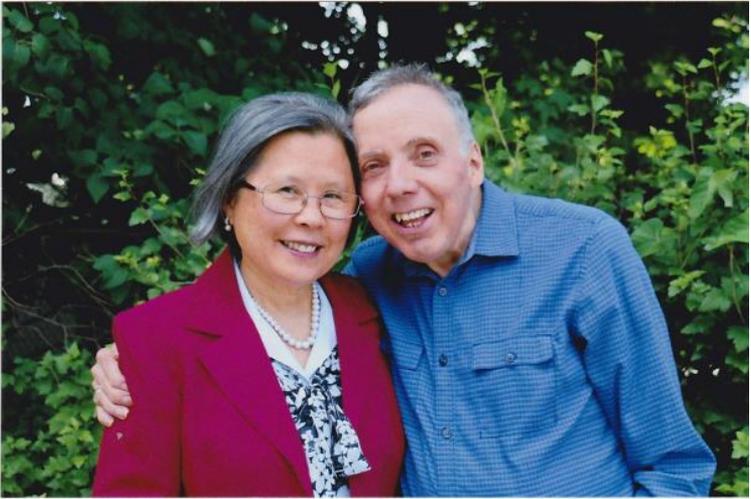


# Galatians



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 65*

What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?

*Answer*

The fifth commandment forbids us to neglect or to do anything against the honour and duty which belongs to everyone in their various positions and relationships in life.

*Proof Texts*

Matthew 15:4-6; Romans 13:8

## **Memory verse of the week**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22,23

**Psalm of the Week.** Psalm 102C. The words are on page 8.

## **Pray for:**

Mon – Sean Russell

Tues – Larry and Leah Sinardo

Wed – Cory, Vanessa, Henry, Samuel and Teddy van der Meer

Thur – Vince, Julie, Samuel, Zakari and Amina Ward

Frid – Dale and Natalie Ward

25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Produced by Ottawa RPC to help family worship.

## **Monday – Galatians 4:21-31 – Slave and Free**

Paul is showing the difference between believers who rest in Christ alone and those who say you need to keep the law to be saved. He compares it to the story of Isaac and Ishmael. Hagar represents the law and the slavery that comes with keeping the law. Sarah represents the promise – God’s promise of a Saviour and the freedom that comes with trusting in that promise, a freedom open to both Jews and Gentiles. Paul then makes the point that the freedom and growth of the Church under the Gospel is what Isaiah is prophesying about in Isaiah 54:1 Sarah, the free woman, the woman of promise, the woman who represents the Gospel, has more children in the end than those born into the slavery of the law.

Paul now applies this history to the present case of the Galatians. Christians, who have accepted Christ, and rely upon Him, and look for justification and salvation by Him alone, become the spiritual, even if they are not the biological, children of Abraham. As such they are entitled to the promised inheritance and its blessings. But Paul warns them that they need to be ready for persecution. Ishmael and his children persecuted Isaac and his children and nothing has changed since then. The children of the world are always going to be opposed to the children of God. Those who try to do things their own way, to save themselves, are never going to like hearing that it is not good enough, and they need a Saviour. Christians should expect to face persecution. But Paul encourages and comforts the Galatians by reminding them that true Christianity lasts forever. They have an eternal inheritance that no amount of persecution can take away.

### **Questions:**

1. Who does Hagar represent?
2. Who does Sarah represent?
3. What makes the Galatians children of Abraham?
4. What should the children of God expect in this world?
5. What is our comfort in this world?

## Tuesday – Galatians 5:1-12 – What hinders us?

Under the Gospel we are freed from the slavery of the ceremonies of the law and the curse of not keeping the law. We owe this freedom to Jesus Christ. He fulfils the ceremonies and keeps the law perfectly but still becomes a curse for us, so we might be free.

Paul tells the Galatians that if they submit to circumcision, they are contradicting everything Christ has done. If they are going to depend on keeping one part of the law in order to be saved, they are under obligation to keep the whole law perfectly. Paul reminds the Galatians that he and those who are with him are Jews by nature, brought up under the law, but when the Holy Spirit brought them to the knowledge of Christ, they stopped depending on good works, and looked for justification (being made right with God) and salvation only by faith in Him. If they, being Jews, are not looking to the law to save them, how foolish it is for the Galatians to be trusting in the law. In the eyes of God our good works count for nothing - what matters is what we think of Christ.

Sometimes we need to ask ourselves what is slowing us down in our Christian life. Are there things or people that are hindering us like the Galatians were being hindered? We should evaluate the things that are strong influences in our life and see if they come from the God who calls us. Even the smallest things can often have a leavening effect in our lives. We might think something is just a 'little' sin and yet in time it can destroy our life. But ultimately Paul, and we, have confidence that Christ is in control of His Church. He protects His people from being led astray through using men like Paul to preach the truth, and He will judge those false teachers.

### Questions:

1. Who gives us freedom from the slavery to the law?
2. What is justification and how are we justified?
3. In whom is our confidence?

## **Wednesday – Galatians 5:13-26 – Fruits of the Spirit**

Paul is telling the Galatians that serious, practical godliness is the best antidote to false teaching. The freedom we have as Christians is not freedom to sin, and though we should hold on to our Christian freedom, we should not use it as an excuse to fight or quarrel with others - instead we are to show love to our Christian brothers and sisters. This love is an evidence of our faith, and it can help stop the fighting that is all too common amongst believers. Paul warns us that if we do not show love, we will end up destroying each other. Churches are destroyed far more often by folk from within than by any trouble on the outside.

Within every believer there is a battle going on between their old sinful self and their new self in Christ. The best way to help our new self is to walk in the Spirit, to spend a lot of time on spiritual things, to be reading God's Word, hearing it preached, praying and trusting in Christ, and making the state of our souls our number one priority. Paul then goes on to list the works of the flesh or sins that are to be avoided and fruits of the Spirit that are to be nurtured in our lives. Paul is not making an exhaustive list of every sin, but he is focusing on ones that are evident to all. The fruits of the Spirit are: love - of God especially and of each other for His sake; joy, a constant delight in God; peace with God and a peaceful attitude and behaviour toward others; patience to put off anger and bear injuries; kindness, a sweet, friendly, and polite attitude that makes us approachable; goodness which shows itself in a readiness to do good to all as we have opportunity; faithfulness where we show justice and honesty in what we say and do to others; gentleness where we are not easily provoked; and self-control where we govern our desires by God's Word.

### **Questions:**

1. What is the best defence against false teaching?
2. What is the best way to help us in the battle that wages within us?
3. Explain one of the fruits of the spirit?

## Thursday – Galatians 6:1-10 – Love of Others

We are taught in these verses to deal gently with those who have succumbed to the temptation to sin. But even though we are to be gentle, we are still to confront them with their sin and seek to bring them to repentance. This is done out of love and with humility, conscious that it is all too easy for us to fall into sin as well.

We are to bear each other's burdens, to sympathise with each other's troubles, and seek to comfort and help however we can. It is easy for us to be harsh and critical of others when they sin and to be so puffed up with a sense of our own importance that we are oblivious to their needs. Paul warns us against deceiving ourselves in this way and tells us to test ourselves, what we say and do, by God's Word. In other words, we should look to the log in our own eye, before we start going on so harshly about the speck in someone else's eye. The more we understand ourselves, the less pride we have and the more compassion we show to others. On the day of judgement it is ourselves we will have to answer for - our burden we will have to bear.

Paul makes clear here that some are called to be ministers, and it is the duty of those who are taught the Word to support and provide for the one who teaches them. Paul then warns the Galatians against thinking they can deceive God by saying one thing and doing another.

It is easy to get tired of doing good, especially doing good to others, so Paul tells us to watch against this tendency. The Lord sees all that we do, and He will reward us for loving and serving Him. So, whenever we have an opportunity to do good, especially to our brothers and sisters in Christ, we should take it with both hands.

### Questions

1. How should be deal with those who have sinned?
2. How are we to bear each other's burdens?
3. What is the duty of those who are taught the Word?
4. What tendency does Paul warn against?

## Friday – Galatians 6:11-18 – Final Words

Paul closes his letter by emphasising to the Galatians that this is coming from him, not from a secretary. He reminds them what the false teachers are really like. They are not sincere - they just want to make a show, so they will look good, and they are picking and choosing which part of the law they want to follow. They are men who are afraid of suffering. They are teaching that Christians must be circumcised because they are afraid of the Jews, and they do not want to open themselves up to the hassle and trouble Paul has gone through at the hands of the Jews. At the end of the day they just want to brag about how many Galatians are on their side. It is not about Christ, it is about them.

Paul, on the other hand, boasts about Christ and what He has done on the cross. This is the basis of all his hope as a Christian; this is the doctrine which he, as an apostle, is resolved to preach; and whatever trials this might bring upon him, he is ready to deal with them and rejoice in them. The more Christ means to Paul the less the things of the world matter. When it comes to being accepted by God, who we are and what we have done does not matter - what matters is our relationship with Christ. Those who are right with God, who are justified by faith in Christ alone, are blessed with peace and mercy and are the true people of God.

Paul finishes by praying for his Galatian brothers. He asks that they might receive from Christ all that grace which they need to guide them in their way, to strengthen them in their work, to establish them in their faith, and to encourage and comfort them in all the trials of life and death itself. We need nothing more to make us happy than the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Questions

1. What do the false teachers fear?
2. What matters most to Paul?
3. How does Paul pray for his brothers in Galatia?

## Psalm 102C

10. Let this be written for the sake  
Of those alive in future days,  
So people He has yet to make  
Will to the LORD lift up their praise.

11. From holy heights the LORD looked down,  
To view the earth from heaven high,  
That He might hear the pris'ner's groan,  
And free them who are doomed to die;

12. That Zion may the LORD's name tell,  
Jerusalem His praise record,  
When gathered are the peoples all,  
And kingdoms join to serve the LORD.