

# Galatians



God tells us that Ezra read from the book of the Law,  
day after day and that the people of God  
were filled with joy!

## **Doctrine for the Mind and Heart**

*Westminster Shorter Catechism*

*Question 64*

What is required in the fifth commandment?

*Answer*

The fifth commandment requires us to preserve the honour and perform the duties belonging to everyone in their different positions and relationships in life.

*Proof Texts*

Romans 13:1,7; Ephesians 5:21-22,24; 6:1,4-5,9; 1 Peter 2:17

## **Memory verse of the week**

James 3:17 – Wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

**Psalm of the Week.** Psalm 116B. The words are on page 8.

## **Pray for:**

Mon – Bob and Bett Parry

Tues – Colin, Corine, Ella, Rose, Lucy, Mabel and Hendrik Postma

Wed – Andrew, Heather, Caitlin, Catherine and Campbell Quigley

Thurs – Tantely Rakotoarisoa

Fri – Lorna Russell

18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021

Produced by Ottawa RPC to help family worship.

## **Monday – Galatians 4:1-7 – Not Slaves But Sons**

The Old Testament church is like an under-age child, under teachers and managers who educate him about things, but he does not quite see things clearly. The teacher is the law, and they are taught by the ceremonies of the law to look to Christ, though they do not fully understand what that means.

But now that Christ has come, the child has grown up. Christ, who is truly God, for our sakes becomes man and takes on the form of a servant to redeem those under the law. Christ agrees to suffer and die for us, that He might redeem us from the wrath of God, and from the curse of the law, which we, as sinners, are under. We are now no longer treated as servants or children, but as sons, grown up to maturity, who are allowed greater freedoms and privileges than when they are under teachers.

Because God has adopted us, He has given us His Holy Spirit that enables us to pray to God as our Father. Upon believing in Christ, we become the sons of God, are accepted and adopted by Him, and being the sons of God, are entitled to the heavenly inheritance.

From these verses we see the amazing love and mercy of God the Father toward us in sending His Son into the world to redeem and save us, of God the Son in coming so low and suffering so much for us, and in God the Holy Spirit in agreeing to live within the hearts of believers. We who are by nature children of wrath and disobedience have become by grace children of love.

### **Questions:**

1. What is the Old Testament church compared with?
2. What role did the law have in the Old Testament?
3. How are we treated now that Christ has come?
4. What has God given us when he adopted us?
5. How does God the Father show us his amazing love and mercy?

## Tuesday – Galatians 4:8-11 – A Great Change

Paul reminds the Galatians what they were before the Gospel was preached to them. They were ignorant of the true God, the way He was to be worshiped, and they were slaves to their idols. Those who do not belong to God always have some sort of idol in their life - something that they put in God's place, and this is always wrong, because only the true God is to be worshiped.

Paul tells the Galatians to remember the happy change that has come upon them through the preaching of the Gospel. Now, by the grace of God, they know the true God and His Son Jesus Christ and have been delivered from their ignorance and slavery. All our acquaintance with God begins with Him; we know Him because we are known by Him.

The Galatians are unreasonable and foolish to go back into slavery. Paul is surprised that they who know the light of the Gospel are turning to the darkness of keeping the law to be saved. The law has no power to cleanse the soul and give lasting satisfaction like the Gospel does. The Galatians are not even Jews, they do not have the past ties to the law. It does not make sense for them to start keeping these ceremonies. It is possible for Christians to be drawn into great sins, like these Galatians, and the more mercy God has shown to any, the worse it is when they turn from Him.

Paul is concerned that his work amongst them has been in vain. He has spent a lot of time teaching them the Gospel, but now they seem to be giving it up, and this is always a cause of great sadness to faithful ministers.

### Questions:

1. What were the Galatians before they heard the Gospel?
2. What change have the Galatians gone through?
3. How are the Galatians being foolish and what is Paul's concern?

## **Wednesday – Galatians 4:12-16 – From Friends to Enemies**

Paul tells the Galatians of the love they used to have for him. He calls them his brothers and wants them to lay aside any resentment they might have. He tells them that he has no quarrel with them. He has spoken strongly about what they have done, not because he is personally offended, but because he must defend the truth of the Gospel, and he is genuinely concerned about their welfare. If we ever need to reprove people, we need to be sure that it is not done out of a personal resentment, but out of concern for the glory of God and the good of the other person.

Paul reminds the Galatians of the difficulty under which he worked when he first came among them. We do not know what Paul's bodily ailment is, but whatever it is, it does not bother the Galatians. They do not despise or reject Paul for it, but they receive him as a messenger of Christ. Notice how quickly and strongly these Galatians have changed in their opinion of Paul. This should remind us to seek acceptance from God not from men, because men change like the weather.

Paul then goes on to say, 'what happened?' Why have they changed towards Paul? They once were happy in receiving the Gospel, why have they turned from that? Paul, who once was their favourite, has now become their enemy. Is it because he told them the truth? Often when we are just faithfully telling the truth of salvation, we can make enemies. But that should not stop us. Again, we need to find our approval in God not in other people. If we really care for others, like Paul cares for these Galatians, we must speak the truth in love to them.

### **Questions:**

1. What does Paul call the Galatians?
2. How did the Galatians initially receive Paul?
3. Why do you think the Galatians now view Paul as their enemy?

## Thursday – Galatians 4:17-18 – False Teachers

Paul is describing to the Galatians the character of those false teachers who have made it their business to draw the Galatians away from the Gospel. These false teachers are men who are looking out more for themselves than for anybody else. They pretend to show a lot of love to the Galatians, but they are not sincere. Their goal is to get the Galatians not to follow Christ but to follow them.

Sometimes people or ideas may seem very exciting and enthusiastic, but they are not true or sincere. False teachers often try to make people agree with them by being nice to them. But usually, no matter what they say, they really care more about themselves than about others.

Paul gives the Galatians and us a good principle to apply in situations like this. He says that it is good to be made much of, it is good to be zealous for a good thing. It is alright, it is good to be excited and enthusiastic about something good. But if you are excited and enthusiastic about something bad - the result is disastrous. And on the flip side - you should make much of something that is good. You should be zealous, excited, enthusiastic for what is good, for the truth. This zeal should be constant and steady, not here today and gone tomorrow, and present even when your leaders are not around. This is part of what it means to be a whole-hearted Christian.

### Questions

1. What do we know about the character of the false teachers?
2. What is the goal of the false teachers?
3. What is a tactic false teacher often use?
4. What should we be enthusiastic about?

## **Friday – Galatians 4:19-20 – Paul’s Love for the Galatians**

Paul is here telling the Galatians of the great love and concern he has for them. Their change in attitude towards him has not affected how he feels about them. He still has the same respect and love towards them that he had when he was living among them. He is not like their false teachers, who pretend to love them, but in reality, are just looking out for themselves. Paul genuinely cares about what is best for them. They are quick to think of Paul as their enemy, but he assures them that he is their friend, and not just a friend, but a parent. Paul is in anguish that he compares to childbirth. And for what? Why is Paul in such anguish? He is not in anguish over whether or not they love him, he is in anguish to see Christ formed in them, that they might live as Christians, strong in the faith of the Gospel.

Faithful ministers like Paul have a great love for those to whom they minister, and their chief desire is to see men and women come to faith in Christ and grow in that faith. They want to see the congregation be made into the image of Christ, strong and fruitful disciples. To desert or dislike a minister like this is foolish. We also learn from these verses that men do not grow in Christ until they stop trusting in their goodness and rely only upon Christ and His righteousness.

Paul wishes he was with the Galatians. At the minute he does not know what to make of them, but if he was with them, he might find that things are better with them than he fears, and he might have reason to commend them rather than rebuke them.

### **Questions**

1. How does Paul feel about the Galatians?
2. Why is Paul in such anguish over the Galatians?
3. What is the chief desire of a faithful minister?
4. Why does Paul want to be with the Galatians?

## Psalm 116B

4. I still believed, although I said,  
“How sorely I am tried!”  
In my alarm I cried aloud,  
“All men are but a lie!”  
What can I render to the LORD?  
What shall my off’ring be  
For all the gracious benefits  
That He has given me?

5. I’ll lift salvation’s cup, O LORD,  
And on the LORD’s name call;  
My vows I will pay to the LORD  
Before His people all.  
The LORD counts precious in His sight  
The death of all His saints.  
LORD, I’m Your slave, Your handmaid’s son;  
You freed me from my chains!

6. My gifts of thanks I’ll offer You,  
And on the LORD’s name call;  
The vows I promised to the LORD,  
I’ll keep and pay them all  
Before the people of the LORD,  
Within His temple courts,  
There, in Your midst, Jerusalem.  
Give praises to the LORD!