v. 3)? (can't have part without eventually following all of it)
5. How does Paul describe those who are trying to be justified by the Law (v.4)? What do you think it means to be alienated from Christ? (NASB uses the word "severed") What do you think it means to be "fall away from grace"? (see side bar on back page—this does NOT mean you can lose your salvation)
6. How would you describe what we are waiting for (v.5)? What do you think this means? Where does righteousness come from? (the Spirit, not the Law)
7. What would you say is most important in Christ (v. 6)? What do you think Paul

Hints and Highlights

1. The idea of falling away from grace in v. 4 does NOT mean you can lose your salvation. It refers to the fact that they have fallen away from the idea that salvation is based on grace. They have fallen into legalism, the opposite of grace. Do not get into a debate about eternal security here because the text has nothing to do with it.
2. The word "offense" in verse 11 is more like a trap or snare or stumbling block. The cross is so offensive that it arouses opposition.
3. Verse 12 is an example of irony. They are talking about people advocating circumcision, so Paul is saying that the knife should go further than circumcision all the way to castration. This shows how strongly he feels about their false teaching.
4. Paul bases his teaching on the command to love your neighbor found in Leviticus 19:18. This sums up the heart behind what the Law should teach. He uses this to answer again the objection to grace that it gives someone the ability to do anything they want.

is saying about Jews or Gentiles, circumcision or uncircumcision?

8. How would you describe the two examples Paul uses (v. 7-9)? What do you think Paul is saying with the race example? Who do you think is cutting in on them in the race? What does Paul say about them cutting in?
9. Why do you think Paul has such confidence in them (v. 10)? Why do you think Paul is so confident that he is right? What does Paul say about the fate of the false teachers (v. 10)? What does Paul say about the fate of these false teachers?
10. What do you think he means by the baking example? What does yeast do in bread making? How is yeast like the teaching of those advocating legalism?
11. What do you think Paul is still being persecuted (v.11)? What does this tell you about the Gospel? Why do you think the cross is so offensive?
12. What do you think he is saying about them in v. 12? (see side bar) Why do you think he would speak so strongly?

Read 5:13-15.

1. How would you describe the challenges that Paul issues to them? What do you think it means to indulge my sinful nature? What do you think the implications are in how we live our lives? What do you think it means through love to serve each other?
2. Why do you think the whole Law could be fulfilled in one word (v. 14)? How do you think loving your neighbor fulfills the Law?
3. What do you think he means by biting and devouring each other? What does that look like? What is his caution toward this kind of activity? What does this exhortation have to do with love?

In Summary:

1. How would you describe what Paul teaches about freedom here? What do you think it looks like to properly live out that freedom?
2. What are some of the challenges Paul gives to the Galatians? Why do you think he challenges them the way he does?

What do you learn about love here? Why do you think love is so important that it can prevent taking liberties and sum up the whole Law?

Making Application

God has set us free and we can therefore live a life of faith and love.

1. What are some things that I do that help keep me in a yoke of slavery? What are the things I try to do for my benefit in God's eyes? How well so these things help me grow in my walk with God?
2. What are some obstacles that trip me up in the race? Why is the cross a stumbling block for so many? How does this fact impact my life? How does this prevent me from being a more effective witness for Christ?
3. What are some areas in my life where I am indulging my sinful nature? What are some things I should do to help stop that? What are some ways I can serve others more in love? What are some situations where I am biting and devouring others rather than loving them?

Let's thank God that He gives us the ability to live out our freedom and love..

Galatians

Living by the Spirit—Chapter 5:16-26



University of Michigan

Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

Hints and Highlights

1. Here is the context for this part of Galatians. Paul transitions to a more personal application in the first part of chapter 5. He talks about living a life of freedom through loving each other. He then expands the application section by showing a contrast between living by the flesh and living by the Spirit.
2. This would be a great time to make sure everyone in your group understands the Spirit-filled life. Pass out each of them a "Satisfied" booklet, then get together with them individually and walk through the booklet with them. Make sure they understand how to "breathe spiritually".

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

Give them a list of words and have them come up with the opposite. You could use words like "light", "clear", "strong", "clever" and mix in words like "engineer" or "Michigan".

Option 2:

Make a list of Top Ten Couples of all Time. They say "opposites attract". How many of these couples are opposites? How did their oppositeness impact their relationship?

Option 3:

Make a list of best sports rivals, like Yankees-Red Sox and UM-OSU. What do you think makes a great rivalry? What do you think would happen if you mixed up the teams and had each new team with half the players from each old rival?

- Why do you think opposites and rivals can be so intriguing? So frustrating?
- Why do you think opposites and rivals can struggle to co-exist?

The Galatians like all of us struggles with 2 natures, the natural desire to sin and the power to live according to God's power. Let's see how Paul helps them learn about living by the Spirit.

Diving In

Read 5:16-21.

1. How would you sum up what Paul is saying here? How would you describe living by the sin nature or flesh?
2. How would you describe Paul's exhortation in v. 16? Why do you think he starts out with this command? What do you think it means to "walk by the Spirit? How might walking by the Spirit influence our lives?
3. You could have them make a chart that is on one side the flesh or sinful nature and on the other the Spirit. Have them write down observations about each as they go through this passage.
4. How would you describe the sinful nature? (see side bar on back page) How would you describe its relationship to the Spirit? Why do you think there is such a battle between the flesh and the Spirit? How would you describe it in your own words? (You could look at Romans 7 to see a description of the battle between flesh and Spirit in the life of a believer.)
5. What do you think it means to be led by the Spirit? (It means to yield control of your life to the Spirit). How do you think one does that? Why do you think this takes away from being under the Law?
6. What do you think Paul describes the acts of the sinful nature as obvious?
7. Make a list of the acts of the sinful nature. What are some patterns or groups

Hints and Highlights

1. The “sinful nature” or “flesh” refers to the natural part of the person that is sinful and marred by the fall. It is synonymous with the old nature or sin nature of any person. It is the part of us that fights against the Spirit to cause us to sin.
2. Paul is not saying in v. 21 that believers will never sin or those who do will not go to heaven. Rather those who live a habitual lifestyle according to the flesh and not the Spirit are not Abraham’s seed (3:29) and will not inherit salvation.
3. Verse 24 is key in understanding the Spirit-filled life. When we place our faith in Christ our old, sinful nature loses its power over us. Now it is clear from this book there is still a battle between our two natures. But we no longer are bound to follow the desires of our flesh. We need to give over control or yield our lives to the Spirit.
4. There are 2 natures that battle within us. We must yield to the Spirit’s control. That is the point of phrases like “led by the Spirit: (v. 18) and “keep in step with the Spirit” (v. 24).

of these sins that you notice? (sexual sins (3), religious sins (2), relational sins (8), and sins of excess (2))

8. How would you describe the sexual sins Paul lists? The religious sins? How would you describe the relational sins? The sins of excess? Why do you think he adds “and the like” to the list? (not a comprehensive list)
9. How would you describe what happens to those who live lifestyles filled with these sins (v. 21)? Why do you think Paul is saying this so strongly? (see side bar)

Read 5:22-26.

1. How would you summarize what Paul is saying here? How would you describe living by the Spirit? How is this in contrast to living by the flesh?
2. How would you describe a “fruit”? How is it different than an “act” or “deed” (word used to describe the results of fleshly living)? (A fruit is a natural product where an act is something you decide to do). Why do you think Paul chooses to use the word “fruit” here and not “deed” or “act”?
3. Make a list of the fruit of the Spirit. What strikes you about this list? How are they different than the deeds of the flesh? What does each fruit mean? Why do you think he says there is no law against these things?
4. What do you think he means by saying we have “crucified the sinful nature” (v. 24)? (see side bar) Why do you think this is so important?
5. What do you think it means to “keep in step with the Spirit”? Why do you think this is significant in living by the Spirit?
6. Why do you think he adds on these exhortations in verse 26? What do you think this means?

In Summary:

1. How would you describe someone who lives according to the flesh or sinful nature? How would you describe someone who lives according to the Spirit?
2. What do you think are the differences between the two kinds of lives? Why do you think they are in such opposition?

How would you describe what makes living according to the Spirit possible?

Making Application

In the battle for our souls we can live according to the Spirit and not the flesh.

1. As you read through the list of acts according to the sinful nature, which of those sins come to mind as things you are struggling with? Have them take a moment and silently reflect on this.
2. What are some areas in my life that I need to give over to the Spirit’s control? Take a moment to silently pray and do this.
3. As you look over the list of the fruit of the Spirit, what are some areas of character that I need help in? Take a moment and ask God to help you there.
4. How often do I not crucify the flesh and resist its passions? What are some situations that encourage me to not do this? How can I moment by moment yield to the Holy Spirit’s control?

Let’s thank God that He gives us the power to live by the Spirit.

Galatians

Getting Along with each other—Chapter 6:1-18



University of Michigan

Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

Hints and Highlights

1. Here is the context for end of the book of Galatians. Paul makes his case against legalism from personal examples (ch. 1-2) and doctrinal application of the Old Testament (ch. 3-4). Paul then gets practical in how believers should live in the Spirit not the flesh (ch. 5). In chapter 6 Paul first continues the idea of how we should live, especially in the area of relationships. Then he closes by once again attacking those who would have them all circumcised.
2. Make sure to get everyone's summer addresses and keep in touch over the summer.

Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

Option 1:

As a group play a timed game like Taboo or Pictionary. Then discuss the finish. What are some things that make great finishes? When you finish telling someone something important what do you usually do at the end?

Option 2:

What kinds of things annoy you? Have every share something that annoys them (try to keep it light, not a gripe session). How do you feel when people do these things that annoy you?

Option 3:

Tell about your first date (if it would be socially appropriate in your group). What happened to that relationship? Why do you think relationships can be so difficult?

- Why do you think relationships with others can be so challenging?
- Why do you think Paul would choose to close out his letter with some advice in that particular area?

The Spirit affects all of our lives, especially how we relate to others. It is a tragedy when a group of believers behave no differently than the lost. Let's see what advice Paul gives on how the Spirit helps us to get along with each other.

Diving In

Read 6:1-10.

1. Before you start you may want to have them make a list of each command
2. How would you describe the tone of what Paul is saying here? What are some of the things he emphasizes? Why do you think he focuses on relationships?
3. What do you think it means to be "caught in a sin" (v. 1)? What do you think it means to "restore" this person? What might that look like? How is this different than how we sometimes respond when we see people sin?
4. How would you describe Paul's caution to those who try to restore others? Why do you think he adds that?
5. What do you think he means by "carrying each other's burdens" (v. 2)? What do you think that looks like? How often do you think Christians help each other like that?
6. What do you think he means in v. 3? How would you describe someone who thinks he is something when he is nothing? Why do you think he deceives himself?
7. How would you describe the focus of "testing yourself" (v. 4)? What are some of the dangers of comparing your self to others? How does this command balance out with verse 3? (obviously he is not encouraging pride)

Hints and Highlights

1. Notice the heart of the spiritual in v. 1 towards others in sin is not condemnation but restoration and caution in your won life. The word "restore" has the sense of a medical doctor setting a broken bone.
2. The word "burdens" in v. 2 refers to more than what a person should carry, where a "load" in v. 5 is a term for a man's "pack".
3. The hint of paying teachers of the Word in v. 6 may well show the need to help support financially those who were devoting their time to spreading and teaching the Gospel.
4. Paul's mention of the "large letters" in v. 11 probably is his way of emphasizing how important he feels this letter is.
5. Already in his first letter Paul's body bears the scars of persecution for his faith in Jesus (v. 17). Some may be from the stoning in Galatia (Acts 14:19), while 2 Corinthians 6:4-6 and 11:23-30 list in detail some of what Paul went through.
6. What is most important above all is a "new creation" (v. 15), new life in Christ (see 2 Cor. 5:17).

8. What do you think it means to "carry your own load" (v. 5)? How do you think this is different than verse 2?
9. What do you think Paul is encouraging in verse 6? What are some things this tells us about the importance of teaching the Word?
10. How would you describe the word picture in verses 7 and 8? What do you think it means to sow and reap? What are some ways we sow to please our sin nature? What happens when we do? What are some ways we sow to the Spirit? What happens when we do?
11. What kind of a long term perspective should we have (v. 9)? Why? What do you think it means to do good to all people (v. 10)?

Read 6:11-18.

1. How would you say Paul closes the letter? Why do you think he closes in this way?
2. Why does Paul imply some may pressure the Galatians to be circumcised (v. 12-13)? What do you think Paul felt about these motives? How serious does it seem they were about following the Law? Then why do you think they pushed circumcision so heavily?
3. What do you think it means to boast in the cross of Christ (v. 14)? Why do you think it is better than boasting in anything else?
4. What do you think Paul thought was most important in a person's life (v. 15)? What do you think he means by a "new creation"? Why does that make whether or not a person is circumcised so insignificant? Then why do you think Paul was so adamant they NOT be circumcised?
5. How would you describe Paul's final statement (v. 16-18)? Why do you think Paul wishes "peace and mercy to all who follow this rule"? What do you think the marks of Jesus are that Paul bears?

In Summary:

1. How would you describe how the Spirit should impact the way we relate to other believers? What happens when we don't do this?
2. What does it look like to sow and reap to the flesh? To the Spirit?
3. What do you think are the most important things in a person's life?

Making Application

One of the greatest areas of struggle can be in our relationships with others.

1. As you read through the list of commands Paul gives, what are some of them that strike you as areas to work on? What can I do differently this week?
2. Who are some people God may want me to gently restore? How highly do I view myself? Too highly? How often do I compare myself against others?
3. What are some ways that I am sowing to the flesh? What are some things that I can do to sow to the Spirit? What are some things I am boasting in besides Jesus? GPA? Resume? Girlfriend/Boyfriend? Money?
4. What are some things I think are more important than "new creations"? What are some things that I do to avoid persecution? What are some ways that I can embrace my own "marks of Jesus"?

Let's thank God that He can give us great relationships.