

## Series Slide

In 2018, Barnes & Noble bookstores were nearing total financial collapse.

Nothing they did was working.

in 2011- they went digital with an online store and an e-reader- The NOOK- which took off at first, but quickly declined.

They dedicated the majority of their floor space to toys, games, and cards- since they thought the printed book was dying.

They opened a cafe- with terrible coffee.

In 2018, they lost \$18 million and fired 1,800 full time employees.

The company fired their CEO.

Their stock share prices were down more than 80%.

Then in August of 2019, James Daunt was hired as the new CEO.

And you know what his super power was? He loves books.

He came in and ended all the deals with publishers that required the store to place books in prominent locations like widows or storefront kiosks simply to make more money. Instead-

He let the staff control their own shops. Recommending books they love and putting those books on display. So that each store would be a reflection of the local people's tastes- instead of somebody in corporate marketing that made a deal with a publisher.

Barnes & Noble slowly started to turn back into a bookstore- committed to selling books. And in so doing- they became a haven for people that actually love books.

In 2021, sales got back to pre-pandemic levels- and kept growing. The company regained the trust of customers. In fact, in 2022, B&N opened 16 new bookstores and are on pace to double that in 2023.

Here's journalist and cultural commentator Ted (JOY-ya) Gioia writing about the B&N turnaround.

**"Frankly, I could draw many...lessons from the Barnes & Noble turnaround. I praise its decentralization, and its willingness to empower booksellers at the local stores. I like the way the stores look nowadays, and the improved selection on the shelves. But the key element uniting all of this is putting books and readers first, and everything else second."**

**That's a strategy that others could learn from. Although I'm not sure you can teach it.**

**You don't fall in love for logical reasons, and you could never convince someone else to do so on the basis of arguments. People either feel it or they don't. That's true whether you love your spouse or you love something more intangible like a song or a book or a movie.**

**But even if you can't teach this kind of love, you know it when you see it. There are people who are passionate about these things. They believe in them with ardor and devotion. You can find them and hire these people—and those are the individuals you can trust.**

**And maybe, in some rare instances, one of them even becomes the boss. If it happened at Barnes & Noble, it could happen anywhere."**

**Title slide: "New Boss/Old Boss: How to Get/Keep the Holy Spirit in Charge of Your Life"- Galatians 3**

As we go through Paul's letter to the Galatians, we find ourselves in Chapter 3 this week. This is a chapter that can be really difficult to understand. Because there is a ton of stuff about the Jewish law and how it relates to salvation and connection to God.

Frankly- its answering a particular question that none of us are really asking- "Is it necessary to follow all of God's OT law in order to be saved from my sin? Can I be included in Jesus' New Kingdom if I'm not a good law following Jew first?"

So- I'm going to stay out of the weeds of that argument today. But, I do want to honor the bigger meaning and purpose of the passage.

That is this: If you have faith in Jesus- if you are following Jesus- the way that that you became a Christian- is the same way you are going to grow and mature as a Christian.

That is by Keeping the Holy Spirit the Boss.

**Galatians 3:1-14, 21-27**

**You foolish Galatians! Who has cast a spell on you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?**

**2 I only want to learn this from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by believing what you heard? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by the Spirit, are you now finishing by the flesh? 4 Did you experience so much for nothing — if in fact it was for nothing? 5 So then, does God give you the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law? Or is it by believing**

what you heard — 6 just like Abraham who believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness?

7 You know, then, that those who have faith, these are Abraham's sons. 8 Now the Scripture saw in advance that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and proclaimed the gospel ahead of time to Abraham, saying, All the nations will be blessed through you. 9 Consequently, those who have faith are blessed with Abraham, who had faith.

10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, because it is written, Everyone who does not do everything written in the book of the law is cursed. 11 Now it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law, because the righteous will live by faith. 12 But the law is not based on faith; instead, the one who does these things will live by them. 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree. 14 The purpose was that the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, so that we could receive the promised Spirit through faith.

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21 Is the law therefore contrary to God's promises? Absolutely not! For if the law had been granted with the ability to give life, then righteousness would certainly be on the basis of the law. 22 But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin's power, so that the promise might be given on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ to those who believe. 23 Before this faith came, we were confined under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith was revealed. 24 The law, then, was our guardian until Christ, so that we could be justified by faith. 25 But since that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, 26 for through faith you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus. 27 For those of you who were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ.

Transition: All year long- we're learning about and praying for Spiritual Renewal. This passage is going to give us some more clarity around that concept. Today- I want to show you to things the Holy Spirit does in your life when you have faith in Christ.

### 1) The Spirit reminds you why you followed Jesus in the first place- His non-sentimental Love.

When James Daunt took over Barnes and Noble- the changes he made weren't motivated primarily by making money. They were motivated by his love of books, and

bookstores. He was really disgusted by what he saw at Barnes & Noble when he came in. He called the store “crucifyingly boring”. He asked employees at every store to take every book off the shelf, and re-evaluate whether it should stay. Every section needed to be looked at under the banner of LOVE OF BOOKS. He said he wanted to create a bookstore that was “intellectually satisfying” and that “feeds your mind”.

He said he was coming in to “weed out the rubbish” in the stores.

Now listen to Paul.

### **v 1**

Doesn't he sound like a new boss coming in to clean house?

“You unintelligent fools! What in the world happened? Has somebody cast a spell on you? You have forgotten your love...for Jesus.”

When he says “Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified before your eyes”- he doesn't mean that all the Galatians were in Jerusalem when Jesus was crucified. Those words “Publicly Portrayed”- are actually the greek word PRO-GRAPHO.

That literally means “written before”. In other words- Paul is saying- when the message of Jesus dying on a cross in your place and resurrecting came to you- you were so moved by it! It deeply affected you. Its like you saw it with your own eyes. You were all in on following Jesus!

I could tell the Holy Spirit was doing something with you that I could not do. He was allowing you to see and understand that without Jesus' death in your place you would be condemned for your sin and eternally separated from God and his Kingdom.

That moved you!!! The Spirit SHOWED you how much you needed Jesus. It was drawn right in front of your eyes.

So whats the problem?

### **v 2-3**

Now, Paul says, you are believing this garbage that you can't follow Jesus until you keep all the Jewish law.

So he poses these questions.

If God's rescue of you from your sin- was all his doing. Jesus lived the life you couldn't live. He died the death you should have died. Now he is offering you his reward of eternal life-and the only way you know that is because the Holy Spirit allowed it to be revealed to you when someone shared that gospel news with you- If all that was the

work of the Spirit- the way you STARTED loving and following Jesus- How in the world can you now think God has switched it up on you and is asking you to get a list of laws and be sure that you follow each one to the tee- or he will look at you and say “GET OUT OF HERE!”?

If the Spirit started this transformational work in you- why do you think YOU are the one whose going to finish it?”

Do you see what he’s doing? He’s doing what James Daunt did at Barnes & Noble. He’s saying “You lost the love you had at first. So its time to go in and reevaluate everything.”

#### **v 5**

He says “Take a look at your shelves. Weed out the rubbish.” Why did God give you his Spirit- How is he working miracles among you? Is it because he’s really impressed with your keeping of the law? NO. Go back to the cross. Go back to what was so impactful for you. Seeing God sacrifice for you. Seeing his great act of love. Remember how it pricked you? How it moved you?

Its like James Daunt walking into the room with the Corporate CEOs and Marketing team at B&N and saying, “Guys- we’re in the book business. And our customers are really into books. Stop testing the market. Stop taking polls. Remember what it was like when you discovered your love for books? Go back there. Let that guide you.”

Then he gets into this comparison of Abraham and the Law.

#### **v 6 -7**

Let me try to summarize his whole argument here.

He is saying- “Ok you guys want to obey the law to get into God’s family... because the law came before Jesus? Well- you know who came before law? Abraham did. Yeah- Abraham. The father of the Jewish people. And HOW- pray tell- was Abraham welcomed into God’s family? By the law? No - BY FAITH. HE believed what God said.

#### **v 8**

Now look at this. Paul personifies “The Scripture”. Ok the Greek word here for “Scripture” is Graphe. You recognize it? Its the root of the word for “Publicly Portrayed” Pro-Grapho that we read in verse 1. It means “writings”

And look at the way he personifies “the writings” here.

He says “The Scripture saw in advance that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and proclaimed the gospel ahead of time to Abraham.”

So in verse 1- he is making the point that the Holy Spirit showed them in a deep way how beautiful and effective God's love is in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. And they believed it.

Then he says that Abraham had the same experience. But here's the thing. There was no Law, no OT, no 10 commandments- when God made a promise to Abraham to make him into a family that would last forever. He just heard God's voice.

And he believed.

He encountered God by hearing God's word. And now- Paul is saying- "That is what Scripture does" That's what the OT did. and by extension- that's what the NT does.

It portrays Christ as crucified and risen from the dead- and all the implications of that in such a deep way that it moves you. It wows you with God's love. And everything that comes after that...all the obedience to God...is not motivated by fear...or a lack of approval. But by love.

Notice the connection with the WORD that God SPEAKS- the SCRIPTURE- and what the Holy Spirit portrays to you. THEY ALL JIBE TOGETHER.

Look how Peter puts it.

## **2 Peter 1:19-21**

**We also have the prophetic word strongly confirmed, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you know this: No prophecy of Scripture comes from the prophet's own interpretation, 21 because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**

Look here's the point.

There is an unbreakable connection running from the words God spoke to Abraham and the prophets- to what was proclaimed about Jesus' death & resurrection- to the Bible you have on your phone or in your lap.

It is all God's word.

And if you want to know how the Spirit works- He will not be disconnected from the Bible. He will not contradict the Bible. He will not contradict God's message to Abraham- if you want to be welcomed into God's family- it will be by grace through faith. By believing God's word...not by a set of actions you perform to prove you are good enough.

And the Holy Spirit's job is to remind you of that good news.

Let me end this point by showing you the way the Holy Spirit “finishes” what he starts in you. by looking at what the Scripture says about him. Particularly- what Jesus tells his disciples about the Holy Spirit.

### **John 16:8**

When Jesus tells his disciples about what the Holy Spirit will do- he tells them the Holy Spirit will convict the world about sin, righteousness and judgment.

To convict- means to expose...or reveal the truth about. To bring a conviction- a belief based on the truth. In other words- That God is right...when we put ourselves at the center of the universe- we are wrong- and it is right to judge that as right and wrong.

Listen- one of the things the Holy Spirit does is remind you when you aren't living in step with the gospel. When you are living as a child of God. When you are out of step with love.

Like James Daunt- or the Apostle Paul- he comes in and says, “What's going on here? You've traded out the good books- and you've put up these cheap imitations all motivated by money. You've made a deal with the publisher instead of sticking to your first love.”

The Holy Spirit addresses your sin- he points it out- especially by reminding you of Scripture- what has been written in the Bible- and says- “Time to repent. Time to get back to following Jesus.”

### **John 14:25-27**

**25 “I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. 26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.**

**27 “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful.**

Notice- again- the connection to the work of the Holy Spirit and God's word. Jesus says to his disciples- I have said a lot while I've been with you...and when I leave physically- the Holy Spirit will keep those things fresh on your mind.

Particularly- he says- to Counsel- or also translated COMFORT you. The word Counselor here is the Greek word para-kletos.

It means to “call alongside” or call next to.

And notice- how Jesus connects the Holy Spirit's role to the Peace he gives. Is your heart troubled or fearful? It must be that you have forgotten something deep and true about the gospel. About what Jesus said and did. Because if he was crucified in your place- you can't and won't be condemned for your sin. Which means you don't have to be afraid to confess it. Which means you can be free from its bondage. Which means you can- with the Holy Spirit's help- walk in the way of righteousness...following in Jesus' steps.

Don't be afraid. Your sin does not have the last say about who you are or to whom you belong. Jesus does. You are not your own. You've been bought with a price.

This is what the Holy Spirit says. Always reminding you of what Jesus said and did.

Not to make you feel bad- rather to comfort and counsel you- to live a life that aligns with God's love.

Finally- lets go back for one more beautiful truth the Spirit reminds us of.

#### **Romans 8:15-17**

**For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba", Father! " 16 The Spirit himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, 17 and if children, also heirs — heirs of God and coheirs with Christ — if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.**

Here's the full circle connection to our text today. The Holy Spirit- reminds you that you are in the family that God welcomes in by faith. Abraham's family. the Holy Spirit reminds your spirit- that you are one of God's kids. Jesus' brothers and sisters. So that when suffering is present. When life feels impossible. That you can lift your eyes above the dark clouds gathering and see your future.

Resurrection. Wholeness. Peace. Shalom. Because nothing can separate God from his children.

#### **Back to 1)**

Listen- all this is why I'm telling you that the Spirit reminds you of Jesus' non-sentimental love. Because love that is only sentimental- is not grounded in any real action. Its just a feeling.

And I'm telling you, and so will the Holy Spirit- that Jesus DID something. He DID something to secure your spot in the family of God. He was shamefully crucified to separate you from your sin...and he was gloriously resurrected to defeat death and unite you to God forever.



He backed up what he said about Love. His love is non-sentimental.

Love is cheap- its not love- if its not grounded in Truth. In reality.

Jesus said "I am the Truth. I am the ultimate reality."

And then he died on a cross to welcome you in.

He is the Truth with LOVE.

And so- there is no ignoring sin. There is no "ahhh- what I've done against God is not that big a deal." No- The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin and righteousness and judgment.

AND- he comforts us and counsels us with the only hope we have. Jesus's death in our place. Only the Bible is as honest and real about the ways the world is broken- and how each of us play a role in that. AT THE SAME TIME- its absolutely comforting that God himself has done something- is doing something- and will do something to make it all right.

And- miraculously- has made a way for us to be a part of it.

THIS is the book we constantly move to the front of the store. This is the message that makes us overflow with love for God.

TRANSITION: And when this catches on- and we all start to listen and obey the Holy Spirit- that's when Spiritual Renewal goes viral...and overflows in life-giving love from love-giving lives into Murfreesboro.

See..

## **2) The Spirit empowers us locally to lead lives of love over law.**

Remember what James Daunt did with his employees? He didn't give an edict that said, "Here are all the ways you are going to represent me- from Anaheim to Albany. Everyone is going to like the same books- sell the same books- and say all the same phrases. No- rather, he set up an identity and a culture with B&N that said "We love books. And we are going to be a haven for intelligent book-buyers."

Then once he had established the identity and the culture- he turned his employees loose to lead locally. Essentially- he said, "Now that you know who we are as Barnes and Noble- think about who you are as a part of that- and think about what the community around you needs as it concerns books."

Because here's the thing. The people of Anaheim are going to be different from the people in Albany or Augusta or Abilene.

And then there's a whole bunch of other cities with Barnes and Nobles that don't even start with the letter A.

So with a culture and identity firmly established- James Daunt entrusted his employees to be guided by that culture of love of books- as they made the choices for what books to promote in their community.

Sound risky? Only if his employees were disconnected from the culture and identity that he established.

Take a look at the way Galatians 3 ends.

#### **Galatians 3:24-29**

**The law, then, was our guardian until Christ, so that we could be justified by faith. 25 But since that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, 26 for through faith you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus.**

**27 For those of you who were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ. 28 There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise.**

Paul says the law was our Guardian.

In other words, the law was a nanny, a baby sitter, an assistant to the Regional Manager- an interim boss. He doesn't mean the law was bad- he just means it was a place holder. It was incomplete.

It's the old boss. The temporary boss. It came to you after God made a promise to Abraham to create a forever family that blesses the whole world. And now- Jesus is the fulfillment of that promise.

Meanwhile- the law- in the in between time was giving you a list of things that you could look at and obey to become set apart. It was mechanical. It was an edict that said "Ok- God's people all will do these things".

Now that Jesus is here- he is the fulfillment of the Law. The Holy Spirit, the scripture says, writes the law on our heart. By the Holy Spirit- we participate in the divine nature. We don't have to constantly look at a downloaded list that gives us step by step instructions- even though that is what some of us think we want.

No- instead we live in a relationship with God. Where he has given us a new identity. And it doesn't mean that as a Christian we cease to be male and female, or different nationalities or even lose our personality...it means that our identity as belonging to Christ takes precedence over all other identities. I belong to Jesus, before I belong to male...I belong to Jesus, before I belong to American, or white, or Gen X or Republican or Democrat or athlete or poet or any other identity.

If I have been baptized into Christ- I have been clothed with Christ. And now- in all of those places that my identity carries me- I represent Christ to those people.

And there are a million different ways the Holy Spirit might call me to do that. Because I live in the neighborhood that I do. I work the job I do. I go to the barbershop I do. And so being constantly reminded of God's love that was PROGRAPHOed for me on the cross...and going back daily to the Bible to read the GRAPHO that reminds me of my identity and the culture of God's people- which is love and self-sacrifice.

Thinking of others as more important than myself- I overflow the love that Christ showed on the cross. In real and tangible ways.

Its non-sentimental.

### **Back to 2)**

Church- this is really good news. God has empowered us with his Holy Spirit to lead lives of love locally. He has given each of us gifts to use for the church- and to overflow into our community- that will help others discover the truth about God's love.

We can become the way- that people have the gospel PROGRAPHOed to them.

So here's my challenge to you- if you are on board for Spiritual Renewal.

- 1) Have you been baptized into Christ?
- 2) Have you given a thought to the book you are displaying to your neighbors and coworkers?

Pray