

Day 1

Imagine that a group of your closest Christian friends are in another country. There are people who want to teach them false things about God. You only get to write them one letter! How would you start the letter off?

“Dear friends. I know that you are facing trials and that men are sharing things with you that seem to make sense and sound so good. Remember the Gospel. Remember who saved you from your sin. Remember the truths that you have heard and professed. Don’t give into the deceptions of the enemy. He wants you to stumble and fall. I am praying for you my friends.” That is what I would want to communicate. False teachers had crept into the Galatian church. Paul wanted to remind them of who they were in Christ so that they could stand against these false teachers. Ask God to help you understand his word today.

Read Galatians 1:1-9

What important things does Paul say about himself, Christ the Son, God the Father and the church in verses 1 to 5? Write next to each one why that is important. Come up with at least 3 things.

1.

2.

3.

What is Paul astonished about in verse 6? Why do you think is he astonished?

What does Paul say about other Gospels and people who preach those Gospels in verses 7 to 9?

What are some of the “other” gospels that people in our culture teach and preach today? Why do you think people believe those Gospels that are false?

What are things you have put into place in your life to help you not believe in “false” gospels?

PRAYER – To know God’s word and not fall for false Gospels.

Day 2

Who is someone in your life that you'd really like to please? Why do you want to please them?

It is easy to be a people pleaser. We will make fun of people to please a group of friends. We will watch inappropriate movies or listen to bad music just so we can fit in with people. We will wear certain clothes because we want people to think we are "in". Sometimes even in our faith we will say or do certain things, not because we are serving God, but because we want people to think we are "good" Christians. Ask God to reveal this attitude in your heart as you read Galatians today.

Read Galatians 1:10-12

Look at verse 10. What does Paul say to the Galatians and us if we are in the business of pleasing people?

Some think that is harsh. Think about it. If you are pleasing people, how are you serving them and not God? Write down 2 ways you are serving man.

1.

2.

What are two ways in which you struggle to serve God and not man?

1.

2.

Look at verses 11 and 12. What does Paul tell us about the Bible? Why was it important for Paul to tell the Galatians and us these things about the Bible considering the presence of false teachers?

Do you believe the Bible is God's word and not mans word? Explain.

Write a prayer to God about why you want to please him above all others and believe the Bible is his word.

PRAYER – Pray your prayer and add what you could not fit on paper.

Day 3

Describe your life before you started to follow Jesus or before you understood what it meant to be committed to Him as His follower.

What event did God use to bring you to faith or open your eyes to see that you needed to follow him with your whole life?

What are 3 ways God has changed your life since you started to wholeheartedly follow Jesus?

1.

2.

3.

When you come to Christ, your life changes. It is inevitable. People start to want to read the Bible, pray, go to church. People give up sinful habits and lifestyles. Men and women use language and speech that is edifying instead of destructive. The list goes on. I pray you sit here today and can look at these first three questions and say, "Amen. God you have changed me." Ask God to teach you and grow you in your faith as you read and interact with Galatians today.

Read Galatians 1:13-24

What do we see about Paul before he knew Jesus in verses 13 and 14?

According to verses 15 to 17, how do we see God is the one who changed Paul and not Paul or any other man?

Why is it important for us to see and know this change in Paul was not brought about man but God?

Paul was trained for 3 years before he started his ministry. What are people's reactions upon hearing the change in Paul?

Think of two people that you can praise God for because of how God has changed their lives. Write them down and how God has changed them.

1.

2.

PRAYER – Give thanks for your changed life and the two people above.

Day 4

Imagine that someone gives you a book of 1000 rules that you must follow in order to go to heaven. How would you respond to that person, knowing what the Bible says about how we are saved?

That imaginary book is real to some degree. Some of it is on paper in the Bible. People take it out of context and use it in ways that it is not meant to be used. Other rules are ones that people take principles from scripture and carry them out into our culture in their own ways. What are some of these 1000 rules you must do to get to heaven? You must be baptized, cannot watch any rated R movie, cannot listen to music that is not about God, can never watch or play a sport on the Sabbath, cannot drink caffeine and the list goes on. Is your faith based on your obedience to a list of rules or is it based on your relationship to the one who took all our sins upon himself at the cross? Ask God to teach you today.

Read Galatians 2:1-5

What did Paul want to make sure he taught to the people in verses 1 and 2?

The Bible is what we must teach, not the teachings of men. Why do many “Christians struggle with teaching just the Bible?

Look at verses 3 and 4. People who want to make us follow rules to get to heaven are enslaving us. How?

What could the Christian Jews have made Titus do to prove he was a follower of Jesus? Did they? How do we know?

How could Titus have been circumcised in a way that honored God and did not make him a slave to man's rules?

In verse 5 Paul says we do not submit to men's rules but God and his word. Think about your own life. Are you a slave to people and their rules or living free in submission to God and His word? Explain.

PRAYER – Ask God to show you how to be free in Christ and not a slave to man and his rules.

Day 5

For each line, circle which one of these groups is more important.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| A. Rich people | B. Poor people |
| A. Christian people | B. Non-Christian people |
| A. People who get good grades | B. People who get F's |
| A. Leaders | B. Followers |

Why can't you just circle one group or the other? What does this say about human beings and their worth, especially in God's eyes?

Unfortunately as Christians we show favoritism to certain people all the time. We cater to the rich in our congregations sometimes because we want them to keep giving generously. Someone in church or youth group will go to sit down and we say they can't because a friend who is not there yet is going to sit there. We don't greet someone who comes into church or youth group if they don't look like or act like us. Though most of us would say both above, we act like one is more important over another. Ask God to convict you of your favoritism as you read today.

Read Galatians 2:6-10

How do we see in these verses that God wants ALL people to be reached and that he wants to use His people to do that work?

Pick out phrases or words that show God is the one that works in us to do this ministry work?

Look at verse 9, what does Peter and John do to show that Paul's ministry was just as important as their ministry? Why is that important?

How do Christians sometimes put down other churches or ministries in inappropriate ways?

Now if a church is preaching a false Gospel, we don't extend the hand of fellowship. But too often we turn away from true brothers and sisters in Christ just because we have different views of baptism or church government structure. What are two ways you can extend the hand of fellowship to another Christian who is not the same as you?

1.

2.

PRAYER – Pray for unity in the church and for the Gospel to go forward.

Day 6

Describe a time you did something wrong because you wanted to please the Christians who were around you? Why did you do it? What was the outcome of your action?

Many Christians find themselves doing and saying things that go against the Bible because they want to please the Christians or non-Christians in their lives. It could be things as simple as watching a bad movie or tv show filled with inappropriate content or listening to music with explicit lyrics. It could be bigger things like thinking I can commit any sin I want because if I ask for forgiveness then God will forgive me. It is a free pass to sin. We can slip into doing and believing these things because we give into the pressure from the people around us. We see this in the life of Peter in our study today. Ask God to show you how you give into people as you study the Bible today.

Read Galatians 2:11-14

What bad thing did Peter do in verses 11 and 12? Why did he do it?

Why was this bad? What truth was he violating from God's word?

What impact did Peter's actions have on the other Christians in verse 13?
Why do you think his actions had this impact?

How does Paul react according to verses 11 and 14?

Peter was being a hypocrite. What had he forgotten about God and about his own faith?

How have you acted like Peter in your life?

How have you confronted someone like Paul?

PRAYER – For strength to live for Christ not matter how hard it is.

Day 7

What is your heritage? Are you Irish? German? Zambian? Native American? A mix of a lot of backgrounds? Write a little bit about your heritage and what it means to you.

I am Irish, German and Mohawk Indian. On the German side I often contemplate that if I had ancestors in Germany during World War 2, which side were they on? Were they pro-Nazi or did they try to save Jews and were compassionate for what was happening to them? On the Indian side, I often wonder what my ancestors dealt with when their land was taken from them. How did they react? Did they get violent or just accept what was happening? I am proud of my heritage and it is cool to think of the different countries represented in me. But it also leaves a lot of questions in my mind. We all have a story. We all have a history. Today we look at little bit about heritage when it comes to our faith. Ask God to convict you of his truths as you read Galatians today.

Read Galatians 2:15-16

What fact was Paul quick to share about himself and those who were leading with him in His ministry in verse 15?

How could Paul and his leaders have been proud of their Jewish heritage?

Who are you? List all the things that describe you.

What are ways you could rely on those things when it comes to your faith?
Why can't you rely on those things when it comes to your faith?

In verse 16 what does Paul say you can't rely on? What does he say you do need to rely on?

You are NOT saved by works! NONE! Only through the work Christ did for us on the cross. This is humbling. Think hard on this one. What are ways in which you sometimes live like your works will save you or make you look good in God's eyes? Be honest and specific.

PRAYER – Thanks for grace and that you are not saved by your works.

Day 8

You go to a restaurant and your parents pay for your meal. You try to pay for your meal even though they've already paid for you. Why doesn't that make any sense? How should you respond to your parents instead of trying to pay for yourself?

We live in a world and culture that believes nothing comes for free. We have to pay something. Our youth group did a free car wash once. I remember a person insisting on paying us something for the car wash. I told him this was a service to our community. He then said to me that people, especially teenagers, don't do work for nothing. That is the attitude of our world and that attitude spills over into the church and into our view of salvation. We have to do something workwise when it comes to our faith. Today we look at that issue. Ask God to reveal the attitude of your own heart as you interact with Galatians.

Read Galatians 2:17-2

In verses 17 and 18, what does Paul say about people who are trying to work for or earn salvation in Christ?

We try to work by being obedient to earn salvation. What does Paul say about that work in verse 19? Where does our focus need to be?

According to verse 20, what does the follower of Christ look like, act like and believe?

Our faith and walk in faith is all about Jesus. What kinds of things do we often make it more about?

In verse 21 what hard truth about Jesus does Paul tell the person who thinks they need to work to earn salvation? Why is that a hard truth?

Who are people in your life (maybe you) who are trying to earn salvation through their own works and not really trusting in Christ and His work?

Try to think of two. Write a way you can pray for them.

1.

2.

PRAYER – To understand God's grace and for the two people above.

Day 9

You have just seen Jesus die on the cross, in person. What thoughts are running through your head? How do you feel about what you're seeing?

I had the opportunity several years in a row to be in a passion play which portrays the life, death and resurrection of Christ. I was usually John, the disciple. That means I was close to Jesus during the crucifixion scene. We were only in a play, but it was not hard to get into character in seeing Jesus beat, tortured and then die on the cross. It was brutal. Sometimes you question whether God could have done it another way and why he would allow his own son to suffer like that at the hand of wicked men. Yet, that was God's plan and what he used to be able to bring us salvation if we would have faith in Jesus. Ask God to grow you in your faith as you read and study his word today.

Read Galatians 3:1-6

What two points was Paul making to the people about their faith in verses 1 and 2? Next to each one write why that was a good reminder for them?

1. Verse 1 –

2. Verse 2 -

If you are a Christian, then you know Christ died on the cross to save you from your sin. At times why do we forget Christ's sacrifice and his power?

What point does Paul make with his 3 questions in verses 3 to 6?

1. Verse 3 –

2. Verse 4 –

3. Verses 5-6 –

How would your life be different if you always remembered what Christ has done for you? List how your thoughts, actions, attitudes, activities, relationships, entertainment choices would be different. Think of 5 things.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

PRAYER – Ask God to keep changing you; make you more like Christ.

Day 10

Have you ever been part of a club? Which club and what was the club like? What kinds of things did you do with the other members of the club? What kinds of people were allowed into the club?

I was in a 4H club in elementary school into high school. It was a guys' club so only boys could get in and it was kids from the neighborhood and school we were all part of. We did woodworking, electricity projects, learned various other skills. It was a fun club to be a part of with my friends. As Christians we are sort of in a club. You can only get in through knowing and walking with Jesus. Non-Christians cannot be part of that club, until they come to faith in Jesus. Today Paul talks a little bit about this club or family. Ask God to open your eyes to his truths today.

Read Galatians 3:7-9

Here are some simple questions from the text:

1. Who are the sons of Abraham?
2. In who shall all the nations be blessed?
3. Who is blessed along with Abraham?

How do we see that God meant his family to be diverse? Why is that something important to remember when we think about ethnicities, politics, sports, etc.?

What are two reasons you need to be thankful that God has opened salvation for all types of people?

1.

2.

Imagine you are reading Paul's words from the perspective of a Gentile during Bible times. How does this news of salvation make you feel?

How does this truth impact how you look at certain churches or even people groups within your church?

PRAYER – For unity in church; joy in the diversity of the church.

Day 11

What is your favorite board game or card game? What are the general rules of the game? What happens when you don't follow those rules?

I like hearts. It is a card game. The goal is to be the low score when one of the players goes over 100. The rules are simple: follow the suit that is played and if you don't have the suit then you can either void cards or dump points on people. High card played takes the points of the suit led. It can be a cut-throat game as people target whoever is in the lead. Paul has made it clear that we are not Christians by following the law and doing good works, but we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ. Today we look at that. Ask for a heart of understanding as you read the Bible today.

Read Galatians 3:10-14

There are a lot of things said about the law that are important to understand in these verses. How does verse 10 show us that the law is important for ALL men?

Obeying the law does not save us. How do we see that in verse 11 to 12?

The law shows us our sin and that we are dead in that sin. It cannot save us. We are cursed. What did Jesus save us from in verse 13? What did he do for us on the cross?

What are we given in verse 14 through faith in Christ? Who can get this gift?

Why should it encourage us that we are not saved by works?

Write a list of God's laws that you have broken. Fill the space below.

PRAYER – Write over your sins above, “FORGIVEN”. Give thanks to God for his grace and forgiveness in Christ.

Day 12

What is a promise that you have made to somebody? Why did you make that promise? Were you able to follow through on the promise? Explain.

I promised my wife that I would never forsake her and find love with another woman. I told her I would do it in sickness and in health, until death did us part. I made it because I was confident that God brought her into my life to be my wife. I did it because I love her. So far, I have been able to follow through on the promise. It is not always easy. There are temptations to sin, there are arguments and hard situations. We have weathered every storm because we have trusted in and depended on God every step along the way. Ask God to encourage you in the promises you have made as you read this section of scripture today.

Read Galatians 3:15-18

Who did God make a promise with, in Genesis?

What promise did he make to this man?

1. Genesis 15:5 –
2. Genesis 15:13-16
3. Genesis 17:6-8

How is this promise ours as you look back at the verses in Galatians?

We are told Abraham believed the promises God gave to him and it was credited to him as what? What is great about that truth?

That means God considered Abraham righteous before he DID anything. Why is that a freeing and important truth for us to remember for our lives but also as we share the hope we have in Christ?

What are 3 promises God has given you as a person who has faith in Jesus Christ? Write them down and next to each one write how that encourages you in your faith.

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – Give thanks for God's promises and help to trust in them.

Day 13

Who is your favorite superhero? Why are they your favorite superhero? What about that character makes them especially “super”?

What is a flaw of your superhero? Why is that important as you think about them and their powers?

My favorite superhero as a kid was Green Lantern. With his ring he could make almost any object and then use that object to defeat enemies or save people. I spend many times pretending some toy ring was my ring of power. I defeated a lot of bad guys too. Superheroes do not save us. They cannot. They are fictitious. God is the one hero who can save us, and he has for all those who have faith in Jesus Christ. Ask God to help you read and apply his word to your life today.

Read Galatians 3:19-20 and Genesis 3:15

Who is the offspring mentioned in both passages?

How is this offspring like a superhero but even better?

What would things have been like if Jesus never came and we only had the law?

According to verse 19, why was the law given to man?

Man messed up so the law was needed to guide us and help us to know how we could honor and obey God. Why is that humbling when you think about it?

What important truth do we see about God in verse 20? Why is that important?

PRAYER – Give thanks for God's word and for who God is.

Day 14

What are some things you can't do in prison? How would it feel to be in prison for a long time? What do you think you would do to pass the time?

In the movie *The Shawshank Redemption*, Andy Dufresne, was wrongfully accused and convicted of killing his wife and another man. He went away to prison for a long time. He had to endure beatings from other prisoners, had many lonely nights, and was being used by the warden to embezzle money. He could do nothing but deal with prison life knowing he did not kill his wife. How awful that would be to know you are innocent and still have carry out your sentence. Today we look at how the law acts as a prison to us if we don't have faith in Jesus Christ. Ask God to convince you of his truths today.

Read Galatians 3:21-22

The law gives us the promises of God. Look at verse 21. Does the law give life? If not, then what does?

Then why is the law important to life in Christ?

In verse 22 we are told that “Scripture imprisoned everything under sin”. How does the Bible do this?

Because we are trapped by sin in that we cannot stop doing it and trapped by the law in that it condemns us because of our sin, then what hope do we have according to the last part of verse 22?

Why is this an important truth to remember for own lives as well as those we share the Gospel with who don't know Jesus yet?

How are some people you know imprisoned by the law – whether at school or at church? Think about 2 people and write their names below. Write how you think they are imprisoned.

1.

2.

PRAYER – Pray for the people you wrote about above.

Day 15

What are some characteristics and responsibilities of a guardian?

When are a guardian's services not needed anymore?

As a youth on just about every form you fill out throughout grade school, middle school, high school and even when applying to colleges has to be signed by a parent or guardian. These guardians are in place to make sure you are making the right decisions in a mature way. They guide in all your decisions and activities. Now once you hit 18, the guardian goes away and then becomes an advisor. You now get to make decisions and sign papers without any say so from your guardians. You have arrived at adulthood. This is sort of a picture of the law that was given to God's people before Jesus came and died on the cross for our sin. Ask God to teach you and instruct you in his truths today.

Read Galatians 3:23-29.

What do verses 23 and 24 tell us about the law?

It is not about the law anymore but faith. What do verses 23 to 26 say about faith and how it has “replaced” the law?

What do the following verses say about our relationship with Christ?

1. Verse 27 –

2. Verse 28 –

3. Verse 29 –

Our identity is no longer the law but Christ. What does the phrase “you have put on Christ” sound like in everyday life? What impact should that phrase have on you when you think about how you are living for Jesus?

How do these verse challenge you to think about your faith and walk with Jesus Christ?

PRAYER – For unity in church; you would live by faith and not the law.

Day 16

What is something your parents have told you that you can't do "until you are older"? Why did they say you had to be older to do it?

Why don't we usually want to wait for those things? What attitudes and desires are exposed when we don't want to wait?

There is a little list that comes to mind when I think of what I had to be older to do: drive a car, get a job, date, get a phone (more for you all today), go to college, etc. We don't want to wait because we all think we are ready, that we are mature, that we can handle the responsibilities of those things now. In reality, many are not ready yet. Your parents know that which is why they say no or wait. When we push on these things, we reveal a selfishness and arrogance. There are some things we will grow into doing. Our faith is similar. We go through stages like children when we mature spiritually. That is what Paul wants to explain to us today. Pray God would grow you in your faith as you interact with his word.

Read Galatians 4:1-7

What does Paul say about children in verses 1 and 2? What does that mean for children?

What is the parallel to those children for us as Christians in verse 3?

What are some important truths in verses 4 and 5 when it comes to who Christ is and what he has done for us?

We are adopted. What does that say about us as followers of Jesus?

You were dead and lost, now you are a son of God. What is to be our response to these truths in verses 6 and 7?

What are 2 things you want to thank God for about adopting you?

1.

2.

PRAYER – Thank God for your adoption; for him to grow you in your faith.

Day 17

What are ways in which you have seen people change from bad to good?

What are examples of people you have seen go back to their “bad” ways of living, abandoning all the ways they had changed?

I worked in a grocery store throughout high school and college. One of the guys that worked there for decades was a man named Jugger. He was a guy who swore, told dirty jokes, looked wrongly at many women, got drunk a lot. One day he came into the store and said that he had found Jesus. He started singing different songs, talking differently and acting differently, at least for a month. After a month, he said that it was too hard, and he missed all the things that he had done before. He went back to all those bad behaviors with a storm. I know many of us are concerned that the people who are Christians in our lives might one day say they never really were one and go back to living for the world. Paul addresses this concern today. Ask God to help you see your own hearts as you read.

Read Galatians 4:8-11

What did Paul say we were enslaved to before coming to faith in Jesus? What does that look like in a person's life?

When you come to know Jesus, Paul says we are known by God. What does it mean in this context that we are known by God?

Known here means a relationship not just facts. How is it encouraging that God knows you as a Christian?

In verses 9b to 11, what was Paul's concern about the Galatians?

Be honest! Are you living for the world or Christ? Explain.

How do you live differently when you are known by God?

PRAYER – Help in living for God; Give thanks that he knows you.

Day 18

Describe a time when someone was nice to you, did things for you and helped you only to later turn their backs on you.

How did that make you feel? What did you do?

These are hard situations that make you question what you did or did not do that caused that person to turn their backs on you. They make you step back and retrace that person's steps to wonder where things went wrong in their lives. Often, we have more questions than we have answers. After all this is someone we loved and cared about. How could they do this? How could they act this way? Why don't they want to follow Jesus anymore? Have you been there? If you do, you know the feeling. If you have not, give it time, you will be. Today Paul continues to talk about his concern for the Galatian Christians. Ask God to help you examine your own heart as you read his word today.

Read Galatians 4:12-20

What kinds of things did the Galatians do for Paul in verses 12 to 14? How were those things encouraging?

According to verses 15 to 17, what happened in the lives of the Galatian Christians?

What are some reasons you think they were losing their excitement?

Are you excited about the gospel and your faith? Why or why not?

Look at verses 18 to 20. How would you describe Paul's concern and emotions when it comes to the Christians in Galatia?

Should people be concerned for your faith and walk with Jesus? Why or why not?

PRAYER – You would stand strong in your faith and not abandon Christ.

Day 19

Write the details you can remember from the story of Sarah and Hagar. If you have no idea who they are then go to Genesis 16 and 21:8-21 and read about them. Write down 5 things about these two women below.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Sarah was Abraham's wife who was barren and desperate for children. Hagar was a servant of Sarah. Sarah wanted her husband to have a baby with Hagar so there would be a child to carry on the family name. Of course as these things go, it went horribly wrong. Sarah drove Hagar and Ishmael away. Eventually Sarah would give birth to Isaac. Both Isaac and Ishmael would become great nations. One would be God's people (Isaac) and the other would not be a line that was favored by God (Ishmael). Today you read about these mom's and their children. Ask God to help you see His truths and apply them to your life today.

Read Galatians 4:21-27

How is the slave woman (Hagar) and her children described in this passage?

How is the free woman (Sarah) and her children described in this passage?

Not all Christians are literal descendants of Sarah and Abraham, but we are all descendants through the promise. What are the benefits of being one of God's children?

It is by grace you have been saved through faith; this is not of your works but God's work. What are 3 things you should be thankful for when you think about this fact?

1.

2.

3.

Who can you pray for who thinks they have to be good and do good things to get to heaven? What is a way you can pray for them today?

PRAYER – Pray for the person above; Give thanks for faith.

Day 20

How you been persecuted for your faith, even in small ways? What did you do? How did you feel?

What are the different ways people are persecuted for their faith?

I still cannot get the picture out of my head of the Egyptian Christians who were marched out on a beach in orange jump suits to be beheaded for because they followed Jesus Christ and not the Muslim religion. These were men who had families, were leader in the church and served God faithfully to the very end. Persecution was very real in the Old and New Testaments and continues today. Today's devotion continues to talk about Sarah and Hagar and their children today. Ask God to open your eyes to His truths as you read and meditate on His word.

Read Galatians 4:28-31

What are we told in these verses about the slave woman and her child?

What are we told about the free woman and her child?

How do we see that this battle or persecution is still happening today?

What does Paul want to remind the people about who they are in verse 31? Why do you think they needed that reminder?

How do we see from these verses that God expected persecution to continue to happen for us as Christians? How should this encourage you and not discourage you?

PRAYER – Ask for strength in dealing with persecution. Pray for the persecuted church in the world.

Day 21

When you hear the word “freedom,” what are 3 thoughts, pictures or words that come mind? Write down why next to each one.

1.

2.

3.

It is said that men who have been locked up in prison for many years, when set free, become anxious and depressed and long to be back in prison. To them freedom is scary. They liked knowing there was a routine or an expectation. They would never say this, but it is something they became used to. Some commit a crime just so they can go back to prison. Paul deals with freedom in Christ and what the looks like. He wants to encourage us to live as freed men in Christ and not for ourselves which is how slaves to sin live. Ask God to help you see your own sin and struggles as you read Galatians.

Read Galatians 5:1-6

Summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in verse 1.

How do people submit again to a yoke of slavery?

What does Paul say in verses 2 to 4 about Christians who go back to following the law and their own works?

This does not mean people lost their salvation. What does it mean?

Look at verses 5 and 6. What does Paul say needs to be our attitude toward salvation and being in heaven one day? There are two things.

Paul is dealing with Jewish teachers who followed him and tried to tell that people needed to be circumcised to go to heaven. This was the false teaching Paul was dealing with. What are some things people try to say we need “to do” to be saved today, that are wrong in the spirit of verse 6?

PRAYER – Your faith would be strengthened and not rely on good works.

Day 22

If you're running in a race, what are ways you get hindered or distracted from your goal of winning the race?

Why is it easy for these things to happen to a person?

I ran cross country in middle and high school. It was hard work and often boring. There is no ball or stick or other equipment. You often are competing against your own self. There are lots of barriers to running a good race: poor training, not eating right or getting enough sleep, wet weather, cold temperatures, big hills, wooded courses with roots and other foot falls, and of course the other people running and jostling for position. That is a lot of barriers. No wonder people don't run. Paul is going to make a comparison between the Christian walk and running a race today. Ask God to help you see and understand that picture from Galatians.

Read Galatians 5:7-12

Who was hindering the Galatian Christians? Look back if you need to.

What are 3 things/people that distract you in your walk with Christ? How?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

In verses 8 and 9, what does Paul say about those things or people who are hindering us in our faith? (Look up leaven to get the full force of what he is saying in verse 9)

In verses 10 to 12, what does Paul say about those false teachers and people who are distracting believers from following Jesus?

This sounds harsh. Is it? What is Paul's point?

The cross is offensive to unbelievers and those who emphasize works according to verse 11. Why is the cross offensive to them?

What are 2 things you can do about the things or people who are or are trying to hinder you in your walk with Christ?

1.

2.

PRAYER – You would run well; help in the things or people hindering you.

Day 23

We hear the phrase, “love your neighbor as yourself” a lot of times. What does it even mean?

What are ways you have loved someone else as yourself? Give 2 examples.

1.

2.

In the second *Hunger Games* a poisonous fog was coming towards Katniss and her group. One of their group was older and had to be carried and she knew she was a liability to the group. When the opportunity came, she ran towards the fog, dying, so that the rest of the group could escape. She loved the others as herself. As you approach Galatians today, ask God to help you see and understand His word.

Read Galatians 5:13-15

We are called to freedom in Christ. How do you think people use that freedom in Christ to sin (do things for themselves only)?

We are to serve others. What are 3 ways you can serve others?

1.

2.

3.

Think of the law. Why do you think it is summarized in “loving your neighbor as yourself”?

What does Paul warn the people about in verse 15?

What are ways in which we bite and devour one another as Christians?

PRAYER – Unity in the church; opportunities to love & serve each other.

Day 24

What is a famous battle that comes to mind from your knowledge of history? Who won the battle? Why did they win?

What is a battle you will face in your life? What will determine whether you will win or not?

What will help you win a battle? Better generals, more advanced weaponry, well trained and equipped soldiers, high ground and the list goes on. These are just some factors that help determine who will win a battle. As Christians we are in a spiritual battle every day. The question is how are you equipped to fight in this battle? Ask God to equip and prepare you to fight for Him in every area of your life as you read today.

Read Galatians 5:16-24

What does Paul say about the conflict in this war in verses 16 to 18?

List all the works of the flesh from verses 19 to 22.

What are two that you struggle with in your life from this list? Write how you struggle with it.

1.

2.

Now if your life is characterized by these sins, then what does Paul say will be the penalty? What does that say about sin?

Verses 22 to 23 give us the fruit of the spirit. Write how you have seen that fruit in your own life. Give a practical example.

1. Love –

2. Joy –

3. Peace –

4. Patience –

5. Kindness –

6. Goodness –

7. Faithfulness –

8. Gentleness –

9. Self-Control –

PRAYER – God would grow you in the fruit of spirit, help you to not sin.

Day 25

What is a burden that someone in your life could have? What are ways in which you could help that person with that burden?

Why do we often not help those with burdens they are bearing? What does that show us about our hearts?

Around Easter I love the part of the story where Simon of Cyrene comes along and carries the cross. We see this in Matthew 27. He bears the cross the rest of the way to the place where Jesus would ultimately be crucified. In Jesus biggest hour of need Simon was there to carry his burden for him, leaving us an example of how to serve Jesus Christ. Of course Jesus carried the burden of our sin to the cross, a burden we could never carry ourselves. Ask God to help you understand his word today.

Read Galatians 5:25-6:5

If we live by the spirit what are we not to do according to 5:25 and 26?

How is and was Jesus life an example that is the opposite of this?

What do verses 1 and 2 say we are supposed to do as Christians? Next to each one write down one practical way you can do that.

What is the warning Paul gives us in verses 1 and 3? What does show about our weakness as humans?

In verses 4 and 5 what is a consequence for not looking to God but our own selves?

What are 3 sins you struggle with in your life? Describe how you struggle with that sin.

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – Confess your sin from above; ask for strength to resist sin.

Day 26

If you plant sunflower seeds, what sort of flowers will grow up from the ground? How can you be sure? Why won't violets or tulips grow? How will they grow? What do they need?

I love planting my garden: tomatoes, peppers, rhubarb, beans, squash, peas, cucumbers and zucchini. It gives us some good food in the summer. Now in order to grow they need good dirt, water, sunlight and someone to pull the weeds. How did I know what would grow? Well I hoped the package was right in telling me the contents. It was proved weeks later when the sprouts started to come up. Today Paul uses the illustration of gardening to teach us spiritual truths. Ask God to help you see your own faith in the picture Paul paints for us.

Read Galatians 6:6-10

What do we need to do for our teachers according to verse 6? Why is that important to do?

List 2 teachers in your life that you should be sharing good things with. What can you share with them to show you appreciate them?

1.

2.

Look at verses 7 to 9. What are 3 things that Paul says about sowing and reaping?

1.

2.

3.

God promises that we will bear fruit for him if we are looking to and trusting him. What are 2 ways we bear fruit for God?

1.

2.

What does verse 10 say about who we are to serve?

List 3 people that you can do good to and serve? Next to each one write what is something you can do good for them.

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – Pray for those people above and pray for your 2 teachers.

Day 27

What do people believe you need to “do” in order to get to heaven?

Why do people want to believe it is about what we need “to do” and not just about what God does for us?

We live in a culture that believes that you don't get something for nothing. We were doing a car wash in our community. After washing someone's car, they asked how much they owed. We said nothing. We don't need any money and we are not taking any money. We wanted to serve our community and get to know our neighbors. The person's comment was, teenagers don't do something for nothing. They believed that we all do things for ourselves, that we are selfish. That does translate to our faith. Many people sing in the choir, go to church and youth group, participate in service projects and mission trips because it is about earning favor with God and heaven and not serving out of love for God. That is the last challenge to us in the book of Galatians. Ask God to grow you in your faith as you read his word today.

Read Galatians 6:11-18

People did what work in order to avoid persecution in verse 12? Why did they do this?

What were people boasting about in verse 13? Why?

According to verses 14 and 15, what is Paul's attitude towards works and his salvation?

If you believe what Paul is saying then, what does it mean to be a new creation? What does that look like?

How did Paul know the cost of serving Christ according to verse 17?
What are ways in which he suffered? (see 2 Corinthians 11:21-29)

PRAYER – That you would do good works because you love God.