

Galatians – Part 10 | 12/2/18

- Paul reaffirms that trusting in law or ceremony will not bring justification. | Galatians 5:2-4
 - **Read Galatians 5:2-4**
 - The entire letter of Galatians speaks against a works-based salvation and that it is through faith.
 - It is not surprising that Paul seems to be repeating himself throughout Galatians, he is continuously making it clear that obedience to the law is not a means for salvation.
 - One cannot be justified by an action like circumcision or works in general, it is only through faith.
 - **Paul is not speaking against circumcision that it is now wrong to do, but that it is a work that cannot be relied upon for salvation.**
 - If one holds this perspective, then they are obligated to keep the whole law perfectly which cannot be done.
 - **Those who have been told the truth that it is by faith, but yet still hold to works by the law have fallen from grace.**
 - They have fallen away from the truth and are still trying to earn God's grace which cannot be done.
 - This does not say that one was saved and then lost their salvation, but they have rejected the truth and therefore never had it.
- **Justification is by faith and is proven through love. | Galatians 5:5-6, 13-14**
 - **Read Galatians 5:5-6, 13-14**
 - We have hope in our righteousness because of faith and the Holy Spirit.
 - Instead of works we are saved by our faith and are justified. Christ then bestows His Holy Spirit upon us.
 - The Spirit is proof of our salvation and that along with our faith gives us hope knowing that we will one day see the full effect of us having been made righteous.
 - **This faith and proof of the Spirit is what gives us hope, not counting all of our good works or actions.**
 - If our hope of seeing the full effect of being made righteous is pinned upon our works then we have missed what it means to truly be saved.
 - **Fulfilling the whole law through love.**
 - While works certainly do not save us, works have a great and significant purpose in the life of a Christian.
 - While we have discussed and seen quite extensively why works will not save us, we must not forget that works are still vital in the Christian life.
 - **We were created for good works.**
 - Ephesians 2:10
 - “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
 - God intends for us to do good works as Christians, this is why there are Spiritual Gifts.
 - **Works are the proof (the effect of salvation) that we are a Christian.**
 - James 2:14-18
 - “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving

them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

- Works are a by-product of being saved, having the Holy Spirit and being obedient to God's commands will cause us to do good works.
- **As Christians we are called to express our faith in Christ to those in the world. The most powerful way we can do this is through love.**
 - To have a desire to do works is a good thing so long as it is done for the right reasons.
 - These Judaizers were all about doing works, unfortunately it was for the wrong reasons.
 - **It was works to obtain salvation and not works being done to express their faith through showing love to others.**
 - **Love fulfills the whole law.**
 - This is a truly significant statement, as the law was quite significant in its demands.
 - Now we are told that the law is fulfilled in love, but how can that be? How can something as seemingly "simple" as love do this.
 - **This is because when a Christian is TRULY showing love to someone else, they cannot also at the same time be breaking God's commands.**
 - How can you murder, commit adultery, steal, lie, cheat, hate, envy or covet when showing the love of God to someone?
 - Showing true love will not allow for these commands of God to be broken.
 - **Scripture tells us just how powerful and impacting love is.**
 - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
 - "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."
 - When we truly love others, we will also be keeping His Holy commands.
 - **Love is action and is a good work when done in obedience to the will of Christ.**
 - 1 John 3:16-18
 - "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth."
 - If we are to truly show love to others there WILL be action on our part.
 - **This is necessary to serve and to demonstrate our faith.**
 - Dangers of taking "love" out of context.
 - It should also be noted that it is common in the world today that the command to love others is taken out of context as a way to OK sin.

- We should always love others regardless of the sins they have in their lives, but that does not mean that a particular sin that God has said “though shall not...” is now OK.
 - I’ve heard many times where people use this very passage of Scripture to condone actions that God had explicitly stated was as sin.
 - **To show love does not mean that we approve sinful actions, you can love the soul and not the sin.**
 - **What does it mean to you personally to “love your neighbor as yourself”? Does this come naturally to be easy?**
 - **What is it like to be on the receiving side of a Christian who is doing this?**
 - **When you have made this a focus in your life, are you less likely to find yourself breaking God’s commands?**
 - **How can we show love without condoning sin?**
 - **If ALL Christians were to make this action a priority in their lives, what would be the impact upon the world?**
- Do not allow yourself to be hindered by the influence of others (or our own choices) that keep you away from the truth and living the Christian life God has called you to. | Galatians 5:7-12
 - **Read Galatians 5:7-12**
 - As we have discussed before, we have seen that one of the reasons Paul is writing this letter is because the people of Galatia have begun to fall away from the truth because they were listening to false teachings of the Judaizers.
 - Paul is trying to show them where they have gone astray and to get them back on the right path.
 - **They were running well initially, but they allowed the leaven (yeast) of the world to infiltrate within them.**
 - Paul likes to use the example of a race to depict the life of a Christian, he has done this in other letters as well.
 - Initially they were doing quite well, they had embraced Paul’s teachings of the Gospel and they were growing and living the Christian life.
 - **But then came the Judaizers who hindered them from obeying the truth that Paul was teaching them.**
 - They began listening to the false teachings of works-based righteousness through keeping the law.
 - **This wasn’t an all at once turn around, but it happened slowly when they allowed a “small” lie (works-based righteousness = leaven) in at first but this grew and had a greater impact on the entire body (body of believers = dough).**
 - Paul used an example of leaven (yeast) as a metaphor of the false teachings of the Judaizers just as Jesus had done.
 - Matthew 16:6
 - “Jesus said to them, “Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”
 - Matthew 16:12
 - “Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”
 - **As with baking bread a small bit of yeast will spread through the entire dough and cause it to rise.**

- The dangers of allowing the false teachings to be accepted (like accepting circumcision for salvation) is like putting yeast into dough, it will spread, grow and have a significant impact on the entire body.
- **By allowing even the smallest deviation from the truth to have a foot hold, it can easily grow and spread.**
- **This is an example of what can happen with Christians when we allow something that is not of God to enter into our lives. If we are not careful it can take over.**
 - We may be running our race of the Christian life quite well, but might then start to allow some **“minor” things** to creep in.
 - We may think that just one particular sin isn’t really a big deal.
 - We may think that a small compromise of our beliefs because of outwardly influence won’t make an overall impact to our character.
 - We may think that just making one small concession of the truth within the church won’t cause any harm.
 - That allowing certain “compartments” of our lives to live outside of Christ, won’t truly impact our Christian life.
 - But something small and what might seem harmless can permeate just like the yeast and spread to the entire body like a virus.
 - What was small in the beginning might take over us entirely and cause us to stray far from the will of God.
- **What are some examples of things that we might allow into our lives (or the church) that may seem small or insignificant but could quickly grow and cause great harm to Christian race we are running?**
- **Paul had hope that they would stay on the right path and that those who led them astray would be punished.**
 - Paul made it clear that the teachings of the Judaizers was not of God.
 - Nor were they teachings that Paul agreed with.
 - It seemed they might have tried to fool the people of Galatia into thinking that they taught the same as Paul.
 - **No, it was sin that was twisting the commands of God to make them something they were not.**
 - Paul used extreme language to speak against those whom were leading them astray, he said he wished they would castrate themselves.
 - **Jesus tells us how He views those who lead people astray, those who tempt others to sin.**
 - Matthew 18:5-7
 - “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes!”
 - This shows just how dangerous it is to be the one that causes others to sin. Woe to those who live their lives in sin and also tempt others to do the same.
 - **Paul had hope that they would see the truth and turn back to the life Christ had called them to.**

- Paul didn't give up on these people, he wrote to them again to remind them of the truth and hoped that they would turn back to the truth.