

**A Study of  
THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS**

*“You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.”*

*- Galatians 5:4,5*

Fellowship of Christian University Students (FOCUS)  
Wildwood Community Church

NOTE: Additional copies of this study may be obtained from “<http://faculty-staff.ou.edu/R/William.R.Reed-1/Bstudies/index.html>”

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

**This study is formatted to be a daily study of Galatians to be done over a period of 11 weeks. We have tried to design a study that will require, on average, about 20 minutes a day. That being said, please remember that the death of a good Bible study is a legalistic adherence to a “list” or schedule. Godly discipline requires a sensitivity to what the Holy Spirit wants to teach you. If you find yourself being led in a direction different from where our questions would take you, forget our questions, and listen to the “higher authority.” Most of all, enjoy the Word of God. There is no book like it in all of creation.**

***- Bob Reed and Mark Robinson***

*Note: We would very much appreciate any suggestions you might have to improve this study. Feedback on whether the questions are too vague, take too long to answer, are too academic, etc. is very much appreciated. Feel free to email us any thoughts you might have as they come up. Our email addresses are [breed@ou.edu](mailto:breed@ou.edu) (Bob Reed) and [markrobinson@wildwoodchurch.org](mailto:markrobinson@wildwoodchurch.org) (Mark Robinson). Thanks!*

## **BRIEF BACKGROUND NOTES ON GALATIANS**

**Who wrote it?** It was written by Paul, the apostle.

**Who were the recipients?** This epistle is addressed to “the churches in Galatia” (cf. Galatians 1:2). Most commentators believe that this refers to the group of churches in southern Galatia that Paul founded on his first missionary journey (e.g. Pisidian Antioch, Lystra, Iconium, and Derbe). These churches likely had a core of Jewish believers, along with many Gentile converts.

**When was it written?** Most commentators place the writing of the Epistle to the Galatians around 50 A.D.

**Why was it written?** This epistle was written to combat the tendency in the fledgling churches to incorporate the legalism of Judaism into Christianity. The Gentiles in these young churches were being pressured to become circumcised, observe the Jewish calendar, and adopt the ritual aspects of Judaism. In a sense, Christianity was in danger of becoming Judaism “with a Jesus face.” In this epistle, the Holy Spirit through Paul aggressively attacks this heresy. In so doing, He makes it clear that Christianity is not an extension of Judaism, it is something entirely different: Christianity is based on the foundational truth that righteousness comes by faith in Jesus Christ, not through following a set of rules.

This book has had a profound influence on the development of the Christian church. It has been called “the Magna Carta of Christian liberty.” It was Martin Luther’s favorite book, and a theological cornerstone of the Reformation.

Galatians deals with one of the most fundamental questions of religion: “How can I live a righteous life?” The answer is startlingly different from anything one might have expected. The truths contained in this book have the potential to revolutionize your life, as they have already done for countless others through the centuries. ENJOY!!!

## WEEK ONE: Galatians 1:1-17

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 1:1-17.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section. For example, one such outline of Galatians 1:1-17 is given below:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 1:1,2.   | A formal introduction of Paul to the churches in Galatia.                            |
| 1:3-5.   | Greetings, with a reminder of what the Christian life is all about.                  |
| 1:6-9.   | Paul condemns those who have misled the Galatians with a different gospel.           |
| 1:10-12. | Paul emphasizes that his gospel is from God.   |
| 1:13-17. | God personally intervened in Paul’s life to appoint him a messenger to the Gentiles. |

Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

(NOTE: Making an outline is a wonderful way to immerse yourself in Scripture. It forces you to think through the content and organization of the text. In addition, it becomes a valuable resource for later review. If you have never done this before, you will probably find this hard to do the first time around. However, it will become easier over time. Persevere! You will be glad you did.)

**Day Two:**

1. Review Galatians 1:1-17.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.”

For example, Paul begins his salutation to the Galatians by writing “Grace and peace to you” (Galatians 1:3). Accordingly, you might ask, “What exactly does Paul mean when he writes ‘Grace to you’?”

Write your questions in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week.

**Day Three:**

1. For background info, read Acts 9:1-30 and Acts 26:12-19 (NOTE: Saul is the same person as the Paul who wrote the book of Galatians.)
2. Read Galatians 1:1-17.
3. Consider the following verses:

Galatians 1:1: “Paul, an apostle--sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father ...”

Galatians 1:11,12: “I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 1:16b,17: “I did not consult any man, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus.”

1 Thessalonians 2:13: “*And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God...*”

4. Briefly summarize the point that the Holy Spirit, through Paul, is making in the verses above. (i.e. In what way is Paul’s message not from man, but from God)?
5. Why do you think Paul (under the power of the Holy Spirit) considers this point so important that He feels it necessary to emphasize it?
6. Why do you think it is necessary for YOU to be convinced that “Paul’s gospel” is not “the word of men” but the “word of God?”

**Day Four:**

1. Read Galatians 1:1-17
2. Now focus in on Galatians 1:3-5.
3. Did you know that Paul begins EVERY ONE of his letters with the salutation, “grace and peace to you?” Consider the following verses:

Romans 1:7: “*To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: **Grace and peace** to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

1 Corinthians 1:3: “***Grace and peace** to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

2 Corinthians 1:2: “***Grace and peace** to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

Galatians 1:3: “***Grace and peace** to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ...*”

Ephesians 1:2: “***Grace and peace** to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

Philippians 1:2: “***Grace and peace** to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

Colossians 1:2: “*To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: **Grace and peace** to you from God our Father.*”

1 Thessalonians 1:1: “*Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: **Grace and peace** to you.*”

2 Thessalonians 1:2: “***Grace and peace** to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

1 Timothy 1:2: “*To Timothy my true son in the faith: **Grace, mercy and peace** from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

2 Timothy 1:2: “*To Timothy, my dear son: **Grace, mercy and peace** from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

Titus 1:4: “*To Titus, my true son in our common faith: **Grace and peace** from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.*”

Philemon 1:3: “***Grace to you and peace** from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

4. Grace” and “peace” were great, motivating themes in Paul’s ministry. Of these two, “grace” is perhaps the more difficult concept to pin down. As we shall see, a proper understanding of this concept is key to appreciating the Holy Spirit’s teaching in Galatians.

In the space below, give a short definition for “grace” that summarizes your understanding of this word.

5. Consider the following verse:  
1 Corinthians 15:10: “*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His **grace** toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the **grace** of God with me.*”
6. How does the definition you wrote in Question (3) fit into 1 Corinthians 15:10? That is, can you substitute your definition for grace directly into 1 Corinthians 15:10 and still have this verse make sense?
7. The word that is translated “grace” in the New Testament comes from the Greek word “charis,” from which we get charity. Here is how Zondervan’s NIV Bible Software Library describes this word: “*The biblical concept of grace is much*

*greater than is suggested in the common definition of "unmerited favor." "Grace" is a word that expresses a radical view of life and of relationship with God. Grace teaches that God's attitude toward us is one of acceptance and love; knowing God's heart, we can "approach the throne of grace with confidence" (Heb 4:16) with every sin and need. Grace is a dramatic statement about the human condition. Each person is helpless, trapped in sin and incapable of pleasing God or winning his favor. Grace is a proclamation. It is the triumphant announcement that God in Christ has acted and has come to the aid of all who will trust him for their eternal salvation. Grace is a way of life. Relying totally on Jesus to work within us, we experience God's own unlimited power, vitalizing us and enabling us to live truly good lives...grace is not simply a basic orientation to relationship with God. It is also a practical approach to living the Christian life. This aspect of grace helps us to understand the warning found in Gal 5:4, that those "who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; [they] have fallen away from grace." Any attempt by believers to struggle toward a life of goodness by works of the law means a return to the futile way of religion. It involves reliance on ourselves and an abandonment of reliance on Christ, who alone can enable us to live righteous lives. We cannot approach Christian experience from the old perspective, for grace and religion are contradictory. We can only live by full commitment to the way of grace and all that grace involves."*

8. A possible definition of "grace" is "supernatural power untainted by human effort." Does this seem to you like an adequate definition of "grace?"
9. In light of your study above, what do you think Paul meant when he wrote "Grace to you"?

**Day Five:**

1. Read Galatians 1:1-17, then pay special attention to Galatians 1:3-5.
2. According to verse 4, why did the Lord Jesus Christ "give Himself for our sins?"
3. In your own words, explain what the following phrase means: "to rescue us from the present evil age."
4. Here is how one commentator explains the meaning of "to rescue us from the present evil age":

“The word "rescue" implies a "rescue from the power of." ... Believers are not [physically removed] out of the present evil world (though that will also be true eventually), but [rescued] from the power of evil and the values of the present world-system through the power of the risen Christ within the Christian. [SOURCE: *NIV Bible Commentary* in the *Zondervan Bible Reference Library* software].”

In what way is the world we now live in “evil?” Do you agree with that assessment? Why or why not?

5. According to Galatians 1:5, what is the reason why God wants to “rescue us from the present evil age?”
6. Using the understanding you have gained from your study above, paraphrase Galatians 1:3-5 in your own words.
7. What is your attitude toward the world in which we live? Is it a desirable thing to be “rescued from it? Why or why not?

**Day 6:**

1. Read Galatians 1:1-17, then focus in on Galatians 1:6-10.
2. Central to Paul’s charge is that the “gospel of Christ” is being distorted (cf. Galatians 1:7). In the space below, briefly explain what you think the “gospel of Christ” is. (HINT: The “gospel of Christ” is summarized in Galatians 1:4,5.)
3. According to Galatians 1:5, what is God’s primary motivation for working in our lives?
4. Explain how the “gospel of Christ” glorifies God.
5. To give you an idea of how seriously the Holy Spirit views the distortion of the gospel, consider this: The expression “accursed (NASB)/eternally condemned

(NIV)” [cf. Galatians 1:8,9] comes from the Greek word “anathema,” which can be interpreted “damnation.”

In other words, the Holy Spirit through Paul is saying that anybody who distorts the “gospel of Christ” is deserving of being sent to hell forever. Is it just me, or does this seem a little harsh to you! Why do you think God considers this subject so important? (HINT: Remember that God’s ultimate purpose in working in our lives is to glorify Himself – cf. Galatians 1:5.)

6. A possible explanation for why God is so harsh in His denunciation of those who propagate false gospels is that only the “gospel of Christ” gives God the glory that He deserves. All other “gospels” elevate the role of man and rob God of the credit for His work in our lives. What do you think about that? Could that explain why this issue is so important to God?
7. What are some examples of “false gospels” that you are aware of today?
8. What did you find most spiritually impacting in this week’s study? Elaborate.

## WEEK TWO: Galatians 1:13-2:10

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 1:13-2:10.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

### Day Two:

1. Review Galatians 1:13-2:10.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

**Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 1:13-2:10.
2. What is the main point of 1:13-2:10? What was Paul trying to communicate to the Galatians by telling them this story?
3. Why is this point important? In other words, why should it matter whether Paul did or not speak with the apostles in Jerusalem?
4. Paul comments in 1:15 that he was set apart by God for a special purpose from the time he was in his mother's womb. Based on what you know about Paul, in what way is that true?
5. Think about your own life for a moment. Do you feel as though God has set you apart for a special purpose? If so, in what way? If not, why not?

**Day Four:**

1. Read Galatians 1:13-2:10.
2. To better understand the significance of Galatians 1:13-2:10, we are going to break down these verses into small sections. For each section below, write down the main point being made:

Galatians 1:13,14:

Galatians 1:15-17:

Galatians 1:18-24:

Galatians 2:1-5:

Galatians 2:6-10:

3. Consider the following progression of thoughts:
  - Look at how my life changed so dramatically all of a sudden
  - At first, I went into seclusion and didn't have contact with anybody
  - Three years later, I met Peter and James, but only to "get acquainted" – they didn't teach me anything
  - Fourteen years later, I confronted those in the highest positions of leadership in the church and told them they were wrong
  - The apostles acknowledged God's supernatural working in my life and embraced my gospel

In light of this progression of thoughts, can you now figure out the main point that Paul is making in Galatians 1:13-2:10? Do you see why it is so important?
  
4. The change in Paul's life was a major "proof" of God's involvement in His life and a validation of the message He was giving testimony to. If you are a Christian, in what ways have you seen God change your life since you have trusted in Him, or while you have been growing in your relationship with Him? If you are not a Christian, what have been your impressions of the lives of the Christians you have known? In your opinion have their lives helped to validate the message they believe?

**Day Five:**

1. Consider the following scenario:

*Imagine that you are an engineering student at college, and that for several years you have taken classes from the most brilliant, most dynamic, most compelling professor you have ever had. After class, this professor starts meeting with you and several other students and begins teaching you the design of a radical new machine that will transform society. The machine itself uses new technologies that defy established scientific principles, which causes your professor to be the source of much controversy.*

*Towards the end of your college career, your professor announces to you that He is God, and that He has chosen you for a special mission to take this machine to the world. Your professor makes a dramatic departure from the university and disappears. All of a sudden you and your team are in charge of*

*finding a way of mass-producing this machine and getting people to use the new technology.*

*After several years you hear of another student, let's call him Paul, who claims to have invented a machine identical to yours. To the best of your knowledge, Paul never had any contact with your professor while he was teaching at your university. He claims that your professor appeared to him in a dream, and taught him the design of the machine. While there is no substantiated proof of this, it is widely known that Paul made a major life-change about the time he claims to have seen your professor in his dream.*

*Over the years, you and Paul have some brief contact, but your team and his team work largely independently. Finally, after several, relatively small production runs, you are ready to take the machine to mass-production. However, a crisis occurs on your design team, and Paul comes to your team to tell you that there is a flaw in your plans to mass-produce the machine. Your team is hardly incredulous that Paul knows what he is talking about. After all, you all spent years studying with your professor at the university.*

*Remarkably, Paul not only points out the design flaw that has crept into your plans, but is able to show you new functionalities of the machine that you never even knew it had the capacity to do. Thanks to Paul, you correct the mistake and you and Paul join forces to take this radical new machine to the world!*

2. After the events described in (1), would you be convinced that Paul had, indeed, received his design instructions directly from your former professor?
3. Would you be more willing to believe Paul's "theories," even if they sounded really strange to you?
4. Can you see any parallels between this story and certain events that are described in the Bible? (^\_^)

### **Day Six:**

1. Read Galatians 1:13-2:10.
2. As we move into the next section of Galatians, the apostle Paul is going to share his "theory" about the Christian life. He is going to say that this theory is of the utmost importance. Without a proper appreciation of his "theory," he is going to tell you that your Christian life is not going to "work." In other words, he is going to say that while you might think that your "design" of the Christian life is correct, it is at risk of having a fatal flaw. This design flaw is so serious, it has the capacity to leave your Christian life completely powerless. Are YOU going to believe what the Holy Spirit, through Paul, is going to say? Why?

3. What did you find most spiritually impacting in this week's study? Elaborate.

### **WEEK THREE: Galatians 2:11-21**

#### **Day One:**

1. Read Galatians 2:11-21.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

#### **Day Two:**

1. Review Galatians 2:11-21.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

**Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 2:11-14.
2. For what, specifically, did Paul criticize Peter? (HINT: It was NOT for separating himself from the Gentiles.)
3. Why do you think that Paul reacted so strongly and publicly in confronting Peter?
4. Compare Acts 11:1-18 with Galatians 2:11-14. What do these passages tell us about Peter? (NOTE: The events of Acts 11 happen BEFORE the events of Galatians 2 chronologically.)
5. Peter seemed to be a slow learner on this issue of how the church should deal with the Gentiles. Do you think Paul is too harsh here in his confrontation of Peter? Why or why not? Do you see any applications in the way Paul interacted with Peter for your life today?
6. In Galatians 2:14, Paul charges that Peter “compelled the Gentiles to live like Jews” (NASB)/“forced Gentiles to follow Jewish customs” (NIV). What “Jewish custom” was Paul referring to? (HINT: See verse 12.)

7. Read Galatians 2:11-21.
8. In the space below, summarize Galatians 2:15,16 without using the words “faith” or “law.”
  
9. Read Galatians 2:17,18.
10. One (loose) interpretation of verses 17 and 18 is the following:  
*The Christian life is all about “faith.” However, critics point out that Christians continue to sin. They say that this is clear evidence that “faith” is not enough -- unless one wants to argue that Christ is okay with sin. I reply, “Absolutely not!” The fact that Christians continue to sin only proves what the gospel has been saying all along: “Everybody has a sinful nature and needs to be delivered from its power.”*  
What do you think of this interpretation? Do you think it accurately represents the main ideas of verses 17-18?
  
11. In 2:17-18 Paul takes a criticism of Christianity (the sin of its followers) and turns it into an apologetic for the Christian faith! How does the sin in YOUR life remind you of the central truths of Christianity?
  
12. Read Galatians 2:19.
13. One possible interpretation of verse 19 is the following:  
*I learned that following the law could not produce spiritual life in me, and this insight became the secret that allowed me to live for God!*  
What do you think of this interpretation? Do you think it accurately represents the main ideas of verses 19?

14. Read Galatians 2:20-21.
15. Summarize what the Holy Spirit through Paul is saying in verses 20-21 without using the words “faith,” “grace,” or “law.”

**Day Four:**

1. Read Galatians 2:11-21, then focus in on 2:20.
2. In 2:20, Paul closely ties the life of the Christian to the life of Jesus Christ.
  - 2A. Elaborate on the meaning of the following statement: “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”
  - 2B. According to this verse, what enables Christ to live out His life through the Christian?
3. Consider the following thoughts about Galatians 2:11-21:

*In these verses, the Holy Spirit through Paul states that there is a conflict between the “gospel” and a system of righteousness that is based upon following the law. Associated with the gospel are words like “justified,” “faith,” “grace”, “Christ lives in me,” and “righteousness.” In contrast to these are words like “living like a Jew/following Jewish customs,” “works,” “law,” and “Christ died for nothing.”*

Do you agree with this analysis? Do you feel like you understand what the Holy Spirit through Paul is saying here?
4. Do you believe Galatians 2:11-21 refers primarily to how to become a Christian? Or do you think it is primarily concerned with how to grow after one becomes a Christian?

5. In the space below, briefly describe what a person must do to become a Christian.
  
6. In the space below, briefly describe what a person must do to spiritually grow after they become a Christian.

**Day Five:**

*NOTE: Today's study is primarily intended to better understand what is meant by the word "justify," which is a key concept in the Book of Galatians.*

1. Read Galatians 2:16.
  
2. Clearly, the central idea in Galatians 2:15,16 is that one becomes "justified" by "faith in Christ" and not by "works." Circle the choice below that comes closest to describing what it means to "be justified":
  - a) to have one's sins forgiven
  - b) to live righteously
  - c) other (*please describe in the space below*):
  
3. *Biblical Note:* The Greek word that is translated "justified" in Galatians 2:16 is derived from the Greek root "dikaioö" and is related to the noun "dikaiosunë", which is almost always translated "righteousness," as it is in Galatians 2:21. Here is how one commentator explains this:  
*"The Greek verb dikaioö is translated 'to justify.' We have no verb form in English that means 'to righteous.' "*  
[SOURCE: <http://home.messiah.edu/~mcosby/BIL105.htm>]  
In other words, translators use the word "justify" to translate "dikaioö" because there is no corresponding English word for "to righteous". A better translation than "justify" would be "righteous-ize;" that is, to make righteous – if only this word existed in English. Thus, as you wrestle through what the Holy Spirit is teaching, you will do well to think "righteous-ize" or "make righteous" whenever you see the word "justify."

4. Consider the following elaboration of the word “justify:”  
*Just as “salvation” has both a past, a present, and a future sense to it, so “justify” also has three (completely analogous) senses:*  
*Justification (past): The believer is made righteous before God the moment he/she receives a new nature when they become a Christian.*  
*Justification (present): Despite receiving a new nature, the Christian continues to sin because he/she possesses a sin nature. Yet God enables the believer through the indwelling Christ to live righteously on a daily basis.*  
*Justification (future): One day, the Christian will be “glorified”. He/she will have their old sin nature stripped from them and will stand in the presence of God completely “righteous,” devoid of sin.*  
*In other words, God is engaged in the process of making Christians completely righteous. First, He gives them a new, righteous nature. Then, He enables them to live righteously in this life.<sup>1</sup> Finally, upon their death and subsequent resurrection, they have their old, sin natures completely removed so they can stand sinless in God’s presence.*  
Do you have any thoughts about the preceding elaboration? Does this make sense to you?

5. Go back and look at your answer to Question (2). Then consider the following:  
*The answer to Question (2) above is both (a) AND (b). However, since Paul is writing to Christians, when the Holy Spirit through Paul speaks of being “justified” He primarily intends the “present” sense of being righteous; namely, living righteously. Thus, the main point of Galatians is about how the Christian can live a “holy life,” overcoming the power of sin and living righteously for the purpose of bringing glory to God (cf. Galatians 1:4,5).*  
Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Briefly elaborate your thoughts in the space below.

6. Based upon Galatians 2:16 and the preceding study, fill in the following blank:

Christians grow spiritually by \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ, not by observing the law.

---

<sup>1</sup> This “present” sense of “justification” is frequently called “sanctification” in Christian literature.

## Day Six:

*NOTE: Today's study is primarily intended to better understand what is meant by "observing the law," which is a key concept in the Book of Galatians.*

1. Read Galatians 2:21.
2. In the space below, reword the phrase "if righteousness comes (NASB)/could be gained (NIV) through the Law" -- without using either the word "law" or "works."

3. Here is how one commentator explains what the Holy Spirit through Paul means by "law":

*"Paul's emphasis here is not on the Jewish law (there is no article in Greek with the word "law"), though it includes it, but rather ON ANY SYSTEM OF ATTEMPTING TO PLEASE GOD BY GOOD DEEDS [emphasis added]."*

[SOURCE: *The NIV Bible Commentary* in the *NIV Bible Reference Library* software.]

In other words, when the Holy Spirit through Paul speaks of "law," He is referring to any system by which a person attempts to become "holier" by doing certain things. In the space below, identify some things that people do to become "holier?"

4. Here is what we have learned so far in our Galatians study:  
*Living righteously/being holy/becoming a better Christian can only be done by "faith in Christ," not by doing a certain set of good deeds.*  
Do you feel like you understand this truth? If not, what do you find unclear or confusing about it?

5. What did you find most spiritually impacting in this week's study? Elaborate.

## WEEK FOUR: Galatians 3:1-5

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 3:1-5.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

### Day Two:

1. Review Galatians 3:1-5.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

**Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 3:1-5.  
*Biblical Note:* Verse 1 is a little unclear in the NASB and the NIV translations. The New Living Translation better captures the true meaning of the verse. It says, “Oh foolish Galatians! What magician has cast an evil spell on you? For you used to see the meaning of Jesus Christ’s death as clearly as though I had shown you a signboard with a picture of Christ dying on the cross.” The emphasis here is not that they witnessed the crucifixion with their own eyes, but that Paul had been very clear that the gospel Paul preached centered around the crucifixion of Christ.
2. Is the Holy Spirit through Paul speaking to Christians or non-Christians in these verses? How do you know?
3. What is the primary subject of Galatians 3:1-5? Circle the best answer, then explain your answer in the space below.
  - a) The primary subject is that one becomes a Christian by faith, not by following “the law.”
  - b) The primary subject is that one lives the Christian life in exactly the same way that one becomes a Christian – by faith, not by following “the law.”
  - c) None of the above.

4. Read Galatians 3:3.
5. Complete the following sentence based on Galatians 3:3. Write in plain English, without using the words “perfected,” “attain your goal,” “flesh,” or “human effort.”

Having begun by the Spirit, are you now \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ?

**Day Four:**

1. Read Galatians 3:1-5.
2. (Review from Week3/Day4/Question5.) In the space below, briefly describe what a person must do to become a Christian.
  
3. (Review from Week3/Day4/Question6.) In the space below, briefly describe what a person must do to spiritually grow after they become a Christian.
  
4. Consider the following verses:  
Galatians 3:3: “*Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh(NASB)/human effort(NIV)?*” (NOTE: The way the grammar sits in 3:3, the expected answer is an emphatic NO!)  
  
Colossians 2:6: “*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him...*”  
  
Hebrews 11:6a: “*And without faith it is impossible to please God...*”

5. Review your answers to Questions (2) and (3) above. How do the verses you just looked at impact how you would answer those questions? After looking at these verses, should there be any difference in your answers? Why or why not?
  
6. Given your current understanding, explain what it means to live your Christian life by “faith,” as opposed to following “the law.”

**Day Five:**

1. Read Galatians 3:1-5.
2. Observe the following contrasts that the Holy Spirit through Paul draws in these verses:

<i>Scripture</i>	<i>Path #1</i>	<i>Path #2</i>
Verse 2	“works of the law” (NASB) “observing the law” (NIV)	“hearing with faith” (NASB) “believing what you heard” (NIV)
Verse 3	“by the flesh(NASB)/human effort(NIV)”	“by the Spirit”
Verse 5	“works of the law” (NASB) “observe the law” (NIV)	“hearing with faith” (NASB) “believe what you heard” (NIV)

***NOTE:** Galatians 3:1-5 contrasts two paths to living the Christian life. One path consists of works/law/flesh/human effort. The other path consists of faith/belief/Spirit. Today’s study is primarily intended to begin the process of understanding what it means to live one’s spiritual life by “observing the law.” Tomorrow’s study will explore the path of living one’s life by faith.*

3. Review the Week3/Day6 study.
- 4A. As we shall see, when Paul wrote about “observing the law,” he had in mind the Jewish custom of circumcision. (We shall discuss why this was so in the weeks ahead.) Obviously, circumcision is not much of an issue today (perhaps precisely because of the Book of Galatians!). Nevertheless, the principle of attempting to become more religious/spiritual by following a prescribed set of rules is still an issue today – maybe far more than we realize!
- 4B. In your own words, what do you think it means to live one’s Christian life by “observing the law.”
  
5. Identify some things you do in your life to become a better Christian/more religious. Do you think this is what the Holy Spirit/Paul had in mind by “observing the law?” Explain why or why not.
  
6. Christians are often exhorted to do more Bible study, pray more, share their faith, increase their financial giving, help the poor, go to a Christian conference, go on a summer project, become a missionary, go to an “unreached people group”, etc. Would you say that these are examples of “observing the law?” Explain why or why not.

**Day Six:**

1. Read Galatians 3:1-5.
2. Consider the following verses:  
Galatians 3:3: “*Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh(NASB)/human effort(NIV)?*”

Colossians 2:6: “*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him...*”

Hebrews 11:6a: “*And without faith it is impossible to please God...*”

3. It is relatively easy to understand that one becomes a Christian through faith alone, apart from works (cf. Romans 3:28): There is nothing that a person can do to earn forgiveness for their sins. The only “path” for forgiveness is to completely trust that Jesus’ death on the cross was sufficient to pay the penalty for one’s sins.

According to the verses above, the Christian life is lived in exactly the same way – by completely trusting in Jesus to make us better Christians. In your own words, explain how to live one’s Christian life by “hearing with faith.”

4. The Book of Galatians presents a radical new “path” for spirituality: Christian growth is not based upon what we do (“observing the law”), but on what we believe (“hearing with faith”).

How do you reconcile this with exhortations “to do more Bible study, pray more, share one’s faith, increase one’s financial giving, help the poor, go to a Christian conference, go on a summer project, become a missionary, go to an ‘unreached people group’, etc.?” Elaborate your thoughts in the space below.<sup>2</sup>

5. What did you find most spiritually impacting in this week’s study? Elaborate.

---

<sup>2</sup> This truth is hard to grasp, so don’t worry if you find yourself confused about what it means to “live by faith.” Rather, be thankful that God’s Word is so rich and deep that it contains many wonderful “surprises” to those who seek to better know the infinite, eternal God of the Universe. We shall return to this subject frequently in the weeks ahead. – And, yes, we shall reconcile the teaching of Galatians to the “faith without works is dead” teaching in the Book of James; cf. James 2:24-26.

## WEEK FIVE: Galatians 3:6-18

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 3:6-18.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

### Day Two:

1. Review Galatians 3:6-18.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

### **Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 3:6-9.
2. Consider the following verses:  
Romans 4:1-3,13-15a: *“What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about -- but not before God. What does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’... It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, because law brings wrath.”*

Biblical Note #1: Abraham is considered the “father of the Jews.” His story is recorded in Genesis, the first book in the Bible. Abraham was born in Mesopotamia. In Genesis 12:1,2, the Bible records that God spoke to Abram/Abraham, and told him to go to a different country where he would become a great nation:

Genesis 12:1,2: *“Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, And from your relatives, And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing.”*

Abraham was 75 years old at the time and had no children. God continued to tell Abraham that he would have children, which would be the start of a great nation (i.e. Israel). Abraham believed God, and the Bible says this act of faith caused God to make Abraham “righteous.”

Genesis 15:1-6: *“After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, ‘Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great.’ And Abram said, ‘O Lord GOD, what wilt Thou give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?’ And Abram said, ‘Since Thou hast given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.’ Then*

*behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 'This man will not be your heir; but one who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.' And He took him outside and said, 'Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness."*

At age 100, Abraham became the father of a son. This son, Isaac, would later also have a son, Jacob. Jacob, in turn, had many sons. His sons became the "patriarchs" of the nation of Israel, from which the 12 tribes of Israel were formed. Thus God's promise to Abraham was fulfilled.

Biblical Note #2: Three times in the Book of Genesis, God tells Abraham that he will "make him a great nation", "make his descendants as the dust of the earth", and "make his descendants as many as the stars of the heavens." The third time, in Genesis 15:6, it is recorded that Abraham "believed" God. This is the FIRST instance in the Bible where it is recorded that someone "believed" God. Interestingly, Genesis 15:6 is also the FIRST instance where an individual is called "righteous" in Scripture.

3. In Galatians 3:6, the Holy Spirit through Paul tells us to "consider Abraham." What specifically is it about Abraham that greatly bolsters the argument that righteousness comes by faith, not by following the law? In other words, if we can be persuaded that Abraham achieved his righteousness by faith, how does that prove that that is also how WE can achieve righteousness in our lives?

#### **Day Four:**

1. Read Galatians 3:10-14.
2. Consider the following verses:

Galatians 3:10: "All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.'"

Romans 4:14,15a: "For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, because law brings wrath."

3. What is the "curse/wrath" referred to in the verses above?

4. Do you think the “curse” mentioned in Galatians 3:10-14 and the “wrath” spoken of in Romans 4:14,15a refer solely to the eternal punishment that awaits those who have not had their sins forgiven? Could it also refer to Christians who attempt to live their lives by “following the law” rather than by faith? Explain your answer in the space below.

5. Consider the following verses:

John 15:5,6: [Jesus speaking] *“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, **and they are burned.**”*

1 Corinthians 3:11-15: *“For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and **the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.** If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.”*

2 Corinthians 5: 9,10: *“Therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”*

Hebrews 11:6a: *“And without faith it is impossible to please God.”*

6. Combine what you have learned from Question 4 and the verses in question 5. These passages indicate a judgment for believers. What type of thing will be judged by God in the believer’s life (note especially the context in Galatians 3)? How does this reconcile with Romans 8:1 and other verses which say there is “No condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus”?

7. Consider the following verses:  
Galatians 1:6-9: *“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be **eternally condemned!** As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be **eternally condemned!**”*
  
8. Based upon the preceding study, how serious an offense is it to attempt to become a better Christian/more religious by “following the law?” Elaborate your thoughts in the space below.

#### **Day Five:**

1. Read Galatians 3:10-14.
  
2. Consider the following verse:  
Galatians 3:12a: *“The law is not based on faith.”*
  
3. In the space below, list four behaviors that in your mind are most closely associated with godly living (e.g., sexual purity, sobriety, Bible study, prayer, going to church, being a missionary, etc.). Explain how one could do each of these things according to “law/human effort.” Then write what you think it would mean to live these things out by faith.

BEHAVIOR	BY LAW	BY FAITH
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

- 4A. Consider the following verses:  
Galatians 3:13,14: “*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, **having become a curse for us**--for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE”--in order that **in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**”*”
- 4B. In what way does Jesus enable us to avoid the curse of the Law?
- 4C. Jesus does more than just enable us to avoid the curse, He makes it possible for something else . . . what is it?

5A. Consider the following verses:

Galatians 2:20: “*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but **Christ lives in me**. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God...*”

2 Corinthians 5:17: “*Therefore if any man is **in Christ, he is a new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*”

2 Corinthians 5:21: “*God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that **in him we might become the righteousness of God**.*”

Philippians 3:9: “*and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through the faithfulness of Christ, **the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith**.*”

Colossians 1:25-27: [Paul speaking] “*Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**.*”

5B. How do these verses relate to your answer to (4C) above?

### Day Six:

*NOTE: Having decisively argued that God first established righteousness on the basis of faith, the Holy Spirit through Paul now addresses some questions about the law. The first question is, Did the later addition of the law change the fact that God awards righteousness on the basis of faith, not works? The second question is, What is the purpose of the law? We take up the first question in today’s study. We address the second question in next week’s study.*

1. Read Galatians 3:15-18.

2. Circle the correct answer to the following question:  
According to Galatians 3:15-18, the answer to the question, “Did the later addition of the law change the fact that God awards righteousness on the basis of faith, not works?” is...

YES

NO

- 3A. Consider the following verses:

Genesis 22:17,18a: [God speaking to Abraham] *“Indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.”*

Galatians 3:16: *“The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say ‘and to seeds,’ meaning many people, but ‘and to your seed,’ meaning one person, who is Christ.”*

Matthew 1:1: *“The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”*

- 3B. Do you have any idea what Galatians 3:16 means? Elaborate your answer in the space below.

- 3C. One possible interpretation of Galatians 3:16 is that the promises God made to Abraham were extended to “his seed,” namely Jesus. This has two implications. First, the principle of righteousness by faith did not just apply to Abraham. Rather, it was intended to apply through Christ to all people (“in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed”). Chronologically, the promise was given to Abraham around 1900 B.C. The Law was not given until around 1450 B.C. and Jesus would not be born until 4 B.C. Therefore, since the Law comes in between the promise for righteousness that was extended to Abraham and its fulfillment in Christ, then the giving of the Law must have been for another purpose than to make us righteous. As previously mentioned, the “other” reason for the giving of the Law will be addressed next week.

===== | Abraham | ===== | The giving of the law | ===== | Jesus | =====

The second implication is that the promises that God made to Abraham, which includes righteousness and the Holy Spirit, are in Christ. That is, Christians have access to these promises only through the person of Jesus. With respect to this second implication, consider (again) the following verses:

Galatians 3:13,14: “*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us--for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"--in order that **in Christ Jesus** the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*”

What do you think of this interpretation? Elaborate your thoughts in the space below.

4. What did you find most spiritually impacting in this week’s study? Elaborate.

## WEEK SIX: Galatians 3:19-29

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 3:19-29.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

### Day Two:

1. Review Galatians 3:19-29.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

**Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 3:19,20.
2. The preceding verses indicate that while the Old Testament contains many commandments, the associated “system for righteous living” based on law was (i) added to highlight man’s sins and (ii) intended to be temporary.
- 2A. Underline the section below that indicates that the law was added to highlight man’s sins.

Galatians 3:19,20: “*What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.*”

- 2B. Underline the section below that indicates that the law was intended to be temporary.

Galatians 3:19,20: “*What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.*”

3. How about the section that says, “*The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.*” What can this possibly mean?

It is likely that the Holy Spirit through Paul is pointing out that the giving of the law to Moses, part of the “Mosaic covenant,” was a “conditional covenant.” This covenant was an agreement between two parties (God and man), in which the associated blessings depended on man upholding his end of the bargain, with corresponding punishments if he failed.

In contrast, God's promises to Abraham, known as the "Abrahamic covenant," constituted an "unconditional covenant." The blessings associated with this covenant did not depend on man. God unilaterally committed to fulfilling the covenant independent of man's actions.

What do you think about this interpretation? Does it seem reasonable to you?

4. This teaching about "conditional" and "unconditional" covenants may be new to you. Consider the following discussion of the Abrahamic covenant:

*"The Abrahamic Covenant has been described as "unconditional." This means that God's promises will be without qualification; that is, that the covenant promises will be completely fulfilled in spite of man's success or failure to keep whatever conditions or commandments may be contained in the covenant. Fulfillment is dependent upon God and not man. God intends to fulfill the terms of the covenant regardless of whether man fulfills his obligations. Abraham may have had some obligations to fulfill, but even if Abraham failed to fulfill those obligations, God's promises to him would still have been kept.*

*In Genesis 15 animals were slaughtered so as to solemnize a blood covenant. Afterwards the animals were cut up and its pieces were lined up in two parallel rows....In the culture of that day, if the contract being made was a conditional covenant, there were certain things that the parties to the agreement would do. In a situation (like that described in Genesis 15) where a conditional covenant was being made, both parties making the contract would walk together between the pieces of the animals (e.g., Jeremiah 34:18-19). This meant that the terms of the covenant would be mandatory on both parties. If one party became guilty of violating any single term of the covenant, it would free the other party from the necessity of fulfilling his own promises contained in the covenant.*

*But in Genesis 15, Abraham and God did not walk together between the pieces of the animals. God put Abraham in a deep sleep and only God -- in the form of a smoking oven and a flaming torch (Genesis 15:17) -- walked between the pieces of the animals. This meant that the fulfillment of the covenant was based purely upon God's grace, in spite of how often Abraham or his descendants may fail. Abraham could not be a participant in the covenant, but could only be a recipient of a covenant." [SOURCE: <http://www.amfi.org/abracovt.htm>]*

5. Review the lesson from Week One/Day Four. In the space below, explain how the "Abrahamic covenant" illustrates the principle of "grace."

6. Now consider the following discussion of the Mosaic covenant:  
*“Deuteronomy 27-29 spell out the specific promises concerning what would happen in response to covenant faithfulness or covenant unfaithfulness. Thus the blessings and the curses of the Torah are the covenant promise!*  
*Deuteronomy 28:1,2,15: ‘Now it shall be, **if you will** diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, **if you will** obey the LORD your God....However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.’*  
*The key phrases of “if you will” show that the Mosaic Covenant is a conditional covenant. It is very different from the Abrahamic Covenant which is by faith and faith alone. Hence, while the Abrahamic Covenant was unconditional and only required faith to effect it; the Mosaic Covenant was a conditional one.”*  
[SOURCE: <http://www.senac.com/nb/1627/bin/251.html>].
7. Consider the following verse:  
Galatians 3:10: *“All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.’”*  
Do you see a connection between this verse and the preceding discussion of the Mosaic covenant? Briefly elaborate in the space below.
- 8A. Do you find yourself doing certain things in order to secure God’s blessings? Alternatively, are you ever fearful that -- when you screw up -- God will withdraw His blessings from you? Elaborate in the space below.
- 8B. If you answered “yes” to either of the questions in (8A), do you think this proves that you are “living under the law?” Elaborate in the space below.

## Day Four:

1. Read Galatians 3:21,22.
2. Consider the following verses:  
Hebrews 7:18: *“For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”*  
  
Hebrews 7:22b: *“Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.”*
3. Now consider the following (loose) paraphrase of Galatians 3:21:  
*Both law and grace aim to produce righteousness. There is no conflict in their goals. The problem is that the law does not give people the power to live righteously. If it did, there would have been no need to replace it with something better.*  
What do you think? Does this paraphrase capture the main ideas of Galatians 3:21,22?
4. Consider the following verse:  
Galatians 3:22a: *“But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin.”*  
What do you think this verse means?
5. Consider the following verses:  
Romans 7:19-23: [Paul speaking] *“For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do -- this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.”*  
In what sense is the person described in these verses a “prisoner of the law of sin?”
6. Romans 7:19-23 is talking about Christians (note where it says “for in my inner being I delight in God’s law”). Are you surprised to know that Christians can be “prisoners of sin?”

7. Have you ever wrestled with a sin in your life that just wouldn't go away? Have you ever felt trapped by inadequacies in your life that kept you from being the kind of person you know God wants you to be? Just between you and God, elaborate on this below.

8. Based on the preceding study, complete the following sentence:

My problem is not that I don't know the right things to do. My problem is that –  
in my own power – I am \_\_\_\_\_ to do them.

**Day Five:**

1. Read Galatians 3:23-25.
2. In these verses, the Holy Spirit through Paul states that the law was intended to “lead us to Christ.” How does that happen? How can trying to live a life based on law lead us to Christ?
3. How often do you go to Jesus in prayer and ask for His help to overcome the sins in your life? (Circle your answer below.)
  - a) More than once every day.
  - b) Once every day.
  - c) Several times a week.
  - d) Several times a month.
  - e) Less frequently than several times a month.

4. If you ask for Jesus' help less frequently than once every day, why do you think that is?
  
5. Consider the following verses:  
2 Corinthians 12:9,10: *“And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”*  
How do these verses relate to the preceding study?
  
6. Consider this alternative translation of Galatians 3:24:  
*“the law leads us to Jesus, that we may be righteous-ized by faith.”*  
As we apply this verse to non-believers, we understand this verse to tell us that if they place their faith in Christ, then they are saved, by exchanging their sinful life for the righteous life of Christ in a heavenly transaction (see 2 Corinthians 5:21). However, do you think this verse has application for the believer also? In other words, what would it look like for a believer to apply Galatians 3:24 in their life . . . being “righteous-ized by faith?”
  
7. To have faith means to choose to embrace/rest on/depend/believe some thing or things. What specifically is the Christian supposed to believe in attempting to live righteously by faith? Take an area of your life where you have struggled with sin. What specifically would you have to believe in order to walk by faith in that area of your life?

8. The Bible teaches that people are incapable of doing anything good in their own power:

Romans 3:10-12: *“There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.”*

Do you have trouble believing this is true?

9. The Bible teaches that Christians have a new nature and desire to live righteously:

Romans 7:22: *“...in my inner being I delight in God’s law.”*

1 Corinthians 3:16: *“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?”*

2 Corinthians 5:17a: *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;”*

Galatians 2:20a: *“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”*

Philippians 2:13: *“...for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”*

Colossians 3:9b,10: *“...you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”*

While these verses tell us that we desire to live righteously, we all still struggle with the fact that we have competing desires to sin. Think again of an area in your life where you struggle with sin. To the best of your understanding, how would you apply these verses above in your own life to encourage you as you struggle with sin?

### **Day Six:**

1. Read Galatians 3:26-29.
2. What do you think Paul means when he says in 3:28, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all on in Christ Jesus”? Is this a statement for women’s rights? An apologetic against racism? A cry out against slavery? Or is it something else? (In answering this question, be sure and also take into account the context of 3:27 and 3:29.)



## WEEK SEVEN: Galatians 4:1-20

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 4:1-20.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

### Day Two:

1. Review Galatians 4:1-20.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

### **Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 4:1-11.  
*Biblical Note:* The Greek word translated “basic principles of the world”(NIV)/ “elemental things of the world”(NASB)” in verse 3 is “*stoicheia*”. It was “used of the letters of the alphabet, the ABCs, and then, because the learning of the ABCs is the first lesson in a literary education,” it came to be understood as “the rudiments” or “first principles” [SOURCE: <http://www.bible.org/docs/nt/books/gal/deffin/gal-10.htm>]. The term is sufficiently general/vague that commentators have differed about the specific nature of these “basic principles of the world.”
2. What do you think the following verse means?  
*Galatians 4:3:* “*So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world.*”  
What do you think the “basic principles of the world”(NIV)/ “elemental things of the world”(NASB)” are? In what way were “we” in slavery under them? Give your interpretation in the space below. (NOTE: If you find this confusing, don’t sweat it. We shall return to this question shortly.)
3. Here is what we know:
  - (1) Paul was writing to a group that consisted of both Gentiles and Jews. Thus, whatever “basic principles of the world” refer to, they must have been applicable to BOTH Gentiles and Jews.
  - (2) These “basic principles” had a grip on his readers’ lives before they became Christians, because the time during which they were in bondage/enslaved to them occurred in the period before Christ came (cf. Galatians 4:4). Thus, they must refer to non-Christian forces, practices, or beliefs.

(3) These “basic principles” were so strong they effectively kept the Galatians “in slavery.”

With that in mind, consider the following interpretation of “basic principles of the world”:

*One possible interpretation is that these were the religious beliefs that guided the Galatians before they became Christians. For the Jewish Galatians, that would have included the religious system of the Old Testament (note that verse 10 talks about “days and months and seasons and years,” suggesting the Jewish religious calendar; and the context of Galatians 3 is, after all, the Mosaic Law). For the Gentiles, it would have been their pre-Christian, pagan beliefs (note that verse 8 talks about being “slaves to those who by nature are not gods,” suggesting idols). These religious beliefs were “basic” in the sense that they were primitive compared to the revelation of God’s “New Covenant” by which man is redeemed and adopted as “full sons” in Christ (cf. verses 4 and 5).*

What do you think of this interpretation? Does it seem reasonable to you? Elaborate in the space below.

4. Consider the following verses:

Galatians 4:4: “So also, when we were children, we were in **slavery** under the basic principles of the world.”

Galatians 4:8,9: “Formerly, when you did not know God, you were **slaves** to those who by nature are not gods. But now that you know God--or rather are known by God--how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be **enslaved** by them all over again?”

Assuming that “basic principles of the world” refers to the Galatians’ pre-Christian religious beliefs, can you think of how religious beliefs not based on Christ can cause one to be “enslaved” or “in bondage?” (NOTE: This is the second time you have been asked this question. If you still find it confusing, you get one more crack at it below!)

- 5A. It is common, almost a cliché, to state that “Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship.” Explain the distinction between “a religion” and “a relationship.”

- 5B. Is it possible that one can get so caught up with the traditions and rituals of “religion” that one completely misses the God to whom those traditions and rituals point? How does this relate to the statement that “Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship?”
- 5C. Is there a sense in which “religion” can trap or hold somebody back from knowing God? Explain.
- 5D. Suppose one had the religious belief that one earned blessings from God by being especially good or “spiritual.” Can you think of how that could prevent one from knowing what God was really like?
- 5E. Review your answers to (5A) through (5D). Now read Galatians 4:3 and 4:8,9 again and explain -- in your own words -- how religious beliefs not based on Christ can cause one to be “enslaved” or “in bondage.”
6. Can you think of any specific religious beliefs or practices that you now have, or had in the past, that are/were ABOUT God, but in fact kept you from truly knowing Him? Elaborate in the space below.
7. In what way have you found your religious experience “enslaving?” How does your relationship with God feel right now? Does it feel like you are enslaved to a religious system?

## Day Four:

1. Consider the following verses:

Galatians 4:4-7: “*But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, **that we might receive the full rights of sons**. Because you are sons, **God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."** So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, **God has made you also an heir.**”*

Ephesians 1:3-19: “*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.*

*In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.*

*For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.”*

Hebrews 7:18: “*The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.”*

Hebrews 8:6: “*But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.”*



## **Day Five:**

1. Read Galatians 4:8-11.
2. Consider the following verse:  
Galatians 4:9: *“But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?”*
3. Many people believe that Michael Jordan, who played for the Chicago Bulls from 1985-1993, 1995-1998, was the greatest professional basketball player of all time. He won 6 NBA Championships, 5 MVP Awards, and finished with the highest scoring average in the history of the game.  
After winning his third NBA championship with the Bulls in 1993, Michael Jordan stunned the sports world by announcing his retirement from basketball, after which he pursued a career in professional baseball. During the 1994 baseball season, he played for the Birmingham Barons, a Class AA Southern League (minor league) baseball team. He had a batting average of .202 in 127 games, struck out 114 times in 436 at bats, and led all Southern League outfielders with 11 errors. (For those of you who are not familiar with baseball, these are BAD numbers!) Sports fans everywhere were glad when Jordan announced in 1995 that he would return to play basketball for the Chicago Bulls! Why do you think somebody like Michael Jordan would turn away from all his success in basketball to pursue a career in professional baseball?
4. Consider the following verses:  
Galatians 3:1-5: *“You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Have you suffered so much for nothing--if it really was for nothing? Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?”*
5. Why do you think the Galatians would turn away from their “spiritual success” following the path of faith, to pursue God via a different path, the path of “law?” (NOTE: Paul mentions several times in 4:12-20 how deep their love for him was, therefore, as you answer this question, take into account that Paul was someone that they loved and sacrificed for. What drew them away from the truth that he taught?)

6. Have you ever felt dissatisfied with your life as a Christian? Disappointed with the rate of progress in your spiritual life? Have you had times when you felt unfulfilled in your relationship with God? At these times, were you ever tempted to pursue a “different path” in your spiritual journey? In the space below, explain how Galatians 4:8-11 pertains to these questions.

**Day Six:**

1. Read Galatians 4:12-20.
2. Consider the following translations of Galatians 4:17,18:

(NIV) “Those people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may be zealous for them. It is fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and to be so always and not just when I am with you.”

(NASB) “They eagerly seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out, in order that you may seek them. But it is good always to be eagerly sought in a commendable manner, and not only when I am present with you.”

*Biblical Note:* The word that is translated “zealous” in the NIV translation and “eager” in the NASB comes from the Greek root “zēloō”, which has a number of meanings (also “jealous,” “envious”). These people who were teaching a false gospel (cf. Galatians 1:6-9) had something about them that the Galatians found appealing. Maybe it was their passion. Maybe it was the great conviction with which they held their beliefs. Maybe it was their eagerness to embrace and “help” the Galatians. Whatever it was, it is clear that their appealing manner caused the Galatians to be drawn into their false gospel.

3. Read Galatians 4:19 and complete the following sentence:  
Paul’s goal was to see \_\_\_\_\_ formed in the Galatians.
4. In plain English, what is the meaning of the expression “until Christ is formed in you?”



## WEEK EIGHT: Galatians 4:21-31

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 4:21-31.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

### Day Two:

1. Review Galatians 4:21-31.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

### **Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 4:21-23.
2. The following provides some biblical background concerning Abraham's two sons, "one born by the slave woman and the other by the free woman." Consider this biblical background as you answer the questions below.

***Biblical Background:*** God first called Abraham/Abram when he was 75 years old. At the time, Abraham was living in Haran, located near the northeastern part of present-day Syria. He was married to Sarah/Sarai and they had no children. God promised to "make Abraham into a great nation."

***Genesis 12:1,2:*** "The LORD had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.'"

Sometime later, God again appeared to Abraham, promising to give him descendants.

***Genesis 12:7:*** "And the LORD appeared to Abram and said, 'To your descendants I will give this land.' So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him."

Later, God reiterated His promise by telling Abraham He would give him as many descendants as the "dust of the earth:"

***Genesis 13:14-16:*** "And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, 'Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered.'"

This led to the establishment of the "Abrahamic Covenant," whereby God made it clear that these descendants were to be his biological children, despite Abraham's advanced age:

Genesis 15:2-5: “*And Abram said, ‘O Lord GOD, what wilt Thou give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?’ And Abram said, ‘Since Thou hast given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.’ Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ‘This man will not be your heir; but one who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.’ And He took him outside and said, ‘Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’”*

However, Abraham and Sarah became tired of waiting for God to fulfill His promise. They decided to take matters into their own hands. As was the custom in that day, Sarah “gave” one of her servants, Hagar, to Abraham so that Abraham could father a child through her.

Genesis 16:1-4: “*Now Sarai, Abram's wife had borne him no children, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar. So Sarai said to Abram, ‘Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children through her.’ And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. And after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife. And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived...”*

Sarah’s and Abraham’s plan worked(!). At age 86, Abraham fathered a son, who was named Ishmael. In this manner, they “helped along” God’s promise to produce biological descendants for Abraham.

Genesis 16:15: “*So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. And Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him.”*

The Bible says of Ishmael that “*he will be a wild donkey of a man, His hand will be against everyone, And everyone's hand will be against him; And he will live to the east of all his brothers*” (Genesis 16:12). Ishmael became the patriarch of the nomadic tribes that lived in Arabia. According to the Muslim holy book, the Koran, Ishmael is the spiritual forefather of today’s Muslims.

Many years later, when Abraham was 99 years old, God again appeared to him and reiterated His promise of making a great nation out of him. This time, God made it clear that this lineage was to come through Sarah, not Hagar (i.e., the “free woman,” not the “slave woman”). When Abraham tried to redirect God’s attention to Ishmael, God emphasized that the covenant would be through Sarah’s son, who was to be called Isaac.

Genesis 17:1,7,15-21; 21:1-3: “*Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. ... And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.’ ... Then God said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.’ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his*

*heart, 'Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?'*

*And Abraham said to God, 'Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!' But God said, 'No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year.' ... Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac."*

3. Given your current understanding, what do you think is the main point that the Holy Spirit through Paul is making by comparing Abraham's two sons in Galatians 4:21-23? What are the two sons supposed to represent? As you answer this, remember the entire context of the book of Galatians. Paul is clearly giving an illustration of the same point he has been making all along. (NOTE: If this isn't yet clear to you, don't worry about it. We shall return to this question below.)
  
4. Put yourself in Abraham's and Sarah's shoes and consider their "plan" to have a biological child through Hagar, Sarah's servant. Do you think this was a reasonable, sensible thing for them to do? Elaborate in the space below. (NOTE: While foreign to our morality today, there was nothing immoral about Abraham sleeping with Hagar for the purpose of producing a biological lineage. This was a commonly accepted cultural practice in that day, as indicated by the fact that Sarah "gave" Hagar to Abraham.)
  
5. Review the Week4/Day5 study.

6. Consider the following verses (NASB translation)<sup>3</sup>:

Galatians 4:23: “*But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the **flesh**, and the son by the free woman through the **promise**.*”

Galatians 4:29: “*But as at that time he who was born according to the **flesh** persecuted him who was born according to the **Spirit**, so it is now also.*”

Galatians 3:3: “*Are you so foolish? Having begun by the **Spirit**, are you now being perfected by the **flesh**?”*

It should be clear from comparing Galatians 4:23 and 4:29 with Galatians 3:3 that the two sons represent the two “paths” identified in Galatians 3:3 (as discussed in the Week4/Day5 study). In the space below, explain how the two sons illustrate these two paths.

7. Consider the following interpretation of the “two sons:”  
*Abraham’s and Sarah’s decision to use Hagar to make God’s promise “happen” analogizes Christians’ efforts to produce righteousness on their own (“by human effort,” in the power of the “flesh”). While it seems “reasonable” and “sensible” to make rules and lists to discipline and push ourselves towards righteousness, this is not God’s way. There are no “Twelve Step” programs to better spiritual living – despite the fact that this seems eminently “reasonable” and “sensible” to us. But God’s way is not our way. God’s way is by grace, through faith. It is the result of a “promise,” implemented by His Spirit. It is the way of Isaac, not Ishmael.*  
What do you think of this interpretation? Does it seem reasonable to you? Write your thoughts in the space below.

---

<sup>3</sup> The English word “flesh” that appears in these three verses derives from the same Greek root, “*sarx*,” which allows us to clearly see the connection between these verses. The NIV translates this word differently (“ordinary way” in 4:23 and 4:29; “human effort” in 3:3). While this has some advantages for understanding the meaning of “*sarx*,” the disadvantage is that it makes it more difficult to see the connection between these verses.

### Day Four:

1. Read Galatians 4:24,25.
2. Galatians 4:24 states that “*the women represent two covenants.*” What are these “two covenants?”
- 3A. What significant Biblical event happened at Mt. Sinai? For help on this, look up Exodus 19. Given that insight, what do you think Paul is implying by identifying one of the covenants with Mt. Sinai?
- 3B. What are the distinctive characteristics of the covenant that was associated with Mt. Sinai? (Hint: This is referring to the Old Testament Law, of which Paul has been arguing is inadequate to make Christians righteous throughout this letter.).
4. Review the Week7/Day3 study.
5. Consider the verses below:

Galatians 4:24,25: “*These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be **slaves**: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in **slavery** with her children.*”

What is it about the “Old Covenant” that causes the Holy Spirit through Paul to associate it with “slavery?”

- 6A. Identify a common Christian practice/ritual/discipline that in your opinion may qualify for what the Holy Spirit through Paul has in mind when He speaks of “law/flesh/human effort”. Elaborate your thinking in the space below.

- 6B. Explain in the space below how the Christian practice/ritual/discipline that you identified in (6A) – while it may seem eminently “reasonable” and “sensible” – can, in fact, lead to “slavery.”

**Day Five:**

1. Read Galatians 4:26,27.
2. What do you think these verses are talking about? What is the Holy Spirit through Paul intending to communicate here? (NOTE: This is a hard question. You will get another crack at answering it below.)

- 3A. Consider the following verses from the Old Testament:

*Jeremiah 31:31-34: “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, ‘when I will make a **NEW COVENANT** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,’ declares the LORD. ‘But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ declares the LORD, ‘for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.’”*

*Ezekiel 36:25-27: [God speaking] “...I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.”*

- 3B. What do you think these verses are referring to?

4A. Consider the following verses from the New Testament:

Mark 2:21,22: [Jesus speaking] *“No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins.”*

Hebrews 8:6: *“But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.”*

Galatians 2:20a: [Paul speaking] *“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”*

4B. Do you see any connection between these verses and the Old Testament verses in (3A) above? Elaborate in the space below.

5. Now consider the following possible interpretation of Galatians 4:27a:

5A. Galatians 4:27a: *“Be glad, **O barren woman, who bears no children**; break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labor pains...”*

Compare this with the following verses:

Romans 7:18a: [Paul speaking] *“For I know that **nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh.**”*

John 15:4,5: [Jesus speaking] *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As **the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.**”*

5B. Possible interpretation: *The picture of a “barren woman” in Galatians 4:27a represents the person who can produce no righteous deeds on their own, in the power of their own flesh.*

What do you think of this interpretation? Does it seem reasonable to you?

6. Now consider the following possible interpretation of Galatians 4:27b:
- 6A. Galatians 4:27b: “...because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband.”

Compare this with the following verses:

Romans 8:3,4: “For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, **in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.**”

1 Corinthians 15:10: “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet **not I, but the grace of God with me.**”

1 Corinthians 1:30,31: “But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who **became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, that, just as it is written, ‘Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.’**”

2 Corinthians 5:21: “God made him [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us, so that **in him [in Jesus] we might become the righteousness of God.**”

- 6B. Possible interpretation: The picture of “more children” in Galatians 4:27b represents the fact that the person who abides in Christ, who is empowered by God’s grace/Christ/the Holy Spirit is able to produce far more righteous deeds (“more children”) than those who try live righteously by “human effort.”  
What do you think of this interpretation? Does it seem reasonable to you?

7. In your own words, summarize in the space below what the Holy Spirit through Paul is intending to communicate in Galatians 4:27.

**Day Six:**

1. Read Galatians 4:28-31.

2A. Consider the following verse:

*Galatians 4:30: "But what does the Scripture say? 'Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son.'"*

2B. What do you think the Scripture means in the context of Galatians when it says "Get rid of the slave woman and her son"? Elaborate in the space below.

2C. Consider the following interpretation:

*When the Scripture says "Get rid of the slave woman and her son," it means that living by law and living by faith cannot coexist. The Christian who desires to have "Christ formed in him/her" cannot hope to accomplish this goal by adding law-living to a life of faith. In this sense, living by law is like adding regular gasoline to an engine that is designed to run on diesel fuel. It not only doesn't make the car go, it destroys the engine.*

*In the same way, not only is living by law unable to produce good works in the Christian's life, it "stops spiritual growth," and, as we shall see in later studies, can actually result in "spiritual death." The solution: "Get rid of the slave woman and her son!" In other words, Do away with attempting to live by law!*

What do you think of this interpretation? Does it seem reasonable to you? Elaborate in the space below.

3. What would it mean to "Do away with 'law-living'" in your life? If you became convinced that this is what Scripture was teaching, how would you live your life differently? Explain in the space below.

4. React to the following statement:

*Most Christians today live their lives, in essence, just like Old Testament Jews. Oh sure, they don't sacrifice animals or keep strict observance of the Sabbath, but they have effectively replaced one set of laws (Sabbath-keeping, 10 Commandments), with another set of laws (church-going, moral living, family values, etc.). There is little real difference between how they live their lives compared with how devout Jews lived their lives under the Old Covenant. This explains why many Christians show little evidence of genuine spiritual vitality.*

In what way do you think this statement is true? What do you think? Is this a fair statement? Elaborate in the space below.

5. Consider the analysis of living under the law versus living under the Spirit:

*Paul connects the birth of Isaac to the power of the Spirit and the birth of Ishmael to mere human action. However, when you look at it more closely, BOTH sons were conceived through human means (i.e. sexual intercourse between a man and a woman.) We might be tempted to think that living in the power of the Spirit is merely a life of meditation or some other "other worldly" activity. However, what we see from this story is that it was not the physical action or non-action that made the birth of Isaac spiritual and the birth of Ishmael fleshly . . . it was the motivation and faith or lack of faith behind that action. When Ishmael was born it was by their idea and plan, but when Isaac was born, it was merely through the gracious provision of God and the faithful response of Abraham and Isaac.*

*All that said, how do you apply this principle to your own lives? I believe that the key distinction between living under the law and living under the Spirit has to do with our source of power and mindset about the action. Under the law, we provide the will power and we do things so that God will accept us. Under the Spirit, He provides the power (that we participate in through faith in His promises) and He does things through us (having made us righteous through the gift of His grace.)*

What do you think of this interpretation? Does it seem reasonable to you?

6. What did you find most spiritually impacting in this week's study? Elaborate.

## WEEK NINE: Galatians 5:1-15

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 5:1-15.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

### Day Two:

1. Review Galatians 5:1-15.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

### **Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 5:1
2. In your own words, explain what the Holy Spirit through Paul means when He says, “*It was for freedom that Christ set us free.*” What is this “freedom” that the verse speaks of? Elaborate in the space below. (NOTE: Don’t worry if the meaning of this is unclear to you. We will continue to explore this subject in the questions below.)

3. Review the Week7/Day3 study.

4. Review the Week7/Day4 study.

5. Living by law “enslaves” us by keeping us from knowing God. This keeps us from enjoying the “benefits, rights, and privileges” of being a child of God. One of those benefits is that we have been redeemed from the power of sin so that we can be “holy and blameless.”

Ephesians 1:4-8: “*For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.*”

In light of what you have learned, elaborate in the space below what the Bible means when it says, “*It was for freedom that Christ set us free.*”

6. Consider the following interpretation of the statement “It was for freedom that Christ set us free”:  
*When a person becomes a Christian, God implants a new nature inside them. This new nature is destined to grow in the image of Christ (cf. Colossians 3:10, 2 Corinthians 3:18). Living by law stunts this process. In effect, it keeps the Christian “trapped/enslaved” in his/her old ways, and (temporarily) blocks them from becoming the person God intends them to be. Jesus Christ came to set people free from this bondage, so that we would be unfettered by the bonds of sin and released (free) to be the person God wants us to be.*  
Critically evaluate this interpretation in the space below.
  
7. How about in your life? Is your life characterized more by being enslaved to sin, or are you experiencing the freedom that 5:1 talks about? If so, how have you experienced that in your life? If not, what is preventing you from living in the freedom that Christ has bought for us?

#### **Day Four:**

1. Read Galatians 5:2-6.
2. Consider the following verse:  
Galatians 5:4: “*You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.*”  
“Severed from Christ,” “fallen from grace” – these are strong statements! What do you think they mean?

Biblical Note: While a complete study lies beyond the scope of this lesson, you should know that the Bible teaches that salvation is a “free gift,” which -- once given -- is eternally secure (see verses below).

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

John 10:28,29: [Jesus speaking] “*I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.*”

Romans 8:29,30: *“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.”*

- 4A. In light of the certainty of a Christian’s salvation after they have trusted in Christ, two possible interpretations exist here. One is that 5:4 is saying that those people who call themselves a Christian but are still trying to live the Christian life under their own power, never have really trusted in Christ to begin with. Another possible interpretation of 5:4 would be to say that this verse is talking about actual Christians who have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, but are kept from growing further in their relationship with God because they are trying to grow in the wrong way (under the Law). Based on the immediate context of Galatians 4-5 and the larger context of the entire book, which interpretation do you tend to agree with? What clues from the text help you to make that decision?

- 4B. Consider this expanded interpretation of Galatians 5:4 (applying it to true Christians):

*When the Holy Spirit through Paul says that Christians have been “severed from Christ” and “fallen from grace,” He is not suggesting that they can lose their salvation. Rather, He is saying that Christians can deprive themselves of the empowerment of Christ working in their life. That is, Christians can either live by “flesh”/“human effort” (cf. Galatians 3:3), or rely on Christ’s power to live His life through them. If Christians choose to rely on their own efforts, then they have effectively cut themselves off from the “power of Christ” in their lives.*

What do you think this of this interpretation? Does it seem reasonable to you?

What do you think it means to be “cut off from the power of Christ” in your life?

What would a Christian life cut off from Christ’s power look like?

5. Consider the following verses:

John 15:4,5: *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.”*

2 Corinthians 12:9,10: [Paul speaking] *“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*

How do these verses relate to the interpretation given in (4B) above?

6. Consider the following verse:

Galatians 5:5: *“But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.”*

In light of this verse, critically evaluate the following statement:

*Unlike every other religion in the world, Christianity does not teach that people should try to produce righteousness by working harder or being more diligent. Rather, Christianity is unique in that it teaches that righteousness is **RECEIVED** by faith – **NOT PRODUCED** by human effort.*

What do you think? Is this a reasonable characterization of Christianity?

7. Apply the principle in question 6 above to a situation involving whether or not someone should cheat on an exam, view internet pornography, or some other obvious sin issue. Pick one of those scenarios out and then explain below what it would look like to walk by faith in the power and righteousness of Christ, instead of depending only on yourself and your will power to “do the right thing.”
8. Isn’t this amazing truth! What kind of mind could have ever conceived of ideas like this? Do you think it is a fair statement to say that only God could have thought of something like this?

Romans 11:33-36: *“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.”*

**Day Five:**

1. Read Galatians 5:7-15.
2. Consider the following verses:

*Galatians 5:13; “For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh...”*

*Romans 6:15: “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?”*

Explain the logic that might cause a person to think that freedom from “the law” means that one need not be concerned about sin in their lives.

3. In your opinion, do you think Christianity’s emphasis on “faith in Christ” rather than “observing the law” (cf. Galatians 2:15,16) causes people to live more or less righteously?
4. One objection to the emphasis on faith and God’s grace is that it minimizes the importance of works. Do you think this is a fair objection? Elaborate in the space below.
5. What would you say to a Christian who was actively engaged in sin (say, sexual immorality)? Suppose you confronted them and told them that they needed to stop sleeping with their boyfriend/girlfriend because it was against God’s law. How would you respond if they told you that God was not concerned that they “observe the law?” Rather, God only required that they completely trust Him to forgive their sins, which they were doing.

## Day Six:

1. Read Galatians 5:13-15.
2. Now consider the following verses:

*James 2:14-16: "What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."*

**NOTE:** Today's study is intended to sort out the seeming conflict between "faith" and "works." On the one hand, we are clearly told in Galatians (and elsewhere!), that the path to righteousness is based on faith, not on doing a prescribed set of "works." On the other hand, there are numerous biblical commands that instruct us to do good deeds. Indeed, James 2:14-16 seems to backpedal on the teaching in Galatians by saying that faith – by itself -- is not sufficient: God expects us to follow up His work in our lives by performing good deeds.

While this topic is bigger than we can cover in one day's study, hopefully the discussion below will help us get a better understanding of what the Bible means when it says that we are "righteous-ized" by "faith in Christ," not by "observing the law" (cf. Galatians 2:15,16).

3. Given your current understanding, how do YOU reconcile the teaching that (i) Christians are to have "faith in Christ" and not depend on their own efforts to produce righteousness; with (ii) biblical commands to do good deeds, and the James passage which teaches that "faith by itself...is dead?"
4. Critically evaluate the following reconciliation:  
*When the Bible speaks of "faith in Christ," it means much more than intellectual assent. It means a genuine embrace of biblical truth. James teaches that to SAY that one cares about others but not DO anything about it really means that one doesn't care. In other words, one didn't REALLY mean what one said. Genuine faith means what it professes. If I say that I believe that the world will end tomorrow, but I stay up all night studying for an exam the next day, I reveal that I didn't really believe what I was saying! THAT kind of faith is "dead," since it is not genuine faith. Genuine faith will always be reflected in actions.*  
*James 2:18: "But someone will say, 'You have faith; I have deeds.' Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do."*



## WEEK TEN: Galatians 5:16-26

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 5:16-26.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

### Day Two:

1. Review Galatians 5:16-26.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

**Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 5:16.
2. Answer the following multiple choice questions below (BE HONEST):

The mature Christian's capacity to sin is \_\_\_\_\_ than the immature Christian :

- a) somewhat less                      b) more  
c) no different                         d) vastly less (he/she has no capacity to sin)

When it comes to temptation, the mature Christian is tempted...:

- a) less                                      b) more  
c) the same                                d) not at all (temptation has gone away)

In your life experience as a Christian, has temptation \_\_\_\_\_ as you have grown?

- a) gone down                            b) gone up  
c) stayed the same                      d) gone away

In your life experience as a Christian has sin \_\_\_\_\_ as you have grown?

- a) gone down                            b) gone up  
c) stayed the same                      d) gone away

As you honestly answered those questions above, are you encouraged or discouraged? Why?

3. Consider the following verses that describe the human experience . . . FOR CHRISTIANS:

1 John 1:8,10: *“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”*

Romans 3:10-12: *“As it is written: ‘There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.’”*

Romans 7:18a,25b: [Paul speaking] *“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. . . . So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.”*

4. In reality, whether we realize it or not, all of us have a daily struggle with sin. This struggle is real and it is daily for the person living on this side of the grave. However, as we answered the questions in number 2, and looked at the verses above, one of three things might be going through your head.

- a) You might be thinking that your struggle with sin is great (far greater than even your friends or anyone else on this planet knows) and you are feeling hopelessly immature in your Christian life, failing to meet God’s holy standard.
- b) You may be thinking that you don’t really sin that much, so the verses you read under point 3 really don’t seem to apply to you, or to Christians who are mature.
- c) A third option is that you understand that you understand that the normal Christian life is marked by an ongoing battle with sin, and so these verses provide a humbling reminder but not a crushing blow in your pursuit of Christian maturity.

Which of these three options best describes your feeling as you reflect on today’s lesson so far? Be honest. Which position do you think best fits in with the teaching of Galatians 5:16-26?

5. According to Galatians 5:16, how are Christians supposed to counteract the “desires of the flesh/sinful nature?”

6. Galatians 5:16 speaks of “walking by the Spirit (NASB)” or “living by the Spirit (NIV).” This phrase literally pictures the Christian life as a “walk in the Spirit’s power.” Why do you think that God chose the picture of walking (something we do everyday) to compare the kind of relationship He wants us to have with the Holy Spirit in our lives? What do you think it means (in plain English) to “walk by the Spirit”?

7. Just between you and God, on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is “No Clue” and 10 is “Very Well”, how well do you understand what the Bible means when it commands us to “walk by the Spirit?” Circle your answer below, again being careful to be COMPLETELY HONEST.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

8. If you are having trouble getting your hands around this concept of “walking by the Spirit,” don’t be discouraged. Think how hard it would be to explain what it is like to walk upright on two legs to somebody who had spent their whole life crawling on all fours.

We have spent our entire lives walking in the power of the flesh. Of course it is difficult for us to understand what it is like to walk in the power of the Spirit! Why don’t you ask God, right now, that He would teach you in your heart how to live His way, in His power, by His Spirit?

**Day Four:**

1. Read Galatians 5:17.
2. In your own words, explain what Galatians 5:17 is saying. Can you give an example of a “Galatians 5:17-type” experience from your own life? Elaborate in the space below.

3. What is your mental image of “the Christian life?” Is it one of internal spiritual harmony? Peaceful serenity? A cool, calm, confidence in the face of life’s challenges? How does that mental image square with Galatians 5:17?

4. Consider the following verses:

Matthew 11:28-30: [Jesus speaking] *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

John 14:27a: [Jesus speaking] *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”*

Philippians 4:6,7: *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

Romans 7:18-24: [Paul speaking] *I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do--this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?”*

Galatians 5:17: *“For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.”*

5. Well, what is it? What kind of experience should the Christian expect from being a follower of Jesus? One of internal peace and harmony? Or one of internal turmoil as the flesh and Spirit conflict with one another within the believer (cf. Galatians 5:17)? Try and reconcile these competing pictures of the Christian life in the space below.

6. Critically evaluate the following reconciliation of the verses above:  
*The answer to the question, What kind of life can the Christian expect?, is BOTH! Jesus brings peace and relief from the anxiety of life. We can take confidence in the fact that we have a God who loves us, and watches out for us, and guarantees us that all things work out for good (cf. Romans 8:28). On the other hand, the regenerated Christian is home to two natures: A new nature that desires to please God, and an old nature that rebels against God. Both natures are in active conflict with one another (cf. Galatians 5:17).*

*The reconciliation comes in seeing this latter conflict as the “growing pains” associated with “Christ being formed” in the Christian (cf. Galatians 4:19). Like the “growing pains” associated with childhood, these pains too will pass. One day we will be entirely freed from this body of death, and given a new glorified body in which our new natures will reign without internal conflict. In that day, we will know a peace that “surpasses all understanding.”*

*Romans 7:24,25a: [Paul speaking] “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? **Thanks be to God--through Jesus Christ our Lord!**”*  
What do you think? Does this reconciliation seem satisfactory to you? Elaborate in the space below.

### **Day Five:**

1. Consider the following verses:

*Galatians 5:16-18: “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_”*

2. Suppose the Holy Spirit had asked you to write the book of Galatians and that He dictated the verses above but told you to fill in the remainder of the sentence. How would you have finished Galatians 5:16-18? What would you have written to fill in the blank?
3. I would have probably written something like “you will not carry out the desire of the flesh” or “you will live the righteous life God intends for you.” Instead, the Holy Spirit through Paul writes “you are not under law.” Don’t you find that a little strange? Why do you think the Holy Spirit did it that way? What is the meaning of Galatians 5:18?

4. Consider the following verse:

1 Corinthians 15:56: “*The sting of death is sin, and **the power of sin is the law.***”

Are you a little surprised by this verse as well? What does Scripture mean when it says “the power of sin is the law?” Write any thoughts you have on this in the space below.

5. Consider the following verses:

Romans 7:4,5: “*So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, **the sinful passions aroused by the law** were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death.*”

Romans 7:9-11: “*Once I was alive apart from law; but **when the commandment came, sin sprang to life** and I died. I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.*”

6. The verses above make a powerful point about the relationship between law and sin. Accordingly, consider the following interpretation of this teaching:

*It seems perfectly reasonable to attempt to overcome sin in our life by trying harder. More discipline, more resistance to temptation, and more accountability are the “religiously correct” responses to sin. Yet the New Testament, in a dazzlingly radical teaching, says that these approaches are ineffective at combating sin in our lives. Even more remarkably, Scripture teaches that these approaches will make our sin problem worse -- not better -- because the attempt to impose control on ourselves only serves to inflame our sin natures.*

Critically evaluate this interpretation. Do you agree with this statement? Do you think it overstates the biblical position? Elaborate your thoughts in the space below.

7. Consider the following verses:

Romans 7:6b: “...we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.”

Galatians 5:18: “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.”

8. One possible interpretation of Galatians 5:18 is the following:  
*Sin is a huge problem in Christians’ lives. While we have the Spirit of God, a battle is taking place inside of us as the Spirit seeks to establish His reign over our sinful natures. The good news is that, if we allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit, we can break the slavery to sin in which living under law had us trapped.*  
What do you think of this interpretation? Do you think it accurately represents the meaning of Galatians 5:18? Elaborate in the space below.

9. Read Galatians 5:19-23.

10. Refer to Galatians 5:19-23 in completing the sentence below:

*Actions spring from a source. The source of sinful behaviors like immorality and strife is \_\_\_\_\_.* *The source of righteous characteristics like love, joy, and peace is \_\_\_\_\_.*

11. One interpretation of Galatians 5:16-23 is that those who want to live righteously should not focus their attention on behaviors, but on the source of those behaviors. If we want to live righteously, then we need to focus our attentions on following the Spirit.

What do you think of this interpretation? Elaborate your thoughts in the space below.

12. What does it mean in real life to focus on the source of our behaviors, instead of the behavior itself? Walk through what it would look like to deal with a sin in your own life by focusing on the source instead of the behavior?

## Day Six:

1. Read Galatians 5:24-26.
2. In 5:25, Paul says that we not only live by the Spirit, but that we also “keep in step with the Spirit (NIV)” or “walk by the Spirit (NASB)”. The word translated walk in 5:25 is a different word than the one translated “walk” in 5:16 in the original language. The NIV translation is preferable here, as it more accurately captures the meaning of this word. What do you think it means to “keep in step with the Spirit?”
3. We saw in yesterday’s study that the flesh and the Spirit were two sources out of which our behavior flowed. I believe that the Bible also teaches that these two sources also will always lead to two separate destinations. The Spirit will always lead to obedience to God in righteous living. The flesh will always lead to disobedience to God and judgment. Knowing where the Spirit is going, how does that help you to know how to “keep in step with the Spirit” in your life today?”
4. Consider the following verses:  
Ephesians 4:30: “*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*”  
1 Thessalonians 5:19: “*Do not quench the Spirit.*”

These two verses also help us to understand the concept of keeping in step with the Spirit. How do they help you to understand the idea of keeping in step with the Spirit better?



## WEEK ELEVEN: Galatians 6:1-18

### Day One:

1. Read Galatians 6:1-18.
2. Summarize these verses by making an outline consisting of numerous “sections”, attaching a brief description for each section (cf. Days One and Two of Week One). Write your own outline in the space below. Try not to refer to other outlines that may be presented in your Bible and elsewhere.

### Day Two:

1. Review Galatians 6:1-18.
2. Think of some questions that might lead to an important spiritual “discovery.” Write them in the space below, then pray that God would answer your question(s).

3. What observations do you have of this passage? To say it another way, what stands out to you most about what you read this week?

**Day Three:**

1. Read Galatians 6:1-10.
- 2A. In the space below, make a list of all the things that Galatians 6:1-10 says Christians should do.

- 2B. What is the common theme of the instructions in Galatians 6:1-10?

- 2C. Are you a little surprised by the statement, “do good to all men, and *especially to those who are of the household of the faith*” (Galatians 6:10)? Do you think this verse is teaching that service to others in the body of Christ is more important than other kinds of Christian service, such as evangelism? Elaborate your thoughts in the space below.

3. Read Galatians 6:11-18.

- 4A. Consider the following verses:

Galatians 6:14,15: “*But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.*”

4B. What do you think it means when it says, “*neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation*”?

4C. One possible interpretation of Galatians 6:15 is that the gospel is not about what happens on the outside of a person (circumcision, things a person does), but about what happens on the inside of a person (being a new creation).

What do you think? Is that a satisfactory interpretation of this verse? Elaborate your thoughts in the space below.

### **Days Four and Five:**

*NOTE: The remainder of our Galatians study is designed to encourage you to reflect on all that you have learned this semester.*

1. Read through the outline below and see if you can find a succinct “heading” for each of the indicated sections of Galatians. Try and write your headings so that by reading them, one after the other, you can “walk through” the main ideas in Galatians. (Feel free to rearrange sections, or come up with your own outline if you’d like.)

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 1:1,2. A formal introduction of Paul to the churches in Galatia.  
1:3-5. Greetings, with a reminder of what the Christian life is all about.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 1:6-9. Paul condemns those who have misled the Galatians with a different gospel.  
1:10-12. Paul emphasizes that his gospel is from God.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 1;13,14. Before his conversion, Paul was rapidly advancing within Judaism.
- 1:15-17. After his conversion, Paul went into seclusion in Arabia, and then moved to Syria.
- 1:18-24. Three years later, he made his first trip to Jerusalem – a brief visit with Peter and James to “get acquainted.”
- 2:1-5. Fourteen years after that, Paul traveled again to Jerusalem to confront the apostles over the issue of circumcision.
- 2:6-10. The Jerusalem leadership recognized the authenticity of Paul’s gospel and embraced him in fellowship.
- 2:11-13. Paul recounts an incident in which Peter felt pressured by Jewish legalists to disassociate himself from Gentiles.
- 2;14. Paul publicly rebuked Peter for violating the truth of the gospel by making Gentiles adopt Jewish customs.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 2:15,16. Man is not justified by works, but by faith in Christ.
- 2:17,18. If Christians sin, it’s not because they haven’t sufficiently followed the law, but because they are lawbreakers by nature.
- 2;19. Paradoxically, the purpose of the law is to cause one “to die to the law and live for God”
- 2:20a. Christians have died and been born again, so that Christ lives in them.
- 2:20b,21. The Christian life is lived by faith, through grace, otherwise Christ’s death means nothing.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 3:1. Paul is incredulous that the Galatians could have left the gospel of the crucified Christ.
- 3:2. Paul wants to know how the Galatians began their Christian lives.
- 3:3,4. Paul asks why the Galatians are trying to live their Christian lives different from how they first began.
- 3:5. Paul asks on what basis is God currently working in their lives? Because of their faith? Or because they follow the law?

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 3:6-9. Abraham is an example of obtaining righteousness by faith.
- 3:10. Living by law puts one under a curse.
- 3:11. One cannot be “righteous-ized” by following the law.
- 3:12. The law is different than faith.
- 3:13,14. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by enabling us to receive the Spirit through faith.
- 3:15-18. Since the law came after Abraham, it did not set aside the covenant of faith that God made with him and “his seed.”

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 3:19a. The law was given because of sin.  
3:19b,20. The law is inferior to “the promise” because it (i) came through a mediator and (ii) was a conditional covenant.  
3:21,22. The law cannot produce righteousness.  
3:23-25. The law was designed to lead us to Jesus.  
3:26-29. There is now no distinction between Jews and Gentiles, since all receive their righteousness through Jesus.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 4:1-3. Being under the law is like being a “child heir” in that one does not have access to all the benefits of being an heir.  
4:4-7. But now that Jesus has come, we can be “full heirs” of God.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 4:8-11. Paul cannot understand why the Galatians would want to go back to being slaves.”  
4:12-16. Paul appeals to the Galatians on the basis of his previous relationship with them.  
4:17-20. Paul warns the Galatians that those who preach another gospel are zealous, yes, but not for a good purpose.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 4:21-23. Abraham had two sons, “one by the slave woman, the other by the free woman.”  
4:24,25. The slave woman, Hagar represents the “Old Covenant,” which is equated with slavery.  
4:26,27. The free woman, Sarah, represents the “New Covenant” and freedom, which produces far more “children” than the ordinary way.  
4:28,29. Just like then, the children of “law” want to persecute the children of “promise.”  
4:30,31. But the Scripture says to “get rid of the son of the slave woman,” since they cannot coexist.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 5:1. We were redeemed from sin for the purpose of “freedom.”  
5:2-4. Those who attempt to live by law are “alienated from Christ” and “fallen from grace.”  
5:5,6. We wait to receive our righteousness by faith.  
5:7-12. Those who preach another gospel are not from God and deserve severe punishment.  
5:13-15. We are free, but not to sin.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 5:16. Live by the spirit.  
5:17. The flesh and the spirit are in conflict with one another.  
5:18. To be led by the spirit is not to be out from under the law.  
5:19-23. Living in the power of the flesh will produce a very different life than living in the power of the spirit.  
5:24-26. While we have received new natures, we need to live according to them.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 6:1,2. Keep watch spiritually over your brothers, helping them when they need it.  
6:3-5. Don't think yourself too good to help others, but be conscientious to carry the load the Lord has given you.  
6:6. Those who receive instruction in God's Word should be quick to share good things with their instructor.  
6:7,8. Put your efforts towards pleasing the Spirit, not pleasing one's sinful nature.  
6:9,10. Persevere in doing good, especially to other believers.

**HEADING:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 6:11. Paul closes his letter by writing with his own hand.  
6:12,13. Those who want you to follow the law are doing it for wrong motives, that they can boast in what they have done.  
6:14. The only thing Paul boasts in is the cross.  
6:15. It's not about the outside (circumcision), but about the inside (a new creation).  
6:16,17. Peace and mercy will flow to those who follow the true gospel; those who preach a different gospel should not contest with Paul.  
6:18. Paul expresses the hope that the Galatians will know grace in their spirits.

**Day Six:**

1. Reflect on all the great truths that you have learned in your study of Galatians this semester. What did you find most spiritually impacting in your study? Elaborate in the space below.