ONE GOSPEL

The only way we can be at peace with the holy God is through faith in Jesus' sacrifice for us at Calvary – there is no other way, and no other gospel.

KEY POINTS

- Paul established churches in the Galatian region (modern-day Turkey) on his first missionary journey and became very concerned about events that took place after his departure: some Jewish Christians were teaching that it was necessary to obey Jewish laws and customs in order to be truly saved.
- Paul's letter to the Galatians was in direct response to these 'Judaisers'.
- He begins by stating that "Our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of God" (Galatians 1:3-5).
- This is the simple, pure message of salvation – Jesus died to save us from our sins and we can only be delivered from this 'present evil age' through Him.
- In Paul's passion for the truth of this message, he pronounces a curse upon anyone—human or angelic—who would preach anything different.
- Paul then establishes his credibility as a messenger who can be trusted. He'd already paid dearly, in persecutions, to preach the gospel.
- Some were hesitant to stand for the freedom and grace the gospel offers and Paul was vocal in even opposing someone even of the status of Peter. He really believed this gospel!
- Here are Paul's main arguments (2:16, 21-22):
  - Do not think you can save yourself and be justified in the sight of God through your own good works. This is an impossibility.
  - No human being can ever be good enough through obeying Jewish law to earn salvation.
  - Biblically speaking, to "justify" is to "declare righteous; to make righteous in the sight of God". We are justified through Jesus' sacrifice at Calvary and that's how we have peace with God. To not believe this is to "nullify the grace of God", and count His death as nothing, or "in vain". He has to justify us or we have no hope.
- Jesus accepts us if we simply believe He will give us salvation for free. We don't have to earn it—in fact, it is impossible to earn it.
- No baby has ever been born clean and dressed. They're all born bloody and naked. Somebody else has to clean them up – it's totally impossible for them to do it for themselves.

KEY SCRIPTURES:
Galatians 1:3-5; 2:16, 20-21; 3:10-14, 26-28
Acts 2:38-41a

- Likewise, we must allow Jesus to clean up our broken, baggage-filled lives – it's totally impossible for us to do it ourselves.
- He accepts those who battle fear and doubt. He truly has the power to conquer fear and remove doubt about the reality of His offer of salvation.
- Some of us try to do good works, but we have no assurance in our soul that we're truly "good enough", according to God's standard, and ready to go to heaven.
- But He offers us His free salvation, independent of good works (which can never be good enough to buy our way into His eternal presence). *Accept it.*
- The biblically prescribed way to enter into covenant with God and receive His free salvation and justification is this:
  > Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).
- This was the prescription given on the day of Pentecost and practiced by the church throughout the New Testament.
- We must obey His word and do it His way. He alone can save!

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. In the Key Scriptures and throughout the book of Galatians, what does Paul emphasize about our salvation? Which points stand out to you and why?
2. What is the purpose of the Jewish Covenant Law in the life of a believer in Christ? Is it of any value?
3. What about good works? Are they of any value? Explain.
4. Compare Paul's message in Galatians to Peter's message in Acts 2. How do they work together to help us understand salvation through Jesus Christ?

Prayer Time

Jesus, thank You for providing salvation by grace through faith in You. Without it I would be hopeless, no matter how hard I try.

L.G. ice-Breaker: What do you feel are the biggest time-wasters in our day/time/society? Are you able to control your interactions with them?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 2018

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

(Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS