



I AM FREE FOR
GOOD

S E R I E S G U I D E

GALATIANS



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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Our hope is that each week you will bring this guide with you. It's a way to dive deeper into the sermon by doing a short devotional before the sermon, taking notes and reflecting during the service, and then using the questions to discuss the sermon with your community group.

It's a way to keep your group in sync, help you unlock new riches in God's Word, and help you focus on what the Spirit may be calling you to do this week. We've also added some space for a prayer journal. Use this journal in your community group to remember and pray for your group throughout the week, or use it for other friends and family at Bethany.

As we study God's Word, our love for Christ grows greater each day. This is just another simple tool to help you study God's Word in new and God-honoring ways, as well as to connect to Scripture together with your community group.

You can also use the devotional page in this book each week to read the passage for the week before Sunday. Then answer the two questions to help you reflect on and apply the Word to your life each week.

WEEK 1

GOSPEL

COMMISSION

GALATIANS 1:1-4

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 1:1-4

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 1: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Describe yourself with a fun “title” that explains what you are best at (outside of your actual job). (Examples: “Chief Coffee Drinker,” “Director of Nap Time,” or “Master of Trivia.”)

Discussion 1: Paul emphasizes that he is an apostle “not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ.” Why do you think Paul starts his letter by establishing his authority so strongly? What was happening in the Galatian churches that made this opening necessary?

Application 1: Why does it matter today that the gospel we believe does not originate from human ideas but from God Himself? How should the divine origin of the gospel shape your confidence, your witness, or your willingness to stand firm when the message of Christ is challenged?

Discussion 2: Paul summarizes the gospel compactly in verses 3–4: Jesus “gave Himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age.” What stands out to you about this description of Jesus’ work? Do you notice anything in particular about how Paul frames this gospel summary?

Application 2: Are there ways we subtly drift into a “Jesus plus something else” mindset — believing we must contribute to our salvation through performance, spirituality, or personal effort? Where are you tempted to add conditions (good behavior, political alignment, or ministry productivity) to the gospel?

Discussion 3: Paul roots everything “according to the will of our God and Father.” What does this teach us about the heart of God in salvation? Why do you think Paul added this foundational idea to his summary of the gospel?

Application 3: Because salvation is God’s divine plan, what pressures or burdens does that lift from your life this week? How can resting in God’s will and Christ’s finished work bring freedom, assurance, and joy into a situation you are facing right now?

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK 2

GOSPEL

DRIFT

GALATIANS 1:6-10

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 1:6-10

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 2: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Share a time you jumped on a “bandwagon” (a fashion trend, a diet, a hobby, or a show) only to quit very quickly or that you now regret in hindsight.

Discussion 1: Paul expresses shock that the Galatians were turning away from God so “quickly” to follow a different gospel. Why do you think it is often easier for humans to drift toward a complicated list of rules or religious checklists than it is to stay rooted in the simple grace of the gospel? How do you see this at play within other modern religions?

Application 1: Reflect on your own spiritual journey. When you find yourself drifting away from a closeness with God, what is usually the “shiny object” or distraction that pulls you away? Is there a pattern that you can see in those distractions?

Discussion 2: Paul uses incredibly strong language in verses 8 and 9, saying that anyone who preaches a different message should be under a curse. Why do you think he takes this issue so seriously? Why couldn’t he just “agree to disagree” on this one? What does this teach us about how central the gospel is to the Christian life?

Application 2: We live in a culture that often values tolerance above absolute truth. How does Paul’s intensity here challenge your boldness for the gospel? Where do you feel pressure (socially, relationally, or professionally) to soften the gospel for the sake of being liked, accepted, or seen as “reasonable”?

Discussion 3: In verse 10, Paul asks a rhetorical question: “Am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God?” He implies you can’t be a servant of Christ if your main goal is keeping people happy. Why do you think people-pleasing has such a strong pull on us? What does it reveal about fallen human nature?

Application 3: Think about your interactions this past week (at work, home, or online). Can you identify a moment where you hesitated to say or do the right thing because you were worried about what someone else might think? What would it look like to choose God’s truth in that moment next time?

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK 3

GOSPEL TRANSFORMATION

GALATIANS 1:11-24

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 1:11-24

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 3: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: If you could go back in time and meet your 10-year-old self, what is one thing about your current life that would completely shock them? (Examples: “You actually eat broccoli now,” “You are a morning person,” or “You live in a different country.”)

Discussion 1: Paul emphasizes that the gospel he preached did not come from human teaching but through a revelation of Jesus Christ (vv.11–12). Why do you think Paul is so intentional about clarifying the source of his message? How does this help explain why he refuses to compromise on the gospel?

Application 1: While God often uses others to strengthen our faith, we must cultivate our own personal relationship with God. Are there areas where you are leaning too heavily on someone else’s knowledge of Scripture instead of your own, or even another man’s gospel?

Discussion 2: Paul reminds the Galatians of his former life as a persecutor of the church (vv.13–15) and how dramatically Jesus turned him around. What does Paul’s transformation reveal about the grace of God? Why do you think Paul brings up his past at this moment? How does that help him make his point?

Application 2: Reflect on your own story. Are there parts of your past that God has redeemed or transformed in a way that now strengthens your faith or serves as a testimony to others? How might God want to use your own “before and after” to encourage someone else?

Discussion 3: Paul concludes by noting that the churches glorified God because of what they heard about his transformation (v.24). Why do you think testimonies of God’s work in someone’s life are so powerful for building faith? What is the difference between just trying to be a “better person” and allowing God to transform you?

Application 3: Think about the people who see you every day (family, coworkers, neighbors). If they were asked, “Has [Your Name] changed since following Jesus?” what do you think they would say? What is one area of your life where you hope to see that kind of visible change?

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK 4

GOSPEL

UNITY

GALATIANS 2:1-10

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 2:1-10

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 4: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What was a specific rule you had to follow growing up (at home or school) that, looking back, seems odd or just plain unnecessary?

Discussion 1: Paul explains that he went to Jerusalem to meet privately with the apostles to make sure his ministry was not running “in vain” (vv.1–2). Why do you think Paul valued accountability and unity while still being confident in the gospel he preached? What does this show us about the relationship between conviction and humility?

Application 1: In your own life, where do you see the need to hold firm convictions while still inviting wise counsel from others? How can we remain firm in our own personal convictions from God’s Word while remaining humble and without becoming defensive or isolated? Is a balance possible?

Discussion 2: Paul highlights that Titus, a Gentile believer, was not compelled to be circumcised despite pressure from false teachers (vv.3–5). Why was this issue such a big deal, and what was really at stake? How does Paul’s refusal to give in help us understand the importance of gospel freedom?

Application 2: Are there ways you feel pressure to conform spiritually in order to fit in or be accepted, whether through religious expectations, traditions, or unwritten rules? Where might God be calling you to protect the freedom you have in Christ?

Discussion 3: Paul says the leaders in Jerusalem added nothing to his message but instead recognized God’s grace at work in him (vv.6–10). What can we learn from this passage about how God assigns different roles within His church? How does this passage challenge comparison, competition, or insecurity in ministry?

Application 3: God gives different gifts and callings so the church can grow together, not compete with one another (Eph. 4:1–7, 11–13). We see this lived out when the apostles recognized and affirmed Paul’s calling without trying to change it (vv.6–10). Where are you tempted to compare your role to someone else’s? How does this hinder our service to God? What might embracing unity look like in this context?

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK 5

GOSPEL

CONFRONTATION

GALATIANS 2:11-14

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 2:11-14

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 5: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Are there some people you tend to act differently around? Why or why not? (Maybe a certain side of the family or a group of friends)

Discussion 1: Paul recounts a public confrontation with Peter because Peter's behavior no longer aligned with the truth of the gospel (vv.11–14). Why do you think Paul saw this as a gospel issue rather than a personal disagreement? What does this moment teach us about how our actions can either clarify or confuse the gospel for others?

Application 1: Peter's actions were shaped by who was watching him (vv.11–14). Where do you feel pressure to adjust your behavior based on the people around you? How might the gospel free you to live more consistently without fear, performance, or pretending?

Discussion 2: Paul explains that justification comes by faith in Jesus Christ, not by works of the law (vv.15–16). Why is it so tempting to measure spiritual standing by performance rather than grace? How does this passage challenge the idea that we can earn or maintain God's approval through effort?

Application 2: Where do you feel the pull to measure yourself spiritually — through good behavior, religious activity, or comparison with others? How might resting more fully in Christ's finished work bring freedom instead of pressure? What are other ways in which we can fall into the trap of trying to measure our spirituality?

Discussion 3: Paul says, "I have been crucified with Christ," describing a life no longer centered on self but lived by faith in the Son of God (vv.19–20). What does it mean for your identity to be rooted in Christ rather than in performance or approval? How should that identity shape our obedience in everyday decisions and habits?

Application 3: If "Christ lives in me" truly defines your life (vv.19–20), how should that shape the way you approach everyday decisions this week? Where might God be inviting you to trust Him instead of relying on yourself? How does the gospel redefine what you believe actually leads to life and freedom?

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK 6

GOSPEL

JUSTIFICATION

GALATIANS 2:15–16

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 2:15–16

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 6: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is something you used to think made you impressive or “cool” that really doesn’t matter much anymore?

Discussion 1: Paul makes a clear distinction between being “justified” by faith in Jesus Christ and not by works of the law (vv.15–16). Why do you think Paul is so emphatic here, repeating this idea multiple times in just a few verses? What problem is he trying to correct by drawing such a sharp contrast between faith and works?

Application 1: Even when we believe salvation is by grace, it’s easy to slip back into performance-based thinking. Where do you find yourself measuring your standing with God by effort rather than by faith in Christ alone? What causes you most often to slip back into performance-based thinking?

Discussion 2: Paul points out that even people with strong religious backgrounds still need to be made right with God through Christ (vv.15–16). What does this tell us about the limits of religious knowledge, good behavior, or moral effort when it comes to salvation?

Application 2: In what ways might your church background or Bible knowledge make it tempting to feel more secure with God than others? How does this passage remind us that everyone stands on the same ground before God through Christ? How might this attitude shape our witness to others?

Discussion 3: Paul uses the phrase “we know that a person is not justified by works of the law.” He suggests the truth about justification is something that must be known and acted upon. Is there a difference between knowing (intellectual agreement) and truly believing (trusting your life to)? How does this verse protect us from pride on one hand and despair on the other?

Application 3: If your right standing with God is truly secured by faith in Christ, how should that shape the way you respond to failure or weakness? What would it look like to rest more fully in grace rather than striving to earn God’s approval?

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK 7

GOSPEL REBIRTH

GALATIANS 2:17–21

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 2:17–21

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 7: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is something you usually try to do without following the directions (IKEA furniture, recipes, new technology, etc.)?

Discussion 1: Paul addresses the concern that emphasizing grace might somehow promote sin, firmly rejecting that idea (vv.17–18). Why do you think people often assume that grace will lead to careless living? How does Paul’s response help clarify what true gospel freedom actually produces? Why is it a misunderstanding of the Gospel to think that grace gives us a license to sin?

Application 1: Where do you see the temptation to swing between legalism and license? How does trusting Christ’s work, rather than your own effort, help you walk in obedience without fear or rebellion?

Discussion 2: Paul says in verse 19, “For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God.” This is a confusing but powerful statement. What does it mean that the law itself leads to a “death to the law”? How does this change the way we understand motivation for obedience and growth?

Application 2: It is common for believers to rely on a “formula” (like a quiet time checklist or a set of moral rules) to feel connected to God. What is one religious routine you find yourself doing out of a sense of obligation rather than a genuine desire to connect with God? What would it look like to live more fully “to God” rather than trying to manage your standing before Him?

Discussion 3: Verse 20 is the climax: “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” What is the difference between your old self (“I”) and your new self (“Christ who lives in me”)? Why is describing this change as a crucifixion (a death) more accurate than describing it as a renovation or self-improvement?

Application 3: Paul says, “The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God.” What is one area of your life (e.g., spending, parenting, professional ambition) that you have been trying to control or manage through your own effort? What would it look like to consciously hand over control of that area to “faith of the Son of God” this week? How does the gospel redefine what you believe actually leads to life and freedom?

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK 8

GOSPEL

BLESSING

GALATIANS 3:1–9

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 3:1–9

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 8: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is a habit you've started more than once but never quite followed through on (working out, reading plans, a new skill, or learning an instrument)?

Discussion 1: Paul begins with a famous rebuke in verses 1-3: "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?" He then asks them a key question: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Why is it illogical (or "foolish") to begin the Christian life by faith and then think you have to be perfected or completed by keeping rules (the "flesh")?

Application 1: We all have seasons where we try to take over the spiritual reins from God. Are there areas in your life where you like to "take over" from God? Why? What helps you recognize when you're no longer living by faith but by striving?

Discussion 2: Paul reminds the Galatians that they received the Spirit not by works of the law but by hearing with faith (vv.2-5). Why is it important that Paul points them back to their own experience with God? How does remembering how God first worked in your life help guard you against drifting into performance-based faith?

Application 2: Think back to a time when your faith felt real and alive. What practices or perspectives helped you depend on God rather than yourself? How might returning to those foundations renew your trust in Him today?

Discussion 3: Paul brings Abraham into the discussion, showing that righteousness has always come through faith, not works (vv.6-9). Why do you think Paul uses Abraham as his example? How does this connection show that the gospel of grace isn't new, but part of God's plan from the beginning?

Application 3: Paul calls those who are "of faith" the true "sons of Abraham." Do you tend to see your Christian identity primarily as something based on your personal effort and obedience, or as an inherited identity? How does this understanding of an inherited identity through faith change how you look at the Christian life?

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK 9

GOSPEL

REDEMPTION

GALATIANS 3:10–14

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 3:10–14

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How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 9: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is the best deal you've ever gotten on something you didn't have to pay full price for?

Discussion 1: In verse 10, Paul delivers a devastating truth: “For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse.” He explains this curse exists because no one can perfectly keep every single command written in the law. What does this passage reveal about the law’s actual purpose?

Application 1: Where do you see the temptation to believe that “mostly obeying” should be enough — either in your own thinking or in the culture around you? How does this passage challenge the idea that partial obedience can secure peace with God? How does understanding that the law reveals our need for a savior change how you view your own failures?

Discussion 2: Paul declares that Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us (v.13). Why is it important that Jesus didn’t simply ignore the curse but actually bore it? How does this deepen our understanding of the cost and completeness of Christ’s work?

Application 2: How do you typically view your own shortcomings? How does knowing that Christ willingly took your place under the curse affect the way you view guilt, shame, or failure? What does it look like to respond to moments of failure with gratitude and repentance rather than self-condemnation?

Discussion 3: Paul concludes by explaining that Christ’s work brings the blessing of Abraham to the Gentiles and enables believers to receive the promised Spirit through faith (v.14). Why does Paul connect freedom from the curse with receiving the Spirit? How does this show that the gospel doesn’t just remove guilt but creates new life?

Application 3: If you have been redeemed and given the Spirit through faith, how should that shape the way you approach obedience, growth, and daily dependence on God? Where might you need to shift from fear-driven effort to Spirit-led trust this week?

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK 10

GOSPEL

PROMISE

GALATIANS 3:15–18

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 3:15–18

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WK 10: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: If you could live in a different country for a year, which country would you choose?

Discussion 1: Paul uses a familiar human example to explain his point, noting that once a covenant or agreement is confirmed, it can't simply be changed (v.15). Why do you think Paul starts with something so practical and relatable? How does this example help clarify what he's about to say about God's promises?

Application 1: The promises to Abraham are unilateral (one-sided, guaranteed by God). Do you tend to view your relationship with God as a unilateral promise from Him, or as a bilateral contract where your performance is necessary to keep it valid? How does realizing the promise is secured by Christ alone change the pressure you feel to keep your end of the bargain?

Discussion 2: Paul explains that God's promise to Abraham came before the law and was not based on obedience to the law (vv.16–17). Why is the timing so important to Paul's argument? What does this show about the foundation of God's plan to save and bless His people?

Application 2: Where are you tempted to think that God's promises depend on your performance or consistency? How does this passage challenge the idea that God's faithfulness rises and falls with your obedience? What are some modern "rules" or expectations that people sometimes mistakenly believe must be followed?

Discussion 3: Verse 18 summarizes the entire argument: "For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise." The inheritance (salvation/righteousness) is either earned by keeping the law, or it is a gift received through the promise. Why is it essential that salvation rests on promise rather than law? How does this protect the gospel from becoming something we earn rather than something we receive?

Application 3: If your relationship with God is grounded in His unchanging promise, how should that shape the way you respond to failure, waiting, or seasons of spiritual dryness? What would it look like this week to rest more fully in what God has promised rather than striving to secure it yourself?

WEEK 11

SERMON

TITLE HERE

GALATIANS 3:19–29

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 3:19–29

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 11: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What was your dream job as a kid? What made that job appeal to you?

Discussion 1: Paul asks a direct question — “Why then the law?” — and explains that the law was added because of transgressions and was meant to be temporary (v.19). Why do you think Paul is so careful to explain the purpose of the law rather than dismissing it altogether? What problem was the law designed to expose or address?

Application 1: The law was given to show you your sin. How does that perspective change the way you read the Ten Commandments or other moral guidelines? How can recognizing the limits of rules help you rely more fully on Christ?

Discussion 2: Paul describes the law as a guardian until Christ came, meant to lead people to faith (vv.21–24). Why is this image helpful for understanding the role of the law? How does the law expose our inability to save ourselves and point us toward Christ instead? How does this keep us from both legalism and lawlessness?

Application 2: Paul later explains that rules and regulations may look wise but have no power to stop the flesh (Col. 2:20–23). Where have you seen rules expose a problem without actually changing your heart? How does understanding that the law is something that leads you to Christ (rather than something that fixes you) reshape the way you think about real spiritual growth?

Discussion 3: The passage concludes with the powerful declaration in verses 26-29: Through faith, we are all “sons of God.” There is no distinction between Jew, Gentile, slave, or free, and we are “heirs according to promise.” Why is this identity shift so central to Paul’s argument? What does it mean that our primary identity is now “in Christ,” making us heirs with Abraham?

Application 3: Paul states that in Christ, differences in ethnicity and social status no longer matter. Where might your identity still be shaped more by background, success, failure, or labels than by being “in Christ”? What would it look like to live out of your identity as God’s child rather than striving to earn belonging?

WEEK 12

GOSPEL ADOPTION

GALATIANS 4:1–7

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 4:1–7

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SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 12: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is something you couldn't wait to be old enough to do: drive, travel alone, choose your own schedule, or make your own decisions?

Discussion 1: Paul compares life under the law to a child who is technically an heir but still lives under guardians and managers (vv.1–3). Why do you think Paul uses this image to describe God's people before Christ? How does this help us understand the difference between having a promise and actually living in the freedom of that promise?

Application 1: Where might you still relate to God more like a child under supervision than a son or daughter who is fully loved and secure? Are there fears, habits, or expectations that make it difficult to live out the freedom God has already given you?

Discussion 2: Paul says that when the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son to redeem those under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons (vv.4–5). Why is it important that salvation is described as adoption? What does adoption communicate about our relationship with God?

Application 2: Because God has adopted us as His children, He sends His Spirit into our hearts crying, “Abba! Father!” (v.6; cf. Rom. 8:15). How do these truths shape the way you think about approaching God? In your everyday life, do you relate to God more as a distant authority or a loving Father? What would it look like this week to approach God with the trust and honesty of a child who knows they are fully accepted?

Discussion 3: Paul concludes that believers are no longer slaves but sons, and therefore heirs through God (v.7). Why is this shift from slavery to sonship so central to Paul's argument in Galatians? How does it summarize what he has been teaching about law, promise, and faith?

Application 3: If you truly believe you are God's child and heir (v.7), how should that shape the way you respond to pressure, comparison, or fear this week? What changes when you see yourself as a child who already belongs to God instead of someone trying to earn His favor? How could resting in your identity as God's child change the way you approach this week?

WEEK 13

GOSPEL

LONGING

GALATIANS 4:8–20

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 4:8–20

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How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 13: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Who is someone who impacted you the most in your childhood or teen years? How did they influence you?

Discussion 1: In verses 8-11, Paul expresses his amazement and fear that the Galatians are actively turning back to observing “days and months and seasons and years.” He equates this rule-keeping to returning to the “weak and worthless elementary principles of the world.” Why is Paul so worried that they would return to their religious rituals? How might this be a form of slavery, as Paul says in verse 8?

Application 1: What are some of the rules, checklists, or even religious calendars that people sometimes treat as essential? How can we guard against letting these practices become “worthless elementary principles” that turn us away from grace? Do you think all of these practices are wrong, or can they be helpful?

Discussion 2: In verses 12-16, Paul reminds the Galatians that they once had a deep, affectionate relationship when they first received the gospel — even to the point of sacrificial care. Why do you think Paul appeals so strongly to their shared history and closeness here? What does this reveal about how easily people can turn against faithful teachers? What do you sense about Paul’s heart in this section?

Application 2: Paul’s ministry to the Galatians was rooted in love, sacrifice, and trust long before this correction came. How might this passage shape the way we think about our relationship with pastors, teachers, or spiritual mentors? What warning signs should it raise when new voices or “new insights” begin to push us away from those who have faithfully loved us, taught us, and pointed us to Christ over time?

Discussion 3: The passage concludes in verses 17-20 with Paul describing his deep, almost painful concern, saying he is “in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!” What does this intense, physical metaphor tell us about the weight and labor Paul felt for their spiritual maturity?

Application 3: Who has the greatest influence in shaping your spiritual thinking right now? What voices do you regularly listen to, follow, or trust? How can you grow in discernment about who you allow to shape your faith and spiritual direction?

WEEK 14

GOSPEL

ILLUSTRATION

GALATIANS 4:21–31

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 4:21–31

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 14: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Are you more of a checklist person or a go-with-the-flow person? How do you respond to the other type of person (ie, when a flow person interacts with a checklist person and vice versa)?

Discussion 1: Paul uses the story of Hagar and Sarah to represent two different ways of relating to God: slavery and freedom. What do these two women symbolize in Paul's argument, and why do you think he uses a family story instead of a theological explanation alone?

Application 1: In what ways can legalism feel like freedom at first but slowly turn into slavery? Where do you see signs of that in your own spiritual life, such as guilt, fear of failure, or pressure to perform?

Discussion 2: In verse 29, Paul notes that just as the son born according to the flesh (Ishmael) persecuted the son born according to the Spirit (Isaac), the same tension still existed in Paul's day. Why do you think legalism so often opposes grace? How does this tension still show up in churches or Christian culture today?

Application 2: How do you typically respond when grace feels unfair — either toward yourself or toward others? What would it look like to rest more fully in God's promise instead of comparing, competing, or measuring spiritual success?

Discussion 3: Paul concludes by saying, "We are not children of the slave but of the free woman." What does it mean to live as a child of promise rather than a child of obligation? How does this passage reshape how we understand obedience, holiness, and freedom?

Application 3: Paul says we are children of the free woman. What is one specific item (a self-imposed rule, a lingering feeling of guilt, or a past mistake) that represents the "slave woman" in your life? What is a tangible action you can take this week to "cast out" that piece of slavery and truly live into the freedom you have as an heir?

WEEK 15

GOSPEL

FREEDOM

GALATIANS 5:1–6

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 5:1–6

What is the author saying?

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SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 15: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What was a specific household rule, chore, or curfew that you absolutely dreaded and couldn't wait to be "free" from when you finally moved out?

Discussion 1: In verses 2–3, Paul warns that accepting one rule (circumcision) obligates them to obey the entire law, making Christ of "no value" to them. Why do you think Paul presents this as such an "all-or-nothing" scenario? Why can't we just rely 90% on Jesus and 10% on our own good behavior?

Application 1: We likely aren't tempted to get circumcised for salvation today, but we often add other "requirements" to the Gospel. What types of rules have you seen added (Ex: political stances, parenting styles, or spiritual disciplines)? What is one "extra" requirement you are tempted to rely on to feel like a "good" Christian?

Discussion 2: In verse 4, Paul uses the phrase "fallen away from grace" to describe people who are trying to be justified by the law, rather than those who have fallen into open sin. Based on this passage, how would you define "falling from grace," and how does this definition differ from how we usually think about spiritual failure?

Application 2: Paul says that relying on works means you have "fallen away from grace." Do you tend to see a reliance on the law/works as a minor mistake or as a complete shift in your relationship with God? How does the seriousness of Paul's warning encourage you to be zealous about protecting the purity of the gospel in your own life?

Discussion 3: The passage concludes with the essential definition of Christian living in verse 6: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love." How does this concept solve the tension between legalism (obeying rules) and license (doing whatever we want)? How is this different from just "working hard to be a loving person"? How does Paul summarize the entirety of the Christian life in this short phrase?

Application 3: If you evaluated your last 24 hours by this metric alone: is your faith primarily focused inward on your own performance, or is it actively working outward through love toward others, how did you do? What is one specific way you can let your faith express itself as love to a coworker, spouse, or friend tomorrow?

WEEK 16

GOSPEL

LOVE

GALATIANS 5:7–15

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 5:7–15

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 16: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is one “small” thing in your day (like a morning coffee or a specific song) that has a massive impact on the rest of your day?

Discussion 1: In verses 7–9, Paul observes that the Galatians were running a good race until someone “hindered” them, noting that “a little leaven leavens the whole lump.” Why do you think Paul uses the analogy of yeast to describe false teaching or legalism? How does one person’s “persuasion” have the power to throw an entire community off course?

Application 1: Paul is concerned about the influence of false teachers. Who or what are the voices (internal or external) in your life that attempt to cut in on your freedom and convince you that you need to do more? How can you protect yourself from the “leaven” of legalism?

Discussion 2: In verse 11, Paul mentions the “offense of the cross,” implying that if he preached a message of “Jesus plus our own effort,” the persecution against him would stop. Why is the idea of a “free gift” so offensive to human nature? Why do we often find it more comfortable to have a list of rules to follow rather than relying solely on the work of Christ?

Application 2: Think about how you explain your faith to others. Do you ever soften the message of the cross (that salvation is completely unearned) to make it less offensive or more palatable? How can we ensure that we are always preaching the finished work of Christ, even when it feels like a “stumbling block” to the world around us?

Discussion 3: In verses 13–15, Paul clarifies that we were called to freedom, but warns: “Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh.” He argues that the entire law is fulfilled in keeping the command to “love your neighbor as yourself.” What does Paul identify as the real purpose of Christian freedom? How does that purpose prevent freedom from becoming an “opportunity for the flesh”?

Application 3: Paul ends with a warning against biting and devouring one another. In what practical ways have you seen true Christian freedom used as an “opportunity for the flesh” (selfishness, excess, or judgmental attitudes)? What does daily, loving service to your neighbor look like this week as a guardrail against misusing your freedom?

WEEK 17

GOSPEL

LIVING

GALATIANS 5:16–26

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 5:16–26

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How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 17: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: If you had to describe your productivity or mood this past week as a plant, would it be a thriving fruit tree, a stubborn weed, or a cactus that's a little prickly to be around? Why?

Discussion 1: Paul gives the key command in verse 16: “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” He then explains the struggle in verse 17: the desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit are constantly at war with each other. What does it mean to “keep in step with the Spirit”? How does understanding that this internal war is constant change your approach to battling temptation?

Application 1: Since the desires of the flesh and the Spirit are opposed, we cannot satisfy both. Where in your life do you currently feel the most intense “tug-of-war” between what you know is right and what you want to do? What does it look like to consciously choose to “walk by the Spirit” this week?

Discussion 2: Verses 19-21 provide a list of the “works of the flesh” (sexual immorality, idolatry, enmity, anger, envy, etc.). Paul warns that those who continue to practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Why is it important for Paul to list these specific behaviors right after emphasizing that we are not under the law (v. 18)? What does this list tell us about where human nature leads when it is not guided by the Spirit?

Application 2: Because our human nature naturally leads us toward the “works of the flesh” and away from God, we can never “drift” toward holiness; without intention, we always drift toward selfishness. If you look at your personal life and your family life right now, do you see a “drift” toward the works of the flesh (like irritability, strife, or division)? What is one intentional plan or spiritual rhythm you can put in place this week to stop the drift and stay connected to the Spirit?

Discussion 3: In contrast to the “works of the flesh,” verses 22-23 list the “fruit of the Spirit” (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control). Why does Paul call these qualities fruit (singular) and not “fruits” (plural) or “works”? How does the analogy of fruit suggest that these qualities are grown organically by the Spirit, rather than being manufactured by our own effort?

Application 3: “Keeping in step with” implies a moment-by-moment alignment with God’s lead, similar to following a pace-setter in a race. If you were to “keep in step” with the Spirit what is the first thing you might have to surrender or change you might need to make? What are some ways we can “keep in step” with the Spirit throughout our day, week, month, year? (Take time to think daily, then short-term, then long-term).

WEEK 18

GOSPEL

RESTORATION

GALATIANS 6:1–5

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 6:1–5

What is the author saying?

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SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 18: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is a good “Do-It-Yourself” story about a project or a repair you attempted to do by yourself? How did it turn out? Did it require you to get professional help?

Discussion 1: Verse 1 provides a crucial instruction for community life: “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.” This act of restoration is not judgment, but careful rescue. Why does Paul specify that those who are “spiritual” (those walking by the Spirit) should do the restoring? Why is the element of gentleness essential for true restoration, and what does it look like to not be gentle in this situation?

Application 1: Restoration is often messy and uncomfortable, which leads many of us to either ignore a brother’s sin or approach it with a judgmental attitude. Is there someone in your life currently “caught” in a struggle whom you have been avoiding or perhaps judging from a distance? How can you approach them this week with a “spirit of gentleness” that acknowledges your own vulnerability to temptation?

Discussion 2: Verse 2 gives the command: “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” What does Paul mean by the “law of Christ,” and how is burden-bearing a fulfillment of this law? What kind of burdens do you think Paul is primarily referring to here — physical problems, financial distress, emotional struggles, or perhaps the weight of sin and failure?

Application 2: We often hesitate to share our burdens because we don’t want to be a “nuisance,” or we hesitate to help others because our lives are too full. If you evaluated your life right now, would you know the burdens the people around you are carrying? Are there any specific burdens (financial, emotional, or practical) that you can help someone else carry this week?

Discussion 3: In verses 4 and 5, Paul seems to offer a contrasting command: “For each will have to bear his own load.” This command follows the one to bear one another’s burdens. What is the difference between the “burdens” of verse 2 and the “load” of verse 5? (The Greek word for “load” here refers to a soldier’s pack or a ship’s cargo — something manageable but required.) Why is it essential for every individual believer to take responsibility for examining and carrying their own required “load” before God?

Application 3: Because human nature is prone to extremes, we either try to carry everyone else’s “pack” or we let people get crushed by burdens they weren’t meant to carry alone. Where do you struggle more: being too proud to let others help with your heavy burdens, or being too lazy to carry your own daily load? How can you adjust to find the middle more effectively in your life?

WEEK 19

GOSPEL ENDURANCE

GALATIANS 6:6–10

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 6:6–10

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How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 19: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Think about the places you've lived. What has made them feel like home? Are there specific things (items, rooms, scents, landscaping, etc) that made it feel like home to you? Why?

Discussion 1: In verses 6–8, Paul uses the imagery of sowing and reaping to explain spiritual growth, warning that “whatever one sows, that will he also reap.” He contrasts sowing to the “flesh” (which leads to corruption) with sowing to the “Spirit” (which leads to eternal life). How does this agricultural metaphor change our perspective on sin and righteousness — moving them from just “breaking or keeping rules” to “investing in a future harvest”?

Application 1: Every choice we make — how we spend our money, what we watch or read, or how we speak — is a seed being sown into either our flesh or the Spirit. If you looked at your bank statement or your screen-time report from the last week, what harvest would they suggest you are currently sowing toward? What types of seeds are you planting in your life right now? Are there new seeds the Spirit is leading you to plant this week?

Discussion 2: Paul gives a relatable encouragement in verse 9: “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.” Why is “doing good” so exhausting sometimes, especially in the context of a church community? What are the specific things that usually cause a person to “grow weary” and want to give up, whether spiritually or in ministry?

Application 2: The promise of a harvest is for those who “do not give up,” implying that the most difficult part of the Christian life is often the middle period, where you see no results. In what area of your life (parenting, ministry, a difficult relationship, resisting sin, or a personal habit) do you feel the most “weary” right now? How might this promise of a harvest in “due season” encourage you?

Discussion 3: In verse 10, Paul concludes that we should do good to everyone as we have opportunity, but “especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Why do you think Paul emphasizes the church community (the household) as our primary area of responsibility? What are some of the benefits and importance of a healthy, supportive church family? What are some of the dangers and drawbacks of an unhealthy church family?

Application 3: What does it look like to prioritize the “household of faith” in practical, everyday terms? Are there specific actions you can think of that might help you more fully embrace your local church community? What ideas, priorities, or problems might be a barrier to fully embracing your church community? Why are those things a barrier?

WEEK 20

GOSPEL RESOLVE

GALATIANS 6:11–18

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DEVOTIONAL

Galatians 6:11–18

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How can I apply this to my life?

SERMON NOTES

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WK 20: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What do you think is a first impression that people may get from you that isn't accurate? Why?

Discussion 1: Paul contrasts those who want to boast in outward markers (like circumcision) with his own desire to boast only in the cross of Christ. Why do you think people are drawn to visible signs of success or spirituality? What makes the cross such a radically different basis for boasting?

Application 1: It is often easier to manage our “stats” (how often we attend church or read the Bible) than it is to address our internal pride or fear. Is there a specific area in your life where you are relying on stats alone to prove your spirituality? What do you think it looks like, practically speaking, to boast in the cross of Jesus?

Discussion 2: In verse 14, Paul makes this declaration: “far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” What does Paul mean when he says the world has been “crucified to him”? What external values does the cross strip away, and what does that process look like?

Application 2: Boasting in the cross means focusing entirely on what Christ has done. What are you most often tempted to boast in (your achievements, your spiritual knowledge, your financial security, your morality)? What might it look like to boast in the cross of Jesus rather than those things? What makes the difference?

Discussion 3: Verse 15 summarizes the conclusion of the entire letter: “For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.” What is the essential difference between an external, physical mark (like circumcision) and an internal, spiritual reality (a new creation)? Why is this new creation the only thing that truly counts?

Application 3: Being a new creation means we have an entirely new identity, free from our past mistakes and our need to prove ourselves to others. In what ways have you seen yourself living as a new creation? What area would you like to live as a new creation, but feel you struggle to do so, and why?



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