

Bible Discussion 46: Legalism and Grace

Text: Galatians 3:1-6; Galatians 5:1-6

Purpose: To receive the truth of justification by faith so that we don't fall into legalism, but freely strive for holiness.

Opening Question: *Growing up what were some of the house rules your family had?*

Resources: [Summary and Outline](#) / [Galatians Overview Video](#)

Read and Discuss: Galatians 3: 1-6

Galatians is written to a number of churches Paul started in his first missionary journey. Paul writes this letter as a protest against a corruption of the gospel of Christ. Some false teachers from Jerusalem came to the churches teaching a counter message of justification by works of the law rather than justification by faith. They were bringing in Old Testament teachings and by-passing the work of the cross. When Paul learned that this teaching had infiltrated the Galatian churches he wrote a passionate correction.

1. *How do you guard your doctrine so that false beliefs do not mislead you from the core truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ?*
2. Gal. 3:3 says the Galatians began in the Spirit, but are finishing in the flesh. Their salvation was birthed spiritually, but they are working in their flesh to keep it going. *Are there areas in your life that you lean on your flesh and not the Spirit? How does knowing we don't have to live out our salvation by ourselves encourage you?*
3. *What were some of the legalistic rules that were put on you in the past? And how does justification by faith lead you to live in holiness?*

Read and Discuss: Galatians 5:1-6

The Judaizers who were coming from Jerusalem teaching a law based gospel were encouraging the Christians to become circumcised so that their faith could be validated. It was their ritual and own action that would demonstrate that they had been justified. But Paul's message was that they were no longer bound by the Old Testament mark of faith and that Jesus came to give them freedom from having to perform a ritual. It didn't mean that there was no standard for the Christian. The Christian has laws and rules, but the desire to follow them is based on the desire for freedom in Christ and not freedom to sin.

4. *How has the grace of God given you new desires and motive to not want to sin? What are some of the changes in your desires and direction in life after receiving God's grace?*
5. *Because Jesus came to set us free what ways do you want to see more freedom in your life?*