

Galatians Overview

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by

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The book of Galatians clarifies the truth of the Gospel message and its importance. The Gospel is the only truth that gives life. The central context is justification or salvation. This should always be in our minds as we relate everything Paul addresses to the Galatians. The Galatians had been influenced by false teachings from fellow “believers”, and Paul states unequivocally that justification is by grace through faith. Paul uses scripture to remind us that grace was established through the Abrahamic Covenant in the book of Genesis. Christ’s work on the cross was completely sufficient for our salvation, and nothing else is needed. Further, Paul refutes the teaching that the law, the Mosaic Covenant, has a role in justification. The law is put into its proper perspective, when Paul explains the role and purpose for the law. Paul, also, stresses that everyone, Jew and Gentile, has a place in the Kingdom of G-d through the gospel. Through Messiah Yeshua’s death, burial and resurrection, we are redeemed, made a new creation, and thus able to enter the Kingdom of G-d.

What is the theme: This epistle is about salvation issues. Grace through faith, work of the law, justification, freedom in Christ, circumcision are all addressed.

Who wrote it: The Apostle Paul penned the epistle while in prison for the Gospel.

To whom was it written: The epistle was written to all the congregations in the region of Galatia.

When was it written: The exact date of penmanship is uncertain. It was sometime between 48-60 AD.

Why was it written: Paul’s intent was to counter a threat to the churches, to defend his apostleship, to repeat and defend the one and only true Gospel and to remind the readers of their obligation to live as faithful believers.

Chapter 1

Part 1: Galatians 1:1-12

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 1:1-12](#)

Discussion Questions

Verse 1

Paul, an apostle, not from man nor by means of man but rather by means of Messiah Yeshua, and G-d the Father, the One Who raised Him from the dead.

The most important word in all of scripture is the Gospel. Where is the message of the Gospel in Galatians 1:1-5?

Paul was being attacked for the Gospel message. He wrote this epistle while in prison for the Gospel. Looking back on your life, have you been “in prison for the Gospel”?

While we do not have to be bilingual, it is extremely helpful to understand the original language of the Gospel. Paul is stating that he is an apostle, or apostello, meaning “sent from”. The Greek word, apo, meaning “from”, tells us clearly Paul’s role. What is this role and why is it important regarding the Gospel message?

Remember, Paul was on his way to Damascus for the purpose of destroying the Gospel. Was Paul’s calling unique?

Paul’s preaching of the Gospel in Galatia was primarily to Gentiles. This follows a biblical order of evangelizing first to the Jew and then to the Gentile. Reflect on which scriptures reveal this pattern.

Paul is stating the source of his calling. He tells us that it was Yeshua, the One Who was raised from the dead, which is essential to our understanding of the Gospel. This, in one word, is resurrection. What does resurrection mean from a biblical perspective?

Notice how Paul addresses not a single congregation, but all of them in the area of Galatia. We see the word used is congregation or church. The word being translated is ecclesia, which consists of two words. The first word is “out”, and the second is “to be called”. Paul is addressing those redeemed who have been called out to a promised land, the kingdom. What is the basis on which all of this happens?

Consider the example of Abraham’s calling. Discuss and compare the calling of Abraham, and relate this to our calling.

Verses 3

Grace to you and peace from G-d our Father and the L-rd Messiah Yeshua.

Verse 4

The One Who gave Himself on behalf of our sin in order to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of G-d and our Father.

Verse 5

To Whom the glory is forever and ever amen.

Order is important in understanding scripture. In verse one, we see the order is Yeshua the Messiah and G-d the Father. In verse three, we see grace and peace from G-d our Father and the L-rd Messiah Yeshua. What can we learn from this? What is the purpose of grace?

Note this important biblical principle: there can be no redemption without death. What must first be dealt with before redemption? In today's body of believers, why is there a reluctance to discuss this subject? What effects does this have on the ecclesia? Reflect on the word ecclesia and the connection between redemption and resurrection. How does this all work together? What is the purpose of our salvation?

Why are the words in verse five something we should not simply read past? What is Paul telling us about G-d and our calling?

Verses 6

I am amazed that so quickly you are turning away from the One Who called you by the grace of Messiah to another gospel.

Verse 7

Which there is not another, except certain ones are troubling you, wanting to turn you from the Gospel of Messiah.

Verse 8

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel different from what we preached to you, let him be accursed.

Verse 9

As we have said before and now again I say, if a certain one should preach to you a gospel different from what you received, let him be accursed.

Verses one through five were an introduction, but now Paul turns to his purpose for writing this epistle, which is to defend his Gospel message. Paul is not saying the people of Galatia are now turning to a new religion, but they are turning to another, different gospel. Why is this a problem? Do we see this problem today?

Paul answers the question about another gospel with an emphatic NO. How many times can you find "no" reflected in these passages? Any change to the Gospel results in destruction. What are the ramifications of this?

Verse 10

For now am I persuading man or G-d or am I seeking to please man, if yet I am pleasing man, I would not be a servant of Messiah.

Verse 11

For I certify to you brethren the Gospel that was preached by me that it is not according to man.

Verse 12

For nor did I receive it from man nor was it taught, but rather by means of revelation of Messiah Yeshua.

Paul defends himself and states that his calling and purposes are for G-d's purposes. Paul defines what it means to be a servant. In your own life, are you taking steps in this direction? Where is your focus? Do we seek to please men or G-d?

Throughout verses one through twelve, Paul states the origin of everything is from the heavens by means of revelation of Messiah Yeshua. What does the power of the Gospel do?

Part 2: Galatians 1:13-24

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 1:13-24](#)

Discussion Questions

One thing the Gospel should remind us of is power, a power that produces change. If people see a change in us, they will desire that change in their lives as well. Change can be reflected by testimony and also better by deeds. Paul, in this section of scripture, speaks about the effect the Gospel had in his life. Paul now gives his testimony, giving all glory to G-d from Whom was the source of his call.

Verse 13

For you have heard of my previous lifestyle in Judaism, that exceedingly I persecuted the congregation of G-d and was destroying it.

Verse 14

And I progressed in Judaism beyond my contemporaries in my generation, being extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Paul begins with his previous lifestyle in traditional Judaism, telling how he had persecuted the ones who were “called out” (ecclesia), with his intent to destroy them. Recall the story of Paul prior to his revelation on the Damascus Road in Acts 7:58 and Acts 9. Reflect on how G-d can use anything for His will.

There are many differences between what Paul calls Judaism and the congregation of G-d. One aspect is referred to as “the traditions of the fathers” or “oral torah”. What is the oral torah? Discuss Yeshua’s response to the teachings of the oral torah.

Paul also speaks of his progression in Judaism and how he rose to a very high level. This progression was viewed favorably in the form of respect, honor and pride. What can we learn from the examples set by Moses and Yeshua? Reflect on which example is reflected in your life and in the church today.

Verse 15

But when it pleased G-d, the One Who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called by means of His grace

Verse 16

to reveal His Son in me, in order that I should preach Him among the nations immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood.

Verse 15 can be summarized in one word, change. This change is connected to the word grace, which Paul uses often. Being chosen before we are born occurs in other places in scripture. Samson, in the book of Judges, Jeremiah 1:5 and Isaiah 49:1 to name a few, were chosen in the womb. Paul is stressing how he received his call by revelation, not from man. Paul was chosen, but did he have a choice whether to respond in a G-dly way? Why is it essential that we respond (submit) to G-d’s plan?

Paul tells us the purpose of his calling was to reveal “His Son in me” (Gospel) so that Paul should preach “Him” (Gospel) to all nations. The connection between Yeshua and the Gospel shows us the purpose of Yeshua’s first coming. When He comes again, it will be for the outcome of the Gospel or “The Kingdom”. In v.16, Paul makes it clear that he sought no man’s opinion on how to respond to his calling. He immediately went to Arabia. Why?

Verse 17

Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to the ones before me (apostles), but I went out to Arabia and again turned to Damascus.

Verse 18

After 3 years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Kefa and remained with him 15 days.

Verse 19

But other of the apostles I did not see, except Yaacov, the brother of our L-rd.

Verse 20

And that which I write to you, behold, before G-d for I do not lie.

Paul’s message is that the Gospel is all we need. Others are saying the Gospel is good, but we must also keep the law in order to be saved. Paul is saying throughout this epistle, that this is not only false, but it results in a message of destruction, not salvation. What is the correct view of the Torah (law)?

After Arabia, Paul went to Damascus. Recall Paul’s training as a Rabbi. He was trained by Gamliel, the top Rabbi at the time. Consider how useful Paul’s prior training would be for the purposes of G-d.

Why did Paul go next to Damascus? What is one purpose of the Gospel that related both to Paul and especially to those living in Damascus?

After 3 years, Paul went to Jerusalem. Numbers have a meaning in scripture. What does the number 3 tell us to look for in scripture?

Paul only went to Jerusalem for 15 days to visit Peter (Kefa) and James (Yaacov), the half brother of Yeshua. Paul spent 3 years between Arabia and Damascus, then 15 days in Jerusalem. Paul tells us emphatically, by the word “behold”, that everything he is writing about his calling, message and Gospel is completely true. What do you think Paul discussed with Peter and James? What was not Paul’s purpose for going there?

Verse 21

After I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia

Verse 22

But I was unknown by the face to the congregations of Judah, the ones in Messiah.

Verse 23

But only they were hearing that the one who persecuted us in the past now preaches the faith which in the past he was destroying.

Verse 24

And they were giving glory to G-d in me.

We see Paul going to two regions. Briefly recall the reasons for going to Damascus. Paul states that among the congregation of the redeemed he, Paul, was unknown. Notice Paul doesn't say he was unknown regarding traditional Judaism. Why? What did the people in the congregation of the redeemed (church) hear about Paul?

In v. 23, Paul is referring to the Gospel, but he uses a different word, "faith". The word faith is related to truth. What is the source of truth? What is Paul telling us?

Remember we started in this section with Paul's testimony. Consider why Paul's conversion, while extreme, should also be evident in our response to the Gospel. Reflect on your own individual response to the Gospel. Is there evidence of a change?

Notice that the people who saw the change in Paul were the ones who were persecuted by him, and now they gave glory to G-d for the change. Read Matthew 5:16 "Sermon on the Mount". Why is Yeshua telling us our response should be to give glory to the Father?

Not only should we inwardly see a change, but others should see the change in our lives also. Why is it important that others see a change in us?

Chapter 2

Part 1: Galatians 2:1-10

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 2:1-10](#)

Discussion Questions

Over and over we saw in Chapter 1 how Paul has emphasized the gospel and grace. Grace is the foundation of the gospel. Paul's apostleship is under attack. If Paul's apostleship is discredited, then so is his gospel message. Paul is also following the biblical pattern of first to Israel then to the nations.

Verse 1

After 14 years, again I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also.

Verse 2

But I went up according to revelation and set before them the Gospel which I proclaim among the Gentiles (nations), but privately to the ones that seem (to be of reputation) that not in vain I am running or was running.

Paul travels to Jerusalem after 14 years with two companions. What distinction can we make between Barnabas and Titus?

Paul returned to Jerusalem in response to a revelation. We have seen this revelation discussed previously. What is the revelation that Paul received?

In Chapter 1, Paul and his message were under attack. Paul travels to Jerusalem which was where the leadership presided. Paul set before the leadership, privately, the Gospel that he was preaching to the Gentiles. What is meant by the phrase "set before"? Was Paul uncertain and seeking clarity from the leadership that his Gospel was correct?

Paul's Gospel was under attack. Who were those referred to as "the ones that seem (to be of reputation)"? Why is it significant that Paul met with the leadership privately? What was Paul seeking to accomplish by going to the leadership in Jerusalem?

Verse 3

But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek was made compelled to be circumcised

Verse 4

But on account of the ones who secretly, false brethren, having entered to spy out our liberty which we have in Messiah Yeshua in order that we should be enslaved.

In verse 3, we learn about Titus. He was a Greek (Gentile) and was not compelled to be circumcised. Circumcision is an important subject throughout the book of Galatians. Chapter 15 in the book of Acts relates directly to the conflict between Paul's Gospel message and the message of those referred to in Gal 2:4. They are those who are called Judaizers. Consider the first verse in Acts 15, and notice the context for that chapter and the central theme of

Paul's epistle to the Galatians. For further study, review the video for Acts 15 in order to more fully understand why circumcision is not required for justification.

Paul now describes the outcome to the Galatians if they follow the false teachings of the Judaizers. Discuss the methods they used to influence the Galatians and apply those methods to today. Paul is not saying the law is to be thrown out. We know from scripture that the law is good and holy. Paul, in Romans 7:14, tells us the law is not given to those in bondage but to the spiritual man. What is this liberty or freedom we have in Messiah, and are we set free from the law?

Reflect on the order of grace and law in the first Passover and that same pattern with Yeshua on that tree. The result in both cases is liberty; liberty to do something, not liberty from something. What does our liberty in Yeshua allow us to do, and why were we unable to have this liberty before Yeshua's work on that tree? Discuss what liberty means to a mature and to an immature believer?

Consider Romans 8:4, and discuss the purpose of the law and why we must become a new creation.

The Gospel message is grace and grace alone. Grace gives us salvation and teaches us to deny ungodliness. What is the problem with adding something to the Gospel message, such as the Judaizers adding circumcision?

Verse 5

Not for an hour did we submit, in order that the truth of the Gospel should continue through us.

Verse 6

But from the ones who seemed to be "what" (of reputation) those that were of a certain type nothing to me did they bring. The face of man G-d does not receive. For these ones of seeming (reputation) did not add anything to me.

Paul answers any question as to whether his Gospel message is correct. The reason is that Paul had no intention of compromising the truth of the Gospel. What is the truth in this passage?

Paul also addresses those of reputation who were opposing the truth. We see a biblical principle: that G-d is not a respecter of people. What does it mean that G-d is not a respecter of people?

Verse 7

But on the contrary, seeing that was entrusted (to me) the Gospel of the uncircumcised just as (to) Peter (the Gospel) of the circumcised.

Verse 8

For the One Who worked in Peter for the apostleship of the circumcised He worked also in me for the Gentiles.

Verse 9

And knowing the grace that was given to me, Yaacov (James), Kefa (Peter), and John, the ones who seemingly to be pillars, gave to me and to Barnabas the right hand of fellowship in order that we to the Gentiles but they to the circumcision.

Paul links himself to Peter, James, John and Barnabas regarding the Gospel and grace. What is meant by the phrase circumcised and uncircumcised?

Verse 10

Only the poor that we should remember, which also I desired this same thing to do with urgency.

This verse tells us that we should remember the poor. Who are the poor to whom Paul is referring? Why are the poor mentioned with regard to grace?

Part 2: Galatians 2:11-21

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 2:11-21](#)

Discussion Questions

Previously in Chapter 2, we saw how some false teachers (Judaizers) were distorting Paul's Gospel message. The issue revolved around whether a gentile needed to be circumcised to be saved. Paul unequivocally stated that Yeshua's death, burial and resurrection were complete and sufficient for our salvation. Further, Paul stated that anything added to or taken away from the Gospel would result in destruction. Paul's Gospel message was affirmed at The Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15.

Verse 11

But when Kefa (Peter) came to Antioch, to the face I withstood him, because he was guilty.

Verse 12

For before certain ones from Yaacov (James) came with the Gentiles, he (Peter) was eating, but when they came he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those from the circumcision.

Verse 13

Also, the remaining Jews played the hypocrite with him, so that also Barnabas was carried away and their hypocrisy.

Peter, who is often thought of as "the leader" of the apostles, is being rebuked publicly by Paul for being guilty of acting in a shameful manner. We learn in verse 12 that Peter is eating with "certain ones from James". Who were these ones from James, and how should they be viewed?

For Paul to withstand Peter to his face is a strong statement. From a human viewpoint, this would be very humiliating and degrading. No one likes to have their mistakes pointed out. From a G-dly perspective, how should this be handled? Recall the purpose of the law and apply it to this situation. What should Peter's and our response be to error?

We are told that previously Peter and also Paul and Barnabas were eating with Gentiles. But upon the arrival of those "from James or the circumcision", Peter only ate with that group. Why was it that who one ate with was so important to Paul? What would cause Paul to react so strongly?

Who one eats with is the issue at hand. However, nowhere in scripture are Jews prohibited from eating with anyone. The source of the concern for those of the circumcision (Jewish believers) was a result of their view of ritual purity. Where would these people of the circumcision get these beliefs and refuse to eat with Gentiles? In order to get a fuller picture of this issue of ritual purity, view the LoveIsrael.org videos on Mark 7, and discuss the situation in Galatians and the misconceptions present today. Were these beliefs universal among the Jews?

It is important that we apply proper context to the word "Jew". In scripture, Jew can refer to several people groups. With regard to verse 12, what different groups can we see?

A word often used throughout scripture is the word “fear”. Peter feared those Jews of the circumcision group. How is that word used here, and where is “fear” used other places in scripture? For example, a common phrase used is “We should fear and love G-d”.

We see the result of following the teachings of false teachers. Peter was giving a false impression by acting one way and then acting differently when these powerful people (Judaizers) were present. What is the effect of Peter’s actions on not only himself, but others over whom he had influence? How can we apply this to the church today?

Verse 14

But, when I saw that they did not walk straightly to the truth of the Gospel, I said to Kefa before all, you are a Jew, but like the Gentiles and not as “Jews” live, how do you compel the Gentiles to live as “Jews”?

Verse 15

We, being of the very essence Jews and not from the sinful Gentiles.

Paul’s response to the behavior of Peter and the effect it had on the other Jews was to publicly rebuke Peter. Sometimes, we see Paul deal with matters privately, as in Gal. 1:19-20 and in Acts 15. When is it proper to respond publicly, and when should matters be handled privately?

In these verses, Paul uses the word “Jew” several times. As previously discussed, it is essential that we have a proper understanding of Paul’s use of the word “Jew”. What is Paul telling Peter in these verses? What is the difference between a Jew and a Gentile? Why does Paul refer to Gentiles as sinful?

Verse 16

Knowing that not justified is a man from works of the law rather through faith of Messiah Yeshua and we in Messiah Yeshua have believed in order that we should be justified out of the faith of Messiah and not from works of the law, because from works of the law none will be justified all (any) flesh.

What is the concept of “kal v chomer” (light and heavy), and how does Paul apply it in this verse?

Paul states the law does not save. He goes on to tell us the Gospel message, which is the only message by which we are declared righteous. Reflect on being declared righteous. What does that mean regarding this verse? We are certainly justified based on our faith in Yeshua. This verse also states we are justified based on the faith of Yeshua. Discuss the faith of Yeshua and how essential it is.

Verse 17

But if seeking to be justified by Messiah we are found also (to be) the same sinners (does this mean) that Messiah is a minister of sin? G-d forbid!

Verse 18

For if that which I destroyed (those things) again I should build, I make myself a transgressor.

Verse 19

For I through the law have died to the law in order that I should live for G-d.

Paul now presents several rhetorical questions. If we sin, is our salvation voided? If we sin, and are “in Yeshua”, then is Yeshua joined with us in sin? Paul answers in a strong way, “G-d forbid!” Notice how often Paul refers to himself as the source of sin. Reflect on why it is incorrect to ever view Yeshua as a source of sin?

Verse 20

Messiah has been crucified that I should no longer live, but Messiah should live in me. But being now alive in the flesh in faith that the beloved Son of G-d should live in me, Who also gave Himself in my behalf.

Paul again turns to the Gospel message. Yeshua was crucified and so are all who call on His name. The outcome of the law is death. We shared in that death, but the “good news” is when Yeshua rose so did we. Because we are still in this body, even though Yeshua lives in us, we still have choices. What are those choices, and what will be reflected when we choose wisely?

Verse 21

That I should not set aside the grace of G-d. For if through the law one should be justified, the result is Messiah died in vain.

Paul repeatedly returns to grace. To set aside grace means that Yeshua’s work on the cross was for nothing. When we apply our sinful flesh to the law, the outcome is always sin. This is opposite of G-d’s will. Eternal life is the outcome if we apply the Holy Spirit and walk in the grace of G-d. When does eternal life start, and is it reflected in your life? Is how you conduct your life based on serving G-d or on serving your own wants and needs?

Chapter 3

Part 1: Galatians 3:1-14

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 3:1-14](#)

Discussion Questions

This chapter is an extensive study of the law and its relationship to grace. Paul presents this relationship using biblical foundations. Quoting from the Tanach (Old Testament), Paul stresses the central context of his epistle to the Galatians, which is justification. Paul is proving that no one will be made acceptable to G-d by works of the law, but only by faith in Messiah Yeshua. However, Paul is not saying the law has no relevance in our lives.

Verse 1

O foolish Galatians, who deluded you? Before the eyes Messiah Yeshua (for it was) written beforehand (that He would be) crucified.

Paul refers to the Galatians as foolish. What is the biblical meaning of the word “foolish”? Discuss where you see foolishness in the church today and the problems that can result. “Written beforehand” refers to the Old Testament. Paul is telling us that biblical truth is always rooted in Scripture. Discuss how Scripture has been revealed to us regarding Yeshua’s crucifixion and what has been revealed through the prophets.

Verse 2

This only I want to learn from you by works of the law you received the Spirit or from hearing of faith?

Verse 3

Are you so foolish, having begun in the Spirit now by the flesh you will be perfected?

Verse 4

So much you have suffered in vain if it is really in vain.

Paul asks a question of each of us. How are we justified? He proceeds to answer the question in a negative manner if we choose foolishly. Reflect on how the Galatians received the Gospel and compare that with Paul’s warning and hope for the Galatians and for each of us.

Verse 5

He, therefore, Who supplies to you the Spirit and works miracles in you, is it by works of the law or from the hearing of faith?

We see that Paul again tells us the answer to how we are justified is by grace. Paul knew from his prior experience with the Galatians that they had received G-d’s grace because of their receiving of the Spirit. Why is the Spirit essential as evidence of one coming to faith?

Verse 6

Just as Abraham believed in G-d and it was credited to him for righteousness.

Verse 7

Knowing therefore that the ones of faith, these are the sons of Abraham.

Verse 8

And seeing beforehand the Scripture that from faith G-d justifies the nations, glad tidings were said to Abraham that would be blessed in you all the nations.

Verse 9

So that the ones from faith should be blessed with the faith of Abraham.

These verses are used by Paul to support that justification is by grace alone. Some Galatians were using the Torah (the Law) as being necessary for justification in addition to Yeshua. Paul is telling them they have no true understanding of the Torah because it actually says the opposite of what the Judaizers had told the Galatians. The verses point back to Abraham. Why did Paul speak about Abraham to refute those claiming the law had any role in justification?

Verse 10

For as many (who) are from the works of the law are under a curse, for it has been written that cursed is everyone who does not remain in all the things having been written in the book of the law, doing them.

Verse 11

And that in the law no one is justified before G-d is evident, for the righteous out of faith will live.

Verse 12

But the law is not from faith, but the one who does them (the commandments) shall live in them.

Paul tells us what the consequences are for anyone who looks to the law for justification. They are under a curse. What is the outcome of this curse? There is not one verse of Scripture that teaches that the Law is an instrument of salvation. However, Scripture manifests our need for a savior. Discuss our need for a savior.

Verse 12 tells us that faith comes before the law. We see several examples of this in Scripture. Discuss this pattern as reflected in the stories of Jacob's family and G-d's plan through Joseph. Reflect on the pattern of that first Pass-over (redemption) and how the children of Israel left Egypt and how and why G-d gave them the law. What is Paul saying regarding the proper application of the law?

Verse 13

Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the law becoming in our behalf accursed for it has been written, cursed is everyone who is hung on the tree.

Verse 14

In order that on the nations should be the blessing of Abraham in Messiah Yeshua, in order that the promise of the Spirit we might receive by faith.

Again and again, Paul shows us the sufficiency of Yeshua's crucifixion with regard to the curse of the law. Previously, only substitutional sacrifices were available on the altar at the temple. Why was Yeshua not sacrificed on the temple altar but on a tree?

Paul now tells us why Yeshua was crucified. Notice the Gospel message and that the first fruit of the Gospel message is the Spirit. We see the word "promise" is used. What distinction can we attach to this word? Was this promise to all nations a new concept?

Part 2: Galatians 3:15-29

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 3:15-29](#)

Discussion Questions

Paul now begins to compare and contrast grace and law. While Paul again states unequivocally that justification is by faith and faith alone, he points out some purposes of the law (Mosaic Covenant).

Verse 15

Brothers, according to man I speak, similar to a man, having certified a covenant (testament/will) no one can set it aside or add something (to it).

Verse 16

And to Abraham were said the promises and to his seed. It does not say and to the seeds, which is many, but as to one and to your seed, which is Messiah.

Paul addresses the Galatians as brothers, which implies that Paul had hope that they (the Galatians) had not fallen away. Paul uses an analogy that would have been readily understood. In the cultural context, what would a certified covenant and its inability to be set aside or changed speak to? How can we apply this to Paul's spiritual message regarding grace? How does a promise differ from a covenant? Reflect on the fact that in verse 16 the promises were only made to Abraham and his seed. How are we included in the promises made to Abraham, and what do we receive?

Verse 17

And this I say a covenant which has been certified beforehand by G-d, one having come 430 years later (which is) the Law is not able to annul or cancel out the promise.

As he has previously, Paul speaks to an issue of timing with regard to covenants. When we consider the order in which covenants have been given, for example: the exodus of the Children of Israel and the civil law in verse 15. What is the point Paul is making between the Abrahamic promise and the Law of Moses?

Verse 18

For if from the Law is the inheritance it would no longer be from a promise, but to Abraham through a promise G-d was gracious.

Paul uses a hypothetical example that if our inheritance came from the law, it would not be from a promise. We see here the connection between promise and grace. Grace was given to Abraham. In order to receive the grace given to Abraham, we must be part of the family of G-d. Consider the concepts of adoption and inheritance and how they apply to each of us in order to be part of the family of G-d.

Verse 19

Therefore what (is) the Law? On account of transgressions it was added until the Seed should come to whom the promise was arranged by means of angels in the hand of a Mediator.

Verse 20

A mediator is not one but G-d is one.

We see by the word “therefore” that Paul is putting the law in its proper place. What is the purpose of the law? Is Paul saying the law is temporary or when does it go into force? If verse 19 is referring to the concept of under the authority of the law, how would this influence your thoughts?

The key word that must be understood is “mediator” in these passages. The main point Paul has been making is justification and that the law never provided justification. Contrast a human mediator and our heavenly Mediator, and apply it to this passage.

Verse 21

Therefore is the Law against the promises of G-d? G-d forbid. For if a law could be given which was able to give life from the Law would be righteousness.

Verse 22

But the scripture closed together all under sin in order that the promise be given by faith of Messiah Yeshua to those who believe.

In typical rabbinic fashion, Paul asks an obvious question: ‘Are there two options for salvation, the promise or the law?’ He answers his own question using strong words. Why is there only one option for salvation, and what is the purpose of the law for a believer?

The word “under” is used with regard to sin. What does this word “under” teach us about sin and the outcome of sin? What is the source of sin, or why are we Adam’s children?

Verse 23

But before faith came under the Law we were kept, having been closed together until faith should be revealed.

Prior to Yeshua, “the yet to come trusting faithfulness”, we were closed up. We were closed up not under the law but under the authority of the law. The idea of closed up speaks to bondage or imprisonment. Why is it essential to understand how we were freed, and where do we find this?

Verse 24

With the result the Law should become our tutor/schoolmaster for Messiah (to bring us to Messiah).

Verse 25

In order that by faith we should be made righteous (or justified).

Using another everyday analogy, Paul tells us how the law worked. He tells us that prior to Yeshua, we were under a tutor. Why was it necessary that we were under a tutor for a time?

When we come to faith and are justified, we are no longer under the authority of the tutor. The tutor is Torah or the law, and it does several things. What are some of these things?

If we are no longer under the authority or judgement of the law, something changed. What is this change?

Verse 26

For you are all sons of G-d through faith in Messiah Yeshua.

Verse 27

For as many which have been baptized in Messiah have put on Messiah.

We are all sons of G-d. We were adopted and given an inheritance through faith in Yeshua. Paul is stating the Gospel message. Two words are used: “baptized and clothed (have put on)”. What do these words tell us with regard to the Gospel message?

Verse 28

For there is no Jew or Greek, no slave nor free, no male nor female for you all are one in Messiah Yeshua.

Verse 29

And if you are of Messiah then you are Abraham’s seed, heirs, according to the promise.

Paul speaks of oneness for all believers. Paul is not speaking in a literal sense but is talking about access to the Gospel message. While we all are one in Messiah, reflect on areas where “the church” has not reflected the oneness of which Paul is speaking.

This last verse pulls together the complete presentation made by Paul to show us how it all works together. Review the logical flow of information presented by Paul on how we can share in the seed of Abraham.

Chapter 4

Part 1: Galatians 4:1-11

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 4:1-11](#)

Discussion Questions

In chapter 3, Paul showed us that the purpose of the law (Torah) for a nonbeliever was to show us our sin and our need for a savior. If left to ourselves, we have no hope. But by grace, we can find salvation in the Gospel. Paul stated that as children of G-d, we will inherit the promise (covenant) but at a time in the future. By faith, we become heirs in the promises of G-d.

Verse 1

“But I say all the while the heir is a child, he is no better (than) a slave (although) he being lord of all.”

Verse 2

“But he is under guardians and stewards until (the time) that has been predetermined by the father.”

In verses 1 and 2, we see an example of an heir demonstrated in the culture at that time. Discuss the cultural setting, and define an heir. Why is this heir under the authority of another? What does an heir inherit, and when does an heir receive it?

Verse 3

“Thus also we, when we were children, we were under the elements of the world, we were in bondage.”

Verse 4

“But when came the fullness of time, G-d sent forth (out of) His Son, being from a woman and being under the law.”

Paul uses the analogy of a cultural example the Galatians would have understood and applies this example to each of us from a spiritual perspective. The phrases “elements of the world” and “in bondage” speak to the same example. What is this example, and what does it stop us from doing?

When does “the fullness of time” happen? Paul answers this by telling us it happens in G-d’s time. G-d did this by “sending out” His Son. Notice the word “out”. Recall in Galatians 1:2, we saw the word “ecclesia” which meant “to be called out of”. What does this word “out” teach us in order to better understand this passage?

We are told two things about the Son. Why are we told the Son is “from a woman”? Apply the phrase “under the law” to each of us, and contrast this phrase as it applies to Yeshua.

Verse 5

“In order that the ones under the law should be redeemed in order that the adoption they should receive from.”

Verse 6

“And because you are sons G-d sent forth (out of) the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out Abba, the Father.”

Verse 7

“So that no longer are you a servant but a son, and if a son also an heir by means of G-d.”

Paul tells us why G-d put all this into motion: to redeem us. In these verses, Paul also points to the source of redemption. Again, we see the Gospel message of receiving a free gift given to us by grace, and grace alone. What was it about the law from which we needed to be redeemed? Why is it important that redemption speaks to possibility or being conditional?

Reflect on the connection between “adoption” and the word “from”. It is essential that we see this connection. What is our role, and what is G-d’s role? G-d sent His Son, our Redeemer, not our redemption. What is the difference?

Once we become a son by adoption, and we are redeemed from the authority of the law, something happens. G-d sends the Holy Spirit. Again, we see the concept “out of” which was previously discussed in verse 4. Also, notice where the Spirit is sent. What does “the Spirit entering into our hearts” teach us?

Paul ends verse 6 using two words, “Abba” and “Father”. This would seem to be repetitive, but these words speak to two different relational characteristics. What are these characteristics, and how would we apply them to the L-rd?

Verse 7 summarizes the outcome. We should be changed or be a new creation. Prior to our coming to trust in Yeshua, we were slaves with no future. Now G-d sees us as a son and an heir who has a place in the Kingdom of G-d and all His blessings. Reflect on whether you are demonstrating the character of a G-dly son and heir in your life.

Verse 8

“But in a previous time you did not know G-d you were enslaved to the essence of that which is not G-d’s.”

Verse 9

“But now knowing G-d; but rather being known by G-d how is it that you turn again to the weak things and the poor elements that you want again to be enslaved?”

Paul now applies the prior verses to remind the Galatians what had previously been revealed to them. We see some words such as: enslaved, poor elements and weak things. Idolatry, which had been practiced by the Galatians, is also mentioned. Paul is stating there are only two options. What are these options?

It is essential that we know G-d, but it is equally essential that G-d must know us. Paul spoke to this relational aspect in prior verses. Redemption is revealed in these verses. We were purchased (a legal concept) by G-d, through the blood of His Son. Consider the value of our faith if G-d does not know each of us.

G-d does become “legally obligated” to acknowledge us in the same way a father is “legally obligated” to his son, his heir, if we put our trust in Yeshua. We are guaranteed salvation. What is the purpose of salvation?

Reflect on the faith of Yeshua. Did He have a choice about going to that tree?

Verse 10

“Days and months and seasons and years you keep.”

Verse 11

“I fear for you that I have labored in vain for you.”

Paul gives an example of people returning to bondage (the ways of men). Paul’s fear is that his efforts have been for nothing. Does this passage speak to the written Torah (Old Covenant)? Today, do we have non-scriptural things that we have “returned to”?

Part 2: Galatians 4:12-21

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 4:12-21](#)

Discussion Questions

Verse 12

You be as I that also I be as you, brothers, I beseech you. You have done me no wrong.

Why is it hard to be at peace with all people? It is because of pride. Most of us do not see ourselves as better than others or arrogant. We see ourselves as thoughtful, caring and kind. But what about being easily offended? Even when others do or say something that is not meant to be offensive, we may still react as if it is a personal affront. Pride, at its core, is self-centeredness. It is always all about me.

Paul is not easily offended. In verse 12, he tells the Galatians that it's not about him. Remember, Paul is defending the Gospel he preached that was under attack by the Judaizers. In our personal walk, do each of us follow this example? This verse literally says "Be as me that also I be as you". This is a Greek idiom meaning a call for unity. Paul is calling to the brothers for unity, unity with G-d. Discuss why this unity is an essential part of the Gospel message.

Verse 13

And you know that through infirmity of the flesh I proclaimed (the Gospel) to you at first.

Verse 14

And the affliction in my flesh you did not despise nor reject but as a messenger of G-d, you received me, (even) as Messiah Yeshua.

Paul uses the word "know" in verse 13. What are the two meanings of the word "know", and which usage does Paul apply in this verse?

Paul reminds the Galatians that they first received him despite his physical condition. What was Paul's affliction, and how were physical infirmities viewed in the culture of that time? Paul states the Galatians received him "(even) as Messiah Yeshua." What does Paul mean by this phrase?

Verse 15

Where therefore is your happiness/blessedness? For I witness to you that if possible your eyes you would have plucked out to give to me.

Paul ties together the previous verses by asking a question in verse 15. He continues by referring back to his physical weakness that the Galatians would have given their own eyes to Paul so great was their joy. What truth did Paul reveal that their joy was so great that they would give anything? Reflect on whether you share in their joy.

Verse 16

Because I proclaim to you truth with the result I become your enemy?

Verse 17

They seek you (but) not (your) good. Rather, they want to call you out, in order that they should envy.

Verse 18

And it is good to seek good always, not only when I am present with you.

Paul now asks another question, ‘Because I tell you truth, am I your enemy?’ Verse 16 is telling us how Paul came to and left Galatia. Considering verses 12-15, discuss the message and outcome of Paul’s time spent in Galatia. What was the outcome of his Gospel message when he last saw them?

Paul contrasts his message in verse 17 with that of the Judaizers. What is the agenda of the Judaizers’ message? Why is their message incorrect? Discuss how we see this same pattern in false teachers today.

We see in verse 18 the word “good” used twice, and it is used once in verse 17. We, also, are to do good always. What is the definition of good from a biblical perspective?

Verse 19

My children whom again I labor until Messiah should be manifested in you.

Verse 20

I want to be with you that also I could change my voice that I should not stand in doubt concerning you.

Remember where Paul is as he writes this letter. Paul’s concerns are for others. We do not have true spirituality until Yeshua is manifested in our lives. Colossians 3:1-4 states this biblical truth perfectly. Consider verses 19 and 20, and picture Paul’s circumstances with his response. Reflect on your circumstances today, and compare your response to Paul’s. Paul ends with his belief that communicating in person is better than written words. How can we apply that principle today?

Reflect on your life today, and discuss how Messiah is being manifested in you.

Part 3: Galatians 4:21-31

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 4:21-31](#)

Discussion Questions

Paul now answers the same question he has been addressing throughout this book, ‘What does it mean to have a covenantal relationship with G-d?’ There are many covenants in the Bible, but the two most important in the Old Covenant are the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants. Paul is explaining both so that we can have a proper understanding as to how they should be applied in our lives. The reason Paul distinguishes between the two covenants is so that we can be found justified by Grace. This is the central theme of his letter to the Galatians.

Verse 21

Say to me, the ones who want to be under the law, you are not hearing the law.

Paul starts by leading us to the answer. In the first part of the verse, Paul is referring to the commands of the law. This is not all there is to the law. It also contains revelation and information. What information is being revealed at this point in Galatians that we should apply now? Contrast this with what the Judaizers are stating.

Paul finishes the verse by supporting his statements with the phrase “you are not hearing the law”. What is Paul expressing regarding scripture, the law and the purposes of the law regarding salvation?

Verse 22

For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one from the slave woman and one from the free.

Verse 23

But the one from the slave woman was born according to the flesh. But of the free woman, was born through a promise.

Paul now shows the contrast in purpose between the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants. The best support of scripture is scripture. This is reflected in the words, “for it is written”. Paul makes a commentary or midrash using the story of Abraham and his relationship with Sarah (who is never mentioned by name), Hagar and the children that resulted from those unions. Read the accounts in Genesis 16 and 17 to familiarize yourselves with the context and setting. There is a distinction made between these two sons. One was born according to the flesh and one through a promise. What is the distinction between flesh and promise, slave and free?

Verse 24

These things are allegorical, for they are two covenants, one from Mt. Sinai, which gives birth to slavery which is Hagar.

Verse 25

And Hagar is Mt. Sinai, which is in Arabia, which symbolizes the Jerusalem of now. For she serves with her children.

Paul uses an illustration to help us understand these two covenants involving the son born according to the flesh and the son born through a promise. He is going to relate these two women to teach us the meaning of both of them. Notice and discuss the order of information in which Paul describes Mt. Sinai culminating with Hagar serving with her children. The temple was in Jerusalem in that day. It was a biblical command that sacrifices be done daily. Also, all people were to go to the temple three times a year. Why is Paul pointing to the temple in Jerusalem as related to Hagar? What is Paul teaching us if we follow the way of Hagar and her children?

Verse 26

But the Jerusalem up above is free, which is our Mother.

Verse 27

For it is written, “Rejoice O barren one which did not give birth, shout and cry out, the one who has not had labor pains, because more are the children of the desolate woman than the one which has a master/husband.”

The Jerusalem above is free as Paul contrasted in verses 26 and 27 with the earthly present day Jerusalem. Relate this to Hebrews 8:4-5, where Moses was instructed to copy the tabernacle (temple) just like the heavenly tabernacle. The two tabernacles were the same except for one thing. What was missing, and what does this teach us? Reflect on the location of Yeshua’s death on that tree, and why it was not at the temple.

Recall the pattern shown to us in that first Passover in Egypt. What was the order of events that led to the children of Israel being freed from bondage and then after forty years entering the land of promise?

Paul cites Isaiah 54:1 to contrast Hagar and Sarah. Paul supports his position with scriptural truth, which points us back to Isaiah to read and reflect on all of Chapter 54. Again, grace and law are being contrasted with regard to justification. Notice Sarah is not mentioned by name, but the word “mother” is used. Patterns are important, and Paul restates the Gospel truth in these two women using: mother, grace, promise, life and contrasting Hagar, low, sin, death as the patterns. What can we learn from this?

Circumcision is frequently mentioned by Paul. The last act before the children of Israel entered the land of promise was to be circumcised. Recall in Genesis 17 the origin of circumcision, and what circumcision teaches. What does circumcision teach us regarding faith and deeds?

Verse 28

But you, brethren, are according to Isaac. You are children of promise.

Verse 29

But with the result then that the one born according to the flesh he persecuted the one according to the Spirit, thus also now.

Paul states the analogy between Isaac (promise) and Ishmael (flesh). The contrast is between the redeemed and the unredeemed. The word “Spirit” is used to describe the children of promise. Why is the Spirit mentioned here? What connection do we see between the Spirit and redemption?

Paul further tells us that believers will be persecuted by the unredeemed. Persecution can take many forms. How are we persecuted today? What should be our response?

Verse 30

But what does the scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son for the son of the slave woman will not inherit with the son of the free.”

Verse 31

Therefore, brethren, we are not children of the slave woman, but children of the free.

Paul tells us our response by quoting Genesis 21:10. This verse is allegorically speaking about the “land promise” and relating it to inheriting the Kingdom of G-d. Paul is using allegory to apply it to today. Reflect and discuss Paul’s usage of the terms: inherit, slave, son of the free.

Paul sums up, and he sets up what he will address next. Remember, the central point Paul is making regards justification. The covenant of promise is manifested through the Spirit by faith through the grace of G-d. In Chapter 5, Paul will explain what biblical freedom is and what it is not. What does biblical freedom mean to you?

Chapter 5

Part 1: Galatians 5:1-11

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 5:1-11](#)

Discussion Questions

Verse 1

“For freedom Messiah has set you free. Therefore, stand and do not again be entangled with the yoke of slavery.”

Paul is now going to address freedom and liberty. Recall in chapters 1-4 Paul spoke about the relationship between faith and the Torah (law). It is essential to see this relationship regarding how we become righteous (justified). This is the context Paul is addressing. Notice Who has set us free. What is the freedom? Are we now free to do whatever we want?

Paul tells us the desired outcome of the freedom by telling us where we were before Messiah (freedom). Define “the yoke of slavery” to which Paul is referring.

Scripture often reveals itself in repetitive patterns. The story of the Exodus by the children of Israel from Egypt has many similarities to freedom and slavery. Discuss this story with a focus on both slavery and freedom. Pay close attention to the purpose according to Moses as to why Pharaoh was to set the children of Israel free.

Verse 2

“Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you be circumcised Messiah will profit you nothing.”

Whenever we see the word “behold”, it tells us to pay close attention. Important information is about to be revealed. “Messiah will profit you nothing.” Is Paul saying circumcision is of no value, and we should no longer observe this practice? Remember that Paul had Timothy circumcised. What is it about Messiah that will be of no value to you? Reflect on this whenever we want to believe there is another way other than the Gospel for anyone to be saved. Consider Acts 15:1-2 and Abraham in your response.

Verse 3

“And I witness again to all men that if you be circumcised that you are obligated to do the entire law.”

Verse 4

“You are invalidated from Messiah, those who are made righteous in the law. You have fallen from grace.”

Paul again follows the statement of truth that salvation is by the Gospel alone, with a very serious warning. These verses should be a review of what Paul is addressing in this epistle to this point. Review the meaning of the following phrases in the context of using the “law” for salvation.

- Obligated to do the entire law

- Invalidated from Messiah
- Made righteous in the law

The end of verse 4 is the warning. “You have fallen from grace.” This is a serious statement. What does Paul mean in this verse?

Verse 5

“For we by the Spirit out of faith wait/expect the hope of righteousness.”

Verse 6

“For in Messiah Yeshua neither does circumcision avail nor uncircumcision, but faith that works by means of love.”

Paul now sets up a contrast by the use of the word “for”. Notice the order of these words: for, by the Spirit, out of faith. Think back to Chapter 4 and Abraham. Discuss the pattern that brings about redemption.

Two words that are used in verse 5 should be understood: hope and righteousness. What is biblical hope? Righteousness consists of two aspects, biblically speaking. Discuss these two aspects.

In verse 6, Paul again uses circumcision as an example. Consider those two aspects of righteousness and reflect which one Paul is using here. What is the purpose of physical circumcision?

We are told elsewhere in scripture that “true” circumcision is of the heart. What causes this heart circumcision, and why does it matter if physical circumcision is of no avail?

Paul finishes verse 6 with a statement as to how faith works. Paul will discuss “love” next. For now, what is the biblical definition of love as expressed by Yeshua in Mark 12:30-31?

Verse 7

“You were running well, who bothered you (that) the truth you do not obey?”

Verse 8

“The persuasion/temptation is not from the One Who has called you.”

Verse 9

“A little leaven leavens the whole batch.”

Paul now applies what he said by asking the Galatians a question. Apply that same question to your life today. Are you a Galatian?

Paul uses the word temptation in verse 8. What is the source of this temptation? Recall what the temptation that the Judaizers succumbed to in Galatians 4:17? What will be the outcome to the Judaizers and anyone who follows them if they do not repent?

In verse 9, a real world example is given by Paul to show the effects of sin. A little leaven (sin) leavens (infects) the whole batch. Recall the story of Joseph in Genesis 37 when Joseph received that coat from Jacob. What caused Joseph’s brothers to react the way they did? Where did they end up as a result? Have you let pride blind you from the things of G-d?

Verse 10

“I am convinced for you in the L-rd that you will not think thusly; but the one who troubles you he will bear the judgement, whatever it may be.”

Paul speaks about judgement, not toward the Galatians, but toward those who are troubling them with a false message. Notice Paul’s attitude toward judgement. Into whose hands has Paul left this judgement and why?

Verse 11

“But brethren, if I still proclaim circumcision why am I still persecuted? (If this was so) the result would invalidate the offense of the cross.”

Apparently, someone was claiming that Paul was preaching and supporting circumcision as part of a salvation experience. Paul refutes this by stating that if this was true, why is he persecuted for the exact opposite? He further says that if it was true, he would “invalidate the offense of the cross”. What does this phrase mean?

Part 2: Galatians 5:12-26

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 5:12-26](#)

Discussion Questions

Verse 12

“Fitting/I would that those opposing you be cut off.”

Paul continues by explaining a proper understanding of liberty or freedom. Freedom is what causes us to walk in obedience with G-d, and not to do whatever we want. Paul uses strong language in reference to false teachers or those who may be theologically confused. The word translated as “cut-off” is both a play on words and relates to a strong spiritual meaning. In the Old Covenant, to be cut-off was a severe punishment. Reflect on those scriptures that impose the punishment of being cut-off and relate this to what Paul is saying.

Verse 13

“For you, brethren, have been called for freedom, only do not (use) the freedom for an opportunity for the flesh. But rather, through love serve one another.”

Paul speaks to the call of believers and reminds us that we have been called to freedom. We see a familiar pattern. We are justified by Messiah, and once we are in Messiah, we are called to live obediently according to the word or plan of G-d. What is the reason for this call, and how is this accomplished?

Paul describes freedom from judgement and also gives a warning not to misuse our freedom. From a heavenly point of view, from what judgement are we freed? What should our response to freedom be while in this body?

Verse 13 ends with a small and important word, “but”, to explain the proper way to respond to freedom. Paul states this several times, and this repetition tells us how important it is. We see this relationship: freedom, service, love. Reflect on this foundational pattern, and discuss where it is present in both the Old and New Covenants.

Verse 14

“For all the law in one saying is fulfilled, namely love your neighbor as yourself.”

Verse 15

“But if one another you bite and devour, watch out that you do not destroy one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit and the desires of the flesh will not be fulfilled/completed.”

Paul tells us plainly what is the fulfillment of all the law. Recall who else in scripture taught that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. We must be justified before we can use our freedom in Messiah. Why is there confusion on the part of the Galatians as a result of the Judaizer’s teachings?

We see another warning about biting and devouring. What do you think the warning means? Is the word “Spirit” connected to biting and devouring and how to protect ourselves? Reflect on the nature and purpose of the Spirit and how essential He is for all of us. What does the word “walk” mean to you?

Verse 16

“For the flesh desires against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh.”

Verse 17

“For these things are contrary to one another, in order that one should not desire to do these things.”

Verse 18

“But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

Paul now discusses the role and purpose of the Spirit. It is only by grace that we receive the Spirit and become a new creation. Reflect on why the Spirit is in opposition to the desires of the flesh, and why without the Spirit we have no hope.

Upon becoming a new creation and being led by the Spirit, we are not under the law. Paul is not saying the law is gone. What is the role of the law in our lives as a new creation? The law also speaks about judgement. When we are led by the Spirit, why do we no longer have any fear of judgement?

Verse 19

“And the works of the flesh are manifested, they are: sexual immorality, uncleanness, licentiousness,”

Verse 20

“idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambition, dissensions, heresies,”

Verse 21

“envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries and the like. This I say to you just as I have said beforehand, that the ones practicing these things will not inherit the Kingdom of G-d.”

Explicit descriptions of the manifestations of the flesh are listed in verses 19-21. What is a common trait to this list? Paul does not mean we will not inherit the Kingdom of G-d because we sin. Paul is addressing sin that we practice and pursue. Discuss what constitutes “practicing sin”, and relate it to today’s culture inside and outside of the church.

Verse 22

“But the fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, generosity, goodness, faith, humility and self-control.”

Verse 23

“Against these things there is no law.”

The word “but” again in verse 22 contrasts the evil (opposition to G-d’s will) and the good (in accordance with G-d’s will) if we put our trust in Messiah. In our walk, there is a connection between Yeshua, the town of Nazareth and the word “no”. What is this relationship, and how can we apply it to our lives? Paul again connects the Spirit with no law. He is referring to the judgement of the law. The fruit of the Spirit brings the blessings of G-d. What do these blessings reflect in our lives and in the lives of others?

Verse 24

“But those of Messiah Yeshua have crucified the flesh with (all of its) passion and desires.”

Verse 25

“If we live by the Spirit then by the Spirit also we should frame our conduct.”

Verse 26

“You shall not be boastful/conceited, challenging one another, nor being envious of one another.”

Paul states in verse 24 the change that must occur, and this is reflected in the crucifixion of Messiah Yeshua. Is this speaking about forgiveness or something else? What must we become?

Verse 25 tells us that the Spirit is the filter through which everything should pass if we truly are in Messiah. Reflect on whether you apply this filter in your life.

Reflecting on verse 26, discuss why it is important how we live out “our walk” with fellow believers.

Chapter 6

Part 1: Galatians 6:1-10

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 6:1-10](#)

Discussion Questions

Verse 1

“Brethren, if also a man should be overtaken in a certain offense, YOU the spiritual ones, restore this one in a spirit of humility. ...watching yourselves, lest also you be tempted.”

Paul now moves from explaining biblical truth to application in the life of the Galatians. Paul is going to move to an important subject. Paul calls it “to be set right”, but “restoration” is the word we use most often. Restoration is what we should desire for ourselves and for others. What are the purposes of our restoration to G-d?

Paul now speaks of a person being overtaken. The word overtaken actually means to fall alongside. This is also an image of war. In war, there are casualties. What should our response be to those who are casualties? Why is it essential that we understand the connection between humility and temptation?

Verse 2

“The burden of one another you bear and thus you will fulfill the law of Messiah.”

Paul uses the word “burden” which speaks to a spiritual attack or not receiving the blessings of G-d. What are we called to do, and how are we called to do it?

Remember the purpose of the freedom or liberty we have because of our trust in Yeshua, which is to serve G-d. Think back to the main subject in Chapter 5, which is love. What is the description of love as stated by Paul?

The phrase “the law of Messiah” is used. What does this phrase mean? What are your thoughts on the law of Moses, and have they changed during your study of Galatians?

Verse 3

“For if anyone thinks him to be something when he is nothing he deceives himself.”

Verse 4

“But let everyone document his work and then in himself alone he will have boasting and not in another.”

Paul compares and contrasts what we often are and what we should be. The words pride and deception should take us back to an earlier story in Genesis 3, the story of Chava (Eve) in the Garden of Eden. Discuss the story and reflect on her actions with regard to pride and deception. How were her actions contrary to the plans of G-d? Apply this to today and consider if this is present in your life.

Paul now uses a small word that is very significant, “BUT”, to teach us that we should document or prove our call. How do we document or prove our call from a biblical perspective? G-d has a plan for each of us. In your own life, have you responded to G-d’s call (plan)?

The word “boasting” is stated here in a positive sense. What does it mean? Consider the shift from verse 2, helping others, to each person’s own individual call.

Verse 5

“For each one should bear his own obligation.”

Paul is stressing that every believer should bear what he has been called to do by G-d. Why is it important that we individually fulfill the plan that G-d has for each of us?

Verse 6

“And the one who is taught the word, let him share with the one who teaches in all good things.”

Sharing is the focus here. What is it that we are to share? How should we share with the one who is being used to reveal G-d’s truth to us?

The word “good” is used in this verse. What is the biblical definition of the word “good” in scripture?

Verse 7

“Do not be deceived, G-d is not mocked.”

Verse 8

“That the one who sows in the flesh of himself, out of the flesh he will reap corruption. But, the one who sows in the Spirit he will reap eternal life.”

Once again Paul alludes to the Judaizers and their agenda. There is only one truth and this group is not speaking this truth. This is the second time the word “deceived” is used. In this case, the word “delude” gives us a better understanding. If we delude ourselves, what is the likely outcome?

In verse 8, “G-d is not mocked”, what is meant by the word “mocked”?

Paul contrasts the consequences of serving G-d or serving the flesh. Paul states that if we serve G-d, we will receive eternal life. If we serve our flesh, we will receive destruction. What is the meaning of eternal life as used by Paul and when does it begin? What is the meaning of corruption (destruction) as used by Paul?

Verse 9

“And in doing good let us not grow weary, for in its time we shall reap, if we do not become despondent.”

Verse 10

“Therefore, as we have season/opportunity, let us work the good to all, and especially to the household of faith.”

Paul speaks to believers and cautions against growing weary of doing good while in this body. It is essential that we do good for G-d's will and not for personal reward. Discuss the spiritual maturity of a believer who expects a response for their “good” works.

What should be the attitude of someone who has been restored to G-d, and how is that restoration manifested in others?

We are all called to disciple. Define discipleship, and discuss why it is important?

Part 2: Galatians 6:11-18

Link to video: [Galatians Chapter 6:11-18](#)

Discussion Questions

Verse 11

“See what large letters I write to you with my own hand.”

Large letters! These two words remind us Paul was in prison when this letter was written. It was typical for someone else to write down Paul’s words, but these last verses Paul chose to write in his own hand. Why? Imagine being in a Roman prison and the difficult situation Paul faced. Would you be concerned for others? Recall in Chapter 4 the comments regarding Paul’s eyesight and how physical defects were viewed in that era. The example that Paul demonstrates can be summed up in one word, service, i.e., if we are going to be used by G-d. Pause and reflect on those people you are personally involved with for the purposes of the Gospel.

Service flows from the central theme to which Paul and all of scripture speak, which is LOVE. How does Yeshua, Paul and scripture define “love”?

Verse 12

“As many who want a good showing in the flesh, these compel you to be circumcised only for the cross of Messiah Yeshua they should not be persecuted.”

The remaining verses are used by Paul to stress and summarize the main points of the letter to the Galatians. The first point is with regard to the “Judaizers.” Paul uses several key words that he has used and explained previously—flesh and circumcision. Compare and contrast those words from the perspective of G-d and from “Judaizers.”

Paul’s use of the word “cross” or execution stake is powerful. Paul has alluded to the Gospel message over and over. If we empty the cross from the Gospel, there is no Gospel at all. What is Paul conveying to us with the words “only for the cross of Messiah Yeshua they should not be persecuted”?

Verse 13

“For nor do the circumcised ones themselves keep the law but they want you to be circumcised in order that they might boast in your flesh.”

Verse 14

“But G-d forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our L-rd Messiah Yeshua by which to me the world is crucified and I to the world.”

Paul now states that boasting is the agenda of the Judaizers. “Kal v chomer” is a Hebrew expression meaning “light and heavy” as a way to express a point. How can we use this concept regarding baptism and circumcision as applied to the Judaizers’ purposes? Discuss any examples of today where boasting can affect the body of believers. Why does Paul only boast in the cross (execution stake)?

Consider the love L-rd Yeshua has for us as evidenced by the crucifixion. Why is it essential that we trust Yeshua as L-rd? Crucifixion is a central part of the Gospel message. Why must believers share in Yeshua's crucifixion?

Verse 15

“For neither circumcision is something nor uncircumcision, but (what is something) a new creation.”

Circumcision is mentioned for the last time in this epistle. Back in the first lesson, Paul discussed justification as the context for the entire epistle. Reflect on justification, which leads to being “a new creation”. What is the purpose of us becoming a new creation, and how are we changed?

Verse 16

“And as many as will demonstrate this walk, peace upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of G-d.”

Paul builds upon one concept leading to another. Paul calls this a demonstration of our walk. Our walk should be reflected in how we conduct our lives. What should this lifestyle look like? What role does the “law” have in our lives?

Paul states, if we demonstrate a proper walk, we will have shalom and mercy. What is the biblical meaning of shalom and mercy? Why is it important that Paul uses the word order of “peace and mercy”? Marriage is a good example of this concept. Reflect on a marriage and consider how these principles can be applied.

The last phrase used here is “the Israel of G-d”. This phrase has caused much controversy in the church. Some have taken the meaning of this phrase to support the concept of “replacement theology”. What is “replacement theology”? Why does this belief not have any biblical merit in general, and no context in the book of Galatians? What is the proper understanding of the phrase “the Israel of G-d”?

Verse 17

“The remaining/henceforth let no one trouble me, for I, the marks of Yeshua in my flesh, bear.”

Paul is now about to wrap up his thoughts. He speaks of trouble and marks of Yeshua in his own flesh. Is Paul speaking to the physical abuse and trouble he has suffered? What role does the cross (execution stake) bear in what Paul is stating? What is the outcome Paul and all receive who embrace Yeshua and His work on that tree?

Verse 18

“The grace of our L-rd Messiah Yeshua (be) with your spirit brethren. Amen.”

In all of scripture, ALL words are valuable and revealing. Why do grace and spirit go together? What is the connection between spirit and being a new creation, considering L-rd Yeshua the Messiah.

When putting this verse together, we see that we must have a relationship with Yeshua. Paul ends with the same message he started with: the true Gospel message.