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Resources/Commentaries used for this study:

- *The New American Commentary: Galatians* by Timothy George
- *Galatians (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)* By Thomas R. Schreiner
- *The Message of Galatians* by John R. W. Stott
- *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* by Craig S. Keener

All Scripture passages are taken from the English Standard Version.

Welcome

Hello! We are so glad you decided to join us in this study of Galatians!

Galatians is a fiery letter, written by the Apostle Paul, to a group of churches who were in danger of believing a *different gospel* (Galatians 1:6) than Paul preached to them. This gospel (which, he says in 1:7, is “really no gospel at all”), focuses on becoming right with God (justified) through works of the law, rather than through faith in Jesus Christ. Paul loves the people in these churches, and is perplexed by their actions and their ideas. So, he warns and pleads with them to stand firm in truth, insisting that “it is for freedom that Christ has set us free.” (Galatians 5:1) The Old Testament law should not be at the center of their community, says Paul. Instead, they should fulfill the law of Christ (Gal 6:2), by living in step with the Holy Spirit: loving one another and carrying each other’s burdens.

If you don’t know the good news of Jesus, or you desperately want to know that you believe the *real* gospel, Galatians will ground you in truth. If you have ever struggled with feelings of guilt and condemnation, wondering if you are doing enough to be a good Christian, Galatians will minister to your soul! If you find yourself looking down on others who are not quite living up to your Christian ideals, Galatians will challenge your categories. If you want to know how to live a life which pleases the God whom you love, Galatians will graciously instruct you. We have been challenged, convicted, and encouraged as we have written this study, and we can’t wait to share it with you!

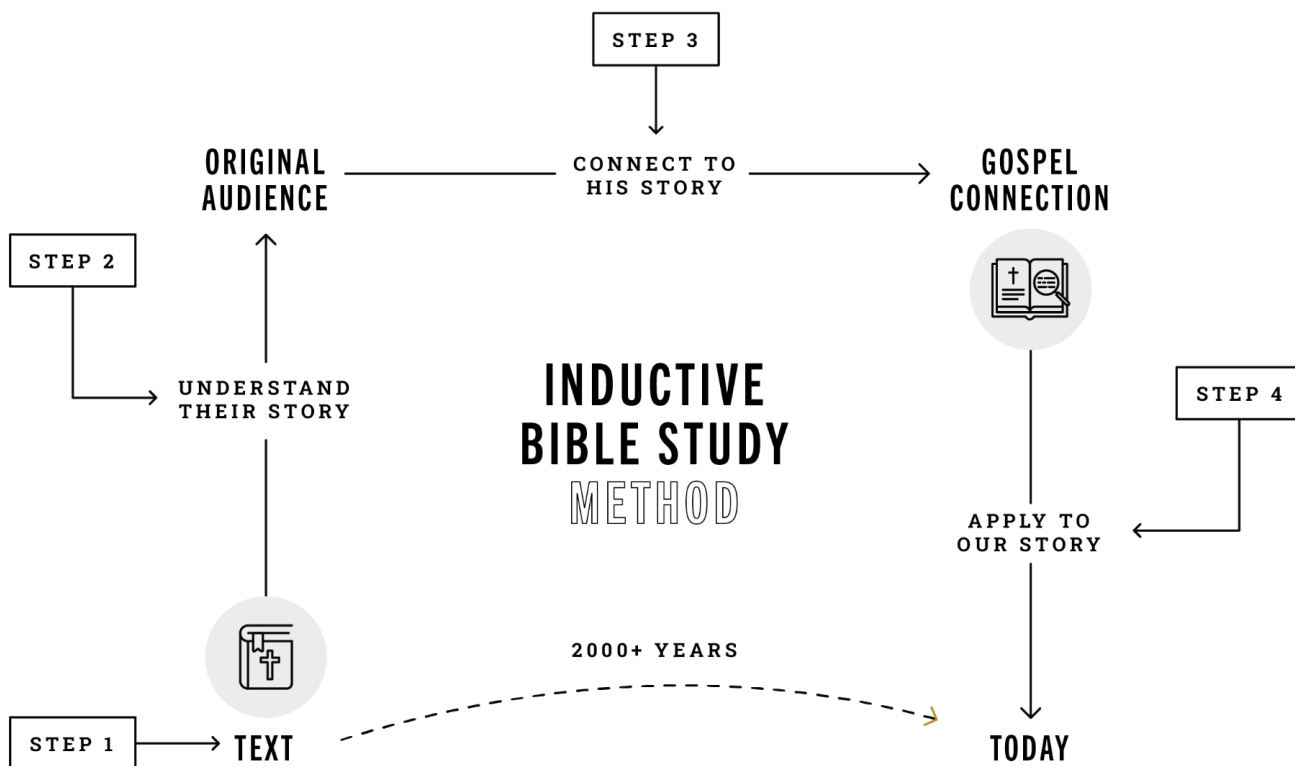
During each week we will work through these steps:

- **At Home: Personal Study**
 - Each week you will have the opportunity to study the text at home in preparation for our weekly meetings. It is not mandatory to complete the study (please attend even if you don’t finish - or start!), but it is recommended because, as you come into contact with God’s word, the Holy Spirit will teach you, rebuke you, correct you, and train you in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). As you meet with others, you can share your questions and your insights, and add meaningfully to the group discussions.
 - The Personal Study can be broken down into 4 steps which are explained on the next page:
 - Step #1 Observe the Text
 - Step #2 Understand their Story
 - Step #3 Connect to His Story
 - Step #4 Apply to Our Story
- **At Bible Study:**
 - **Small Group Discussion** - Each week’s bible study will begin with small group discussion. We will read the scripture together and discuss what we learned from our personal study.
 - **Large Group Teaching** - One of our large group teachers will teach on the text, drawing out biblical themes and application points.
 - **Small Group Prayer** - After the time of teaching, we will gather again in small groups to pray through how this passage, the homework, and the teaching, apply to our own lives as we seek to be a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus.

We look forward to grounding ourselves in God’s gospel of grace as we study Galatians together with you!

The Discipleship team of Northview Community Church

How we are going to study the text each week:



Personal homework section:

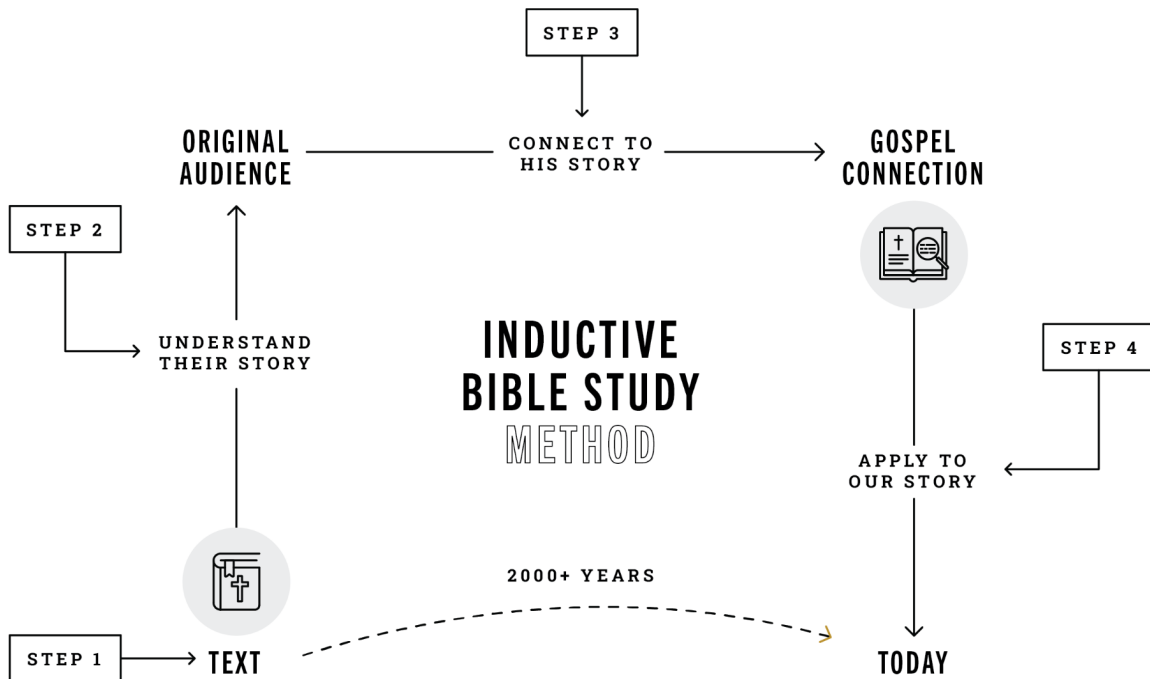
- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
- ☐ **Step 2:** Understand their story by completing the observation questions in the first half of the lesson *SO THAT* you understand what the original author is communicating to his audience.
- ☐ **Step 3:** Connect to God's story by completing the gospel connection questions in the second half of the lesson *SO THAT* you can understand where this passage fits in God's larger story of salvation.
- ☐ **Step 4:** Reflect and Apply to Your story by completing the last page of each lesson *SO THAT* the teaching of the passage helps you to practically grow as a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus.



GALATIANS

Lesson 1 | Galatians 101: Orientation Week

Galatians 1:



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Modern Map of the Mediterranean (Source: Google Maps)



Ancient Map of the Mediterranean (Source: Baker Exegetical Commentary - 2 Corinthians)

Galatians

LESSON ONE: Orientation Week

Large Group Teaching

INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE STUDY

- Introduce Our People
 - Staff
 - Group Leaders - In person & online
- Introduce Our Culture
 - Gather
 - Grow
 - Go
- Introduce Our Study
 - Galatians is a **LETTER** written by the Apostle Paul to a group of churches situated in the province of Galatia.
 - What do we need to know about this letter before we start studying it?
 - Who were the recipients of the letter?
 - When was this letter written?
 - While both of these questions are debated by scholars, the timeline on the following page presents the predominant view of the commentators we have consulted.

TIMELINE FOR GALATIANS¹

- AD 30/33 Jesus was crucified & resurrected. The Christian mission begins.
- AD 34-37 Paul is converted to Christianity and goes to Arabia & Damascus. (Acts 9:19-22, 26:20; Galatians 1:16-18)
- AD 37 Paul meets with Peter in Jerusalem to confirm his gospel. (Acts 9:26-30, Galatians 1:18)
- AD 37-45 Paul ministers in Syria, Tarsus, Cilicia and Antioch. (Acts 9:30, Acts 11:25-26, Galatians 1:21)
- AD 44/47 Paul's second visit to Jerusalem. (Acts 11:27-30, Galatians 2:1-10)
- **AD 46/47 Paul and Barnabas' First Missionary Journey: They plant churches in Galatia.** (Acts 13:4-14:26). Antioch in Pisidia, Lystra and Iconium
- **AD 48 Paul writes Galatians, perhaps from Antioch.** (Acts 14:26-28)
- AD 48/49 The Apostolic Council in Jerusalem. After the council, Paul returns to Antioch. He and Barnabas part ways. (Acts 15:1-29, 30, 36-40)
- **AD 48/49-51 Paul's Second Missionary Journey (with Silas and Timothy): They visit the Galatian churches** and then go on to Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens & Corinth. (Acts 15:36-18:22)
- **AD 52-57 Paul's Third Missionary Journey: He visits the Galatian churches** again and then goes on to Ephesus and Greece. (Acts 18:23 - 21:17)
- AD 57 Paul is arrested in Jerusalem, and held in prison in Caesarea.
- AD 62 Paul arrives in Rome and lives under house arrest.

¹ <https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/chart-40-00-nt-timeline/#chart-40-00-nt-timeline-star-1>

UNDERSTAND THEIR STORY

Small Group Discussion:

As we mentioned in our large group teaching, if we want to understand the contents of any letter, it's important for us to know the author (who wrote it), and the recipients (who it was written to). In the first chapter of Galatians, Paul gives us a lot of information about himself, so we'll learn more about him in Lesson #3. Today, we'll focus on getting a clearer picture of the letter's recipients by discovering what we can learn about them in the New Testament history book: the book of Acts.

Galatians was not written to one church, but to several churches which were located in various cities in the province of Galatia: Antioch in Pisidia, Lystra and Iconium. Locate each of these cities on the map on page 6, and then see what you can discover about them completing the chart below.

1. **GOING OUT:** Read Acts 13:1-12 to see how this journey began, and then carry on to the texts identified below.

	Antioch in Pisidia Acts 13:13-52	Iconium Acts 14:1-6	Lystra & Derbe Acts 14:8-20
How / where did Paul & Barnabas get acquainted with people here?	(v 13-15)		
What was the core content of the message Paul communicated?	(v 23, v 38-39)		(v 15-17)
Who received their message?	(v 42-43, v 48-49)		
Who rejected their message?	(v 44-47, 49-52)		
Why did Paul & Barnabas leave this town?			

2. **GOING BACK.** After going through Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, Paul and Barnabas turn around and head home. Read Acts 14:21-23 and answer the questions below.
 - a. What did Paul and Barnabas **DO** on their second journey through these cities?
 - b. What did Paul and Barnabas **SAY** on their second journey through these cities? What did they tell people in the churches?
3. **GIVING A REPORT.** After planting and further establishing several churches, Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch in Syria (where this journey started), and give their first missionary report! Read Acts 14:24-28 and answer the questions below.
 - a. What did they do when they arrived in Antioch?
 - b. What news did they report to their home church?
 - i. *Does their report surprise you? What news might you have reported if you were them?*
4. Think about the people who are attending the churches in Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium and Lystra.
 - a. What kinds of people are in their congregations?
 - b. What challenges do you think these congregations will face in the future? (eg. think of who is in their churches, consider that Paul & Barnabas have left them and have returned to Antioch)
5. Think about what you've read about Paul and Barnabas in these chapters.
 - a. What is your impression of them?
 - i. *How do their words or actions challenge or encourage you?*

CONNECT TO HIS STORY
APPLY TO OUR STORY

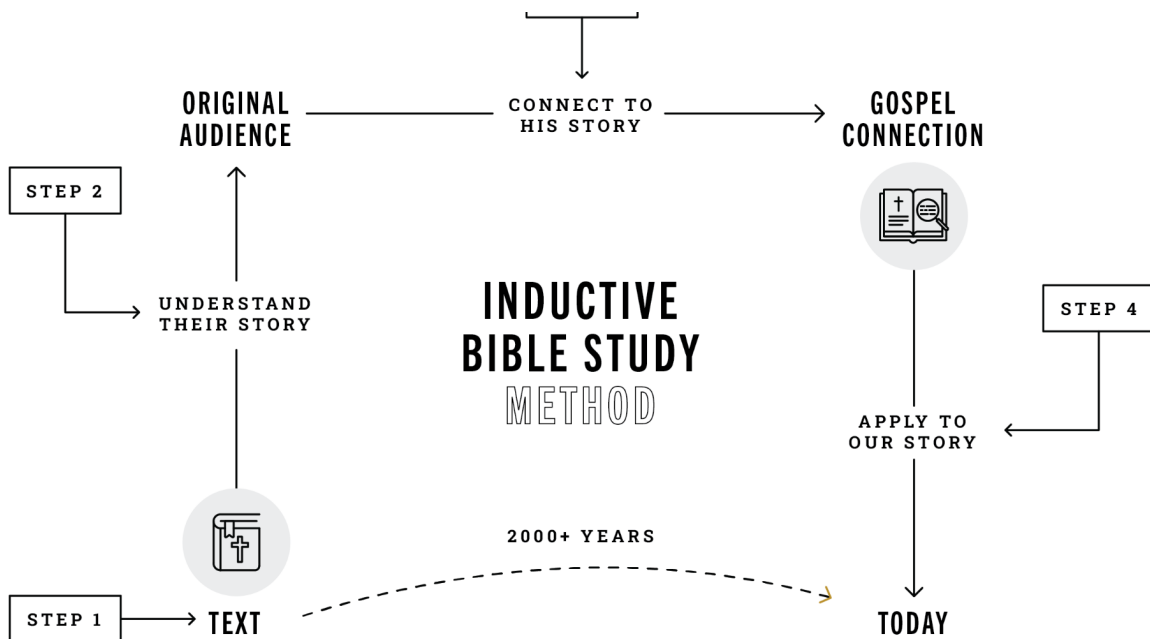
Large Group Teaching



GALATIANS

Lesson 2 | Warning: Don't Desert God's Gospel!

Galatians 1:1-10



- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
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Galatians 1:1-10 (ESV)

LESSON TWO

¹ Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead— ² and all the brothers who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to whom be the glory forever and ever.

Amen.

⁶ I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

¹⁰ For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God?

Or am I trying to please man?

If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

Lesson 2 | Warning: Don't Desert God's Gospel!

Galatians 1:1-10

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

As we mentioned in lesson one, the book of Galatians is actually a letter written by the Apostle Paul to several churches located in the Roman province of Galatia. Last week we read the stories of how these churches began, and who (what types of people) were in their congregations. We also observed Paul's perseverance in the midst of persecution, and his committed, pastoral heart: on his return trip through Galatia, Luke records that Paul strengthened their souls, encouraged them to continue in the faith, and appointed elders in every location (Acts 14:22-23). Despite this encouraging start, Paul soon receives word that these churches are in danger! What has happened and how will he respond? Finish this lesson to find out!

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 1:1-10 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.

1. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?
 - a. *Paul*
 - i. **WHAT** title does he initially give himself, and **HOW** does he say he obtained this title?
 - ii. **WHY** is he writing to the Galatians? (eg. **WHAT** is astonishing to him)?
 - iii. **HOW** does Paul feel about the actions of the Galatians? **HOW** would you describe his tone?
 - iv. **WHAT** title or status does he give himself at the end of this passage? **WHAT** are the implications of this title or status? (eg. How does it affect his actions or his words in this passage)?
 1. **WHY** do you think Paul draws attention to how he became an apostle (v 1), and the implications of being a servant (v 10)? If you don't know yet, the answer may become clearer as you work through the lesson!
 - b. *The Galatians*
 - i. **HOW** does Paul greet them in verses 3-5? **WHAT** does he remind them of?

ii. **WHO** does Paul say they are deserting if they turn to a different gospel? **WHAT** is at stake?

c. *The other preachers.*

i. **HOW** does Paul characterize the people whom the Galatians are listening to? **WHAT** are they doing to the Galatians? **WHAT** are they doing to the gospel of Christ?

ii. **WHAT** is Paul saying should happen to the other preachers?

1. *What do you think about Paul's response? Is he overreacting, or not? Explain why.*

d. *God*

i. **WHAT** do we learn about GOD in these verses?

e. *Jesus*

i. **WHAT** do we learn about Jesus in these verses?

1. *What can you praise God or Jesus for, based on what you have observed in these verses?*

2. **KEY WORDS**

a. *Gospel*

i. **HOW** did the Galatians originally receive the gospel? (eg. From whom? By what method was it communicated?)

ii. **WHAT** do you learn about the gospel in these verses?

- iii. **HOW** does Paul's greeting in verses 3-5 tie into his discussion about the gospel in verses 6-9? (Think: Why does he highlight these specific truths (v 3-5) before outlining his concern (v 6-9)?
- iv. **HOW** should the Galatians evaluate the truthfulness of someone's teaching? Should they base their evaluation on their perception of the messenger or the content of the message?

1. How does this answer challenge or encourage you today?

b. Other Key Words:

- i. What other words do you see repeated in these verses?

3. **HOW** would you summarize each section of the text? What is the flow of thought?

a. Galatians 1:1-2a

b. Galatians 1:2b-5

c. Galatians 1:6-9

d. Galatians 1:10

4. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?

a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?

b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

1. ***Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.*** This verse is PACKED with theology! Let's unpack some of it below.
 - a. Grace ... and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins...
 - i. Read Isaiah 53:4-6. How have we obtained peace with God?
 - b. to deliver us...
 - i. Read Exodus 3:7-8, 6:1-8 and 18:7-10. Who is delivered, what are they delivered from, and how are they delivered?²
 - ii. Read Colossians 1:9-14. Who is delivered and how are they delivered?
 - c. ...from the present evil age...
 - i. Read 1 John 5:18-20. What does John affirm about the world, and about believers in the world?
 - ii. Ephesians 2:1-3. What was our reality before we knew Jesus?
 - iii. Ephesians 2:4-9. What is our reality if we've responded to Jesus in faith?
 - d. ...according to the will of our God and Father.
 - i. Read Acts 2:22-24. Why did Jesus die? (eg. whose plan was being enacted?)
 - ii. Read Acts 2:36-41. What did Jesus' death provide for us?

1. *As you reflect on the four phrases we expanded above, which truth most impacts you today as you think about how it applies to you, if you are a Christian? Why does it impact you?*

² New Testament writers regularly echo the Exodus narrative as they tell the New Testament rescue story. By God's mighty hand He rescued his people from physical slavery in the Old Testament, and slavery to sin in the New Testament.

2. ***I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ...*** As footnoted above, the Exodus story was in the mind of biblical authors as they wrote the New Testament. As Paul warns the Galatians of the danger they are in, he's likely alluding to this narrative again.
 - a. Read Exodus 19:1-4. How does God describe the way in which He rescued His people? (eg. How was Israel brought into relationship with God before He gave them the law in Exodus 20?)
 - i. How does Paul echo this story in Galatians 1:6? (eg. How were the Galatians brought into relationship with God?)
 - b. Read Exodus 24:12-18. What happens next?
 - c. Read Exodus 32:1-8. What happens while Moses is away? What does God say the people have done?
 - i. How does Paul echo this story in Galatians 1:6? (e.g. How are the Galatians mirroring the actions of Israel?)
 - d. Read Exodus 32:30-35. What happened to the people as a result of "turning aside quickly out of the way God commanded" (v8)?
 - i. How is Jesus the "true and better Moses"? What was Moses unable to do, which Jesus has now been able to do? (need a hint? Compare Exodus 32:30-33 and Galatians 1:4)
3. ***.. and are turning to a different gospel - not that there is another one.*** Paul charges the Galatians with embracing a different gospel, and then clarifies that there is no good news outside of the news of Jesus Christ. Read the texts below to see how this concept is echoed in other parts of scripture.
 - a. Read Acts 4:1-12 for context and focus on verses 11-12. What does Peter tell the Jewish leaders?
 - b. Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. What (or who) must be the foundation for all Christian teaching?

4. ***But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed ... If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.*** Paul's language is very strong in Galatians 1:8-9, but his warnings about and judgements on false teaching are not unique to him; he is drawing on language from the Old Testament. Read the following texts and answer the questions to see how Israel was instructed on how to deal with false prophets.

Read Deuteronomy 18:20-22

- a. What should happen to a prophet who **PRESUMES** to speak on behalf of God according to this text?
- b. How are people supposed to test the truthfulness of a prophet's words?

Read Deuteronomy 13:1-5.

- a. What situation does this text describe in verse 1?
- b. What is the complicating factor in this scenario, according to verse 2?
- c. What is Israel supposed to discern as they decide whether or not to listen to this person?
- d. Why would the LORD permit a person to prophesy about a sign or wonder which actually **DOES** come to pass, according to this text?
- e. What is Israel supposed to do with this false prophet? Why are they supposed to do this?
 - i. How does this text relate to Galatians 1:1-10?

There are other examples and instructions in other parts of the New Testament which help us understand how to discern teaching. Look up the following texts to see what they teach.

- a. Read Acts 17:10-12. How do the Bereans evaluate the truthfulness of Paul and Silas' words?
- b. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22. What does Paul tell the church in Thessalonica to do with prophecy?
 - i. *Do you feel qualified to "test everything" you hear? If not, how can you become more qualified?*
 - ii. *Is this something you should do alone, or in community? Explain your answer.*

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?

- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?

- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?

- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?

- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 1:1-10 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

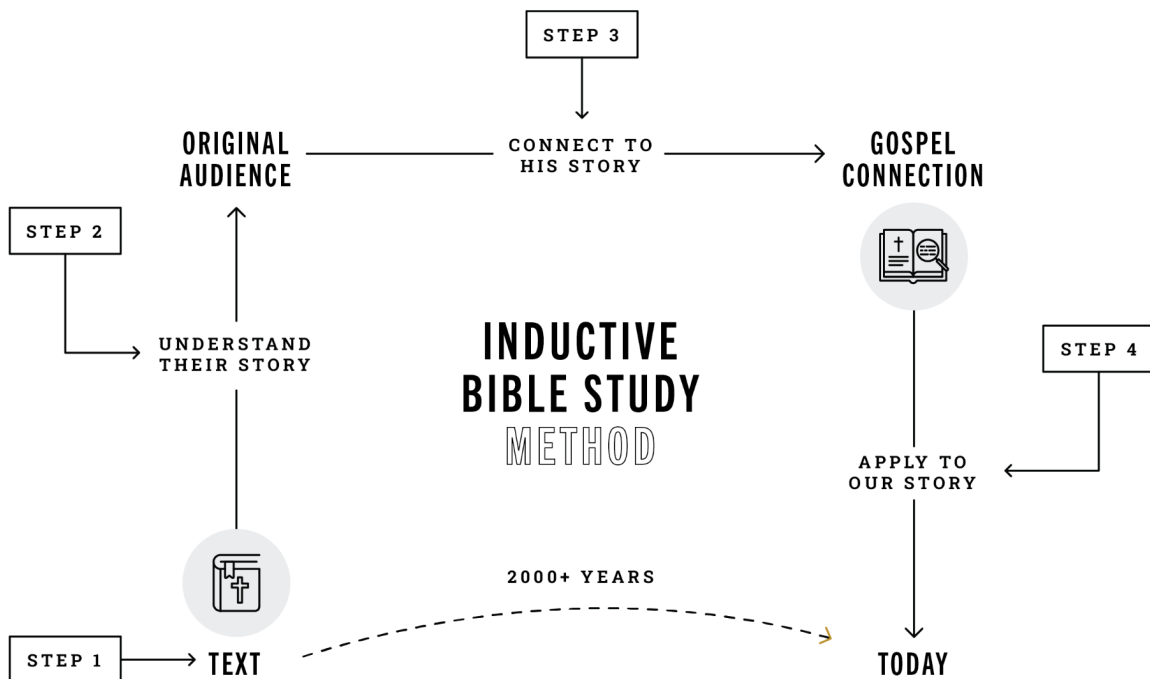
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?



GALATIANS

Lesson 3 | Why? Because it's God's Gospel

Galatians 1:11-2:10



-
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Galatians 1:11-2:10 (ESV)

LESSON THREE

¹¹ For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel.

¹² For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

¹³ For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.

¹⁴ And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

¹⁵ But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, ¹⁶ was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone; ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days.

¹⁹ But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

²⁰ (In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!)

²¹ Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

²² And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.

²³ They only were hearing it said, "He who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy."

²⁴ And they glorified God because of me.

2¹ Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me.

² I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain.

³ But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek.

⁴ Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery—⁵ to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.

⁶ And from those who seemed to be influential (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those, I say, who seemed influential added nothing to me.

⁷ On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised ⁸ (for he who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry to the circumcised worked also through me for mine to the Gentiles), ⁹ and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

¹⁰ Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.

Lesson 3 | Why? Because it's God's Gospel!

Galatians 1:11-2:10

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

Last week we learned that the people in the Galatian churches were in danger of deserting the gospel which was preached to them by Paul. Paul is astonished (1:6), and calls down curses on anyone who preaches a different message (1:8-9)! In order for them to understand how important this is and why he's reacting so vehemently, Paul provides a series of arguments explaining why they should hold onto the message which they heard from him. His first argument, which we'll study today, is autobiographical. Paul tells them the story of how he personally came to understand the gospel, and how he confirmed that his understanding was true. Because he's building an argument by telling a story in these verses, we'll structure our questions around sections of the story.

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 1:10-2:10 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.

1. Read Galatians 1:11-12. These two verses operate as a "thesis statement" for the argument that he will make, using his own story.
 - a. **WHAT** is Paul's primary argument in these verses?
2. Read Galatians 1:13-17 and record what you learn about Paul in these verses.
 - a. **HOW** does Paul describe his **ACTIONS** before he heard the gospel?
 - b. **HOW** does Paul describe his **MOTIVATION** before he heard the gospel? **WHY** did he do what he did?
 - c. **WHAT** happened to Paul, which changed his actions? **WHAT** did God do? *(if you don't know the story of Paul's conversion, don't worry! We'll study it later in the Gospel Connections section)*
 - i. **HOW** do verses 15-16 support Paul's thesis statement in verses 11-12?
 - d. **WHY** does Paul say that God revealed Jesus to him? For what purpose did God call him?
 - e. **WHAT** is Paul careful to say that he did **NOT** do next? **WHAT** did he do instead?
 - i. **HOW** does what he did **NOT** do support Paul's thesis statement in verses 11-12?

3. Read Galatians 1:18-20 and record what you learn about Paul in these verses.³
- a. **WHAT** information does Paul relate in these verses?
 - i. **HOW** does who he did **NOT** see support Paul's thesis statement in verses 11-12?
 - ii. **WHY** do you think he says what he does in verse 20?
4. Read Galatians 1:21-24 and record what you learn about Paul in these verses.
- a. **WHERE** does Paul go next?
 - b. **WHAT** does he say about his relationship with the churches in Judea?
 - i. **WHY** do you think he makes this statement about his relationship with them?
5. Read Galatians 2:1-10 and record what you learn about Paul in these verses.
- a. **WHERE** does Paul go in these verses? **WHO** does he bring with him?
 - b. **WHY** does he go? **WHAT** is his motivation for going?
 - c. **WHY** do you think he includes the details about Titus in verse 3? (If you're not sure, that's fine! It will become clearer as we read this letter over the next few weeks!)
 - d. **WHO** opposed Paul? **HOW** does he describe their motivation?
 - e. **WHY** does Paul resist them? **WHAT** is at stake?
 - f. **WHAT** resulted from Paul's meeting with "those who seemed to be influential" in Jerusalem according to verse 6?
 - i. **HOW** does this fact support his thesis in v 11-12?

³ Note "Cephas" is another name for the Apostle Peter (John 1:42).

- g. **WHAT** other things resulted from Paul's meeting with "those who seemed to be influential" in Jerusalem according to verse 7-10?

- i. *In each section of this story, using different methods, Paul draws attention to the fact the gospel he preaches is not "man's gospel", but is a "revelation of Jesus Christ". He's trying to make the Galatians realize that they need to understand and obey the message he has preached to them because it comes from God! In the thousands of years since the Apostle Paul lived, many people have said that they have received a "revelation from God" and have gone "rogue" - starting all sorts of different religions as a result! Do you think the Apostle Paul is going "rogue" in these verses and starting his own religion based on his own revelation? Why or why not?*

6. This text focuses on Paul's story, but it also teaches us important things about God and Jesus. If you didn't do this in step one, read through the text and highlight or mark each time God or Jesus is mentioned.

- a. **WHAT** do you learn about God in Galatians 1:11-2:10?

- b. **WHAT** do you learn about Jesus in Galatians 1:11-2:10?

7. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?

- a. Galatians 1:11-12

- b. Galatians 1:13-17

- c. Galatians 1:18-24

- d. Galatians 2:1-10

8. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?

- e. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?

- f. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

Galatians 1:11-2:10 provides a helpful timeline to Paul's conversion and first few years of ministry! This week, we will use the Gospel Connection section to connect the dots between Paul's timeline and other New Testament accounts of his life and work. We trust that after you work through the next few pages, you'll know Paul a lot better - which will help as you keep reading this letter!

1. *For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I...* In Galatians 1:13-14 Paul alludes to his own history. More information is provided in other books and letters in the Bible. Look up the following passage and see what you find out.

- a. Read Acts 8:1-3⁴ and Acts 9:1-2⁵. What information does Luke (the author of Acts) provide about this time of Paul's life in these passages?
- b. Read Acts 21:37-22:5. What additional information does Luke record Paul telling the people who are arresting him in Jerusalem in these verses?
- c. Read Acts 26:1-11. What additional information does Luke record Paul telling King Agrippa?
- d. Read Philippians 3:1-7. Philippians is another letter written by Paul. What does he tell this church about his "former life in Judaism"? How does he view his former life now?

2. *But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles....* In Galatians 1:15-16, Paul relates how God stopped him in his tracks and changed his life. This story is also referenced in a few places in scripture.

- a. Read Acts 9:3-19a. Summarize the details Luke records in this account.

⁴ Note: "Saul" was Paul's Jewish name. He was also called "Paul", which was his Greek name (see Acts 13:9).

⁵ "The Way" is the first name given to the followers of Jesus. We learn that followers of Jesus are identified as "Christians" years later in Antioch (see Acts 11:26)

- i. What does Ananias confirm about Paul's history as he resists the Lord's guidance?
 - ii. What does God tell Ananias about Paul's future? Where do God's words in Acts 9:15 show up Galatians 1:11-2:10?
- b. Read Acts 22:6-16. What additional details does Luke record Paul telling the people who are arresting him in Jerusalem years later?
- c. Read Acts 26:12-18 What additional details does Luke record Paul telling King Agrippa?
3. ***"... I did not immediately consult with anyone, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother."*** In Galatians 1:16b-20 Paul tells the Galatians where he went and what he did after Jesus called him. What additional details do you learn in Acts?
- a. Read Acts 9:19b-30. What does Luke record about Saul's next steps?
 - b. Read Acts 22:17-21. What additional details does Luke record Paul telling the people who are arresting him in Jerusalem years later?
4. ***"Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia."***
- a. Read Acts 9:30. Where does Luke record Saul going after Jerusalem?
 - b. Read Acts 11:19-26. Where did Barnabas find Saul and where did he bring him?

i. Consult the map on page 6. Which provinces are these cities in?

ii. Why did Barnabas bring Saul to Antioch? What did he do there?

5. “Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me.”

There is a debate over which text in Acts describes this visit. Read and summarize both texts,

a. Option A - Acts 11:27-30

b. Option B - Acts 15:1-35

i. Now compare these 2 accounts with what Paul records in Galatians 2:1-10. Which one do you think records this 2nd visit to Jerusalem? Why do you think so? (if you’re still not sure, ask your group leader or listen to see if this is covered in the large group teaching).

6. “But when he who had set me apart before I was born and who called me by his grace...” We drew your attention to these verses earlier when we looked at Saul’s conversion in Acts 9. It’s likely, when he used these specific words, he was alluding to more than simply his own conversion story. Look up the following texts to see who else in Scripture was “set apart before he was born”?

a. Read Jeremiah 1:1-5. Who is this text talking about? What kind of authority and influence did this person have in their life amidst God’s people?

b. Read Isaiah 49:1-7. Who is this text talking about? What kind of authority did this person have?

i. By using this Old Testament language to describe his own call, what do you think Paul was saying about himself, and his authority?

7. With this entire lesson in mind, if someone asked you to describe the Apostle Paul, what would you say? What words would you use to talk about his character, identity and mission?

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?
- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?
- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?
- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?
- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 1:11-2:10 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

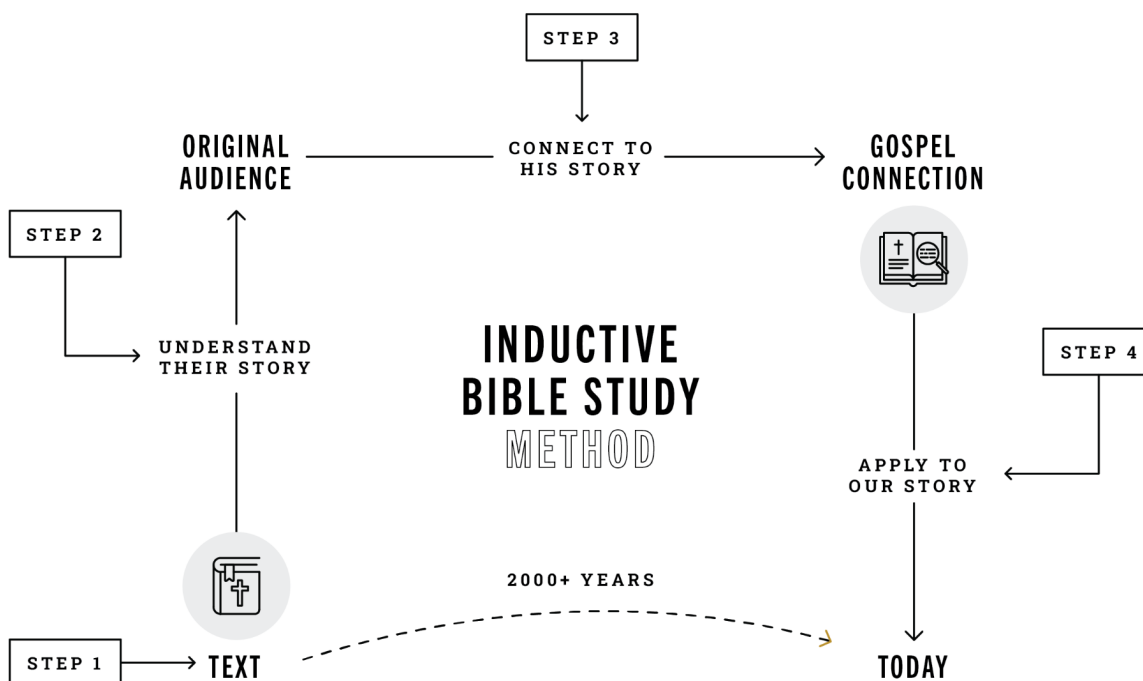
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?



GALATIANS

Lesson 4 | What is at stake?

Galatians 2:11-21



- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
- ☐ **Step 2:** Understand their story by completing the observation questions in the first half of the lesson *SO THAT* you understand what the original author is communicating to his audience.
- ☐ **Step 3:** Connect to God's story by completing the gospel connection questions in the second half of the lesson *SO THAT* you can understand where this passage fits in God's larger story of salvation.
- ☐ **Step 4:** Reflect and Apply to Your story by completing the last page of each lesson *SO THAT* the teaching of the passage helps you to practically grow as a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus.

Galatians 2:11-21 (ESV)

LESSON FOUR

¹¹ But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.

¹² For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party.

¹³ And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.

¹⁴ But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

¹⁵ We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶ yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

¹⁷ But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin?

Certainly not!

¹⁸ For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor.

¹⁹ For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God.

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ.

It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

²¹ I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Lesson 4 | Why? Because a Lot is at Stake!

Galatians 2:11-21

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

As we've learned so far, people in the Galatian churches were in danger of deserting the gospel which was preached to them by Paul. As he began this letter, Paul stated emphatically, "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed." (Acts 1:8). Now, we see that Paul is serious about confronting *anyone* who distorts the gospel, regardless of their status in the church! Who does he confront and why? What is at stake? Read today's text and find out!

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 2:11-21 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.

1. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?

a. *Cephas*

i. **WHAT** did Cephas do wrong, according to Paul?

ii. **WHY** did he act this way? **WHAT** was his motivation?

iii. **WHAT** are the consequences of Cephas' actions? List as many as you can!

iv. **HOW** does Paul respond to Cephas?

1. *Do you think Paul's approach was justified and appropriate? Why or why not?*

b. *Circumcision party.*

i. **WHAT** do you learn about this group of people in these verses?

c. *Cephas & Paul (identified as "we" in verses 15-17)*

i. **WHO** are Paul & Cephas? (their nationality / religious heritage)

ii. **WHAT** do they know?

iii. **WHAT** have they done as a result of knowing this truth? **WHY** have they done this?

d. *Paul*

- i. **WHAT** does Paul tell the Galatians about what he has **DONE** in verses 19-21?
- ii. **WHY** has Paul **DONE** these things? **WHAT** is his motivation?
- iii. **WHAT** does Paul tell the Galatians about what he has **NOT DONE** in verses 19-21?
- iv. **WHY** has Paul **NOT DONE** this? **WHAT** is his motivation?

e. *Jesus (called Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus, Christ and the Son of God in these verses)*

- i. **WHAT** do you learn about the relationship between a Christian and Jesus in Galatians 2:11-21?

1. *How do these truths challenge or encourage you today?*

2. Key Words

a. *Hypocrisy / hypocritically*

- i. **WHAT** is hypocrisy? **WHAT** does it mean to act hypocritically? (Feel free to use a dictionary!)

1. *Have you seen hypocrisy 'lead people astray' (to use the words of v 13)?*

b. *Works of the law*

- i. **WHAT** do you think Paul means by *works of the law* in these verses?

c. *Justified*

- i. **WHAT** does it mean to be justified? (Again, feel free to use a dictionary!)
- ii. **HOW** are people **NOT** justified, according to Galatians 2:11-21?
- iii. **HOW ARE** people justified according to Galatians 2:11-21?

1. *Are YOU justified? If not, why not!? If so, how does the knowledge that you are justified encourage or challenge you today?*

d. *Righteousness*

- i. **WHAT** is righteousness? (Consult a dictionary if you want!)

3. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?

a. Galatians 2:11-14

b. Galatians 2:15-20

c. Galatians 2:21

4. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?

a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?

b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

Galatians 2:11-21 is a short but very important text! Paul confronts Cephas (Peter), who is one of the key leaders of the church, for failing to preserve the truth of the gospel. In order to explain why he confronted him, he began to unpack the core error that Peter and others were making: seeking to be justified by works of the law rather than by faith in Christ. We'll look at some of the concepts that were at play in our lesson today, and work through others in the weeks to come. Paul adds layers to this topic all the way until Galatians 5:12.

1. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself... What is the big deal about eating with the Gentiles? And why would Cephas (Peter) withdraw from eating with them when "certain people" came to town?

a. Read Deuteronomy 14:1-21.

- i. What are the rules about in this text?
- ii. Why are God's people supposed to follow these rules according to verses 1-2, and 21?
- iii. Who is not expected to follow these rules?

1. How does reading Deuteronomy 14:1-21 help you understand what may have been going on in Galatians 2:11-14?

Throughout the Old Testament, "Dietary laws separated the Israelites from the Gentiles. The laws reminded Israel that they were special in the eyes of Yahweh; the Israelites are symbolically identified with clean food, while the Gentiles are identified with unclean food."⁶ What happens, however, when Jesus comes on the scene?

b. Read Mark 7:14-19

- i. What defiles people, according to Jesus.
- ii. What does not defile people, according to Jesus?
- iii. What parenthetical statement does Mark insert, in order to make sure that his readers get Jesus' point?

⁶ Babcock, B. C. (2016). *Law, Dietary*. In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

- c. Read 1 Corinthians 8:1-8, and then focus on verse 8.
 - i. What does Paul tell the Corinthians about food?

- d. Now read 1 Timothy 4:1-5.
 - i. What does Paul teach about the “theology of food” in this text?

- 2. **And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him...** In Galatians 2, Paul doesn’t accuse Cephas (Peter) of not **UNDERSTANDING** the Gospel, but of **ACTING HYPOCRITICALLY** when he knows better. Why does Paul make this differentiation? What has Cephas (Peter) experienced and said in previous situations?
 - a. Read Acts 10:1-43. Summarize Cephas’ (Peter’s) experience in this chapter.
 - i. What does God say in verse 15?

 - ii. What does Peter say in verses 34-35, and verses 42-43?

 - iii. How do Peter’s words in these verses compare with Paul’s in Galatians 2:11-21?

 - b. Read Acts 11:1-18 which records the first time Cephas (Peter) encounters the circumcision party
 - i. What do they accuse Peter of?

 - ii. How does he respond?

 - c. WHY does Paul say that Cephas (Peter) now draws back from eating with people (Galatians 2:12).
 - i. From what you know of the scriptures, when is another time that Cephas (Peter) has had this same battle?⁷

⁷ Need a hint? Read Luke 22:31-34; 54-62.

1. *Is this a battle that you have? Does fear of people and fear of criticism cause you to act hypocritically from time to time? If so, confess this to Jesus and seek his forgiveness. Ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit to live in line with the truth that you know and believe.*

3. **But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.** In Paul's letters, he generally encourages people to rebuke others privately and teach patiently. Later in Galatians 6:1, he will tell the church to restore others in a spirit of gentleness. With this in mind, why is he so vehement here, and how does Cephas (Peter) respond?

- a. Read 1 Timothy 5:1-2, and then verses 17-21.
 - i. What is the difference in status between the people in verses 1-2, and those in v 17-21?
 - ii. What is the difference in how they should be confronted or rebuked? Why is there a difference?
- b. Read James 3:1. What warning is given to those who teach?
- c. Re-read Galatians 2:12-13.
 - i. What were the results of Cephas' actions?
 - ii. After reading from 1 Timothy and James, and re-reading Galatians 2:12-13, would you change your answer to Question 1.a.iv.1. on page 25 or not?

Do you wonder how Cephas (Peter) took this rebuke, and if Paul & Cephas were reconciled? If so, look up the following verses and see what you learn about their future relationship!

- d. How does Paul talk about Cephas (Peter) to the church in Corinth? (1 Cor. 1:12, 3:18-23, 9:1-5, 15:3-5)
 - e. How does Cephas (Peter) talk about Paul when he writes a later letter? (2 Peter 3:14-16)
4. **"...a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ..."** Paul will go on to explain this truth in great depth in this letter, so for now, we'll simply focus on what the Galatians should have known already.
- a. Read Acts 13:1-41, which records Paul's first sermon to the people who live in the region of Galatia.
 - i. What does he tell them in verses 38-41?

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?

- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?

- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?

- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?

- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 2:11-21 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

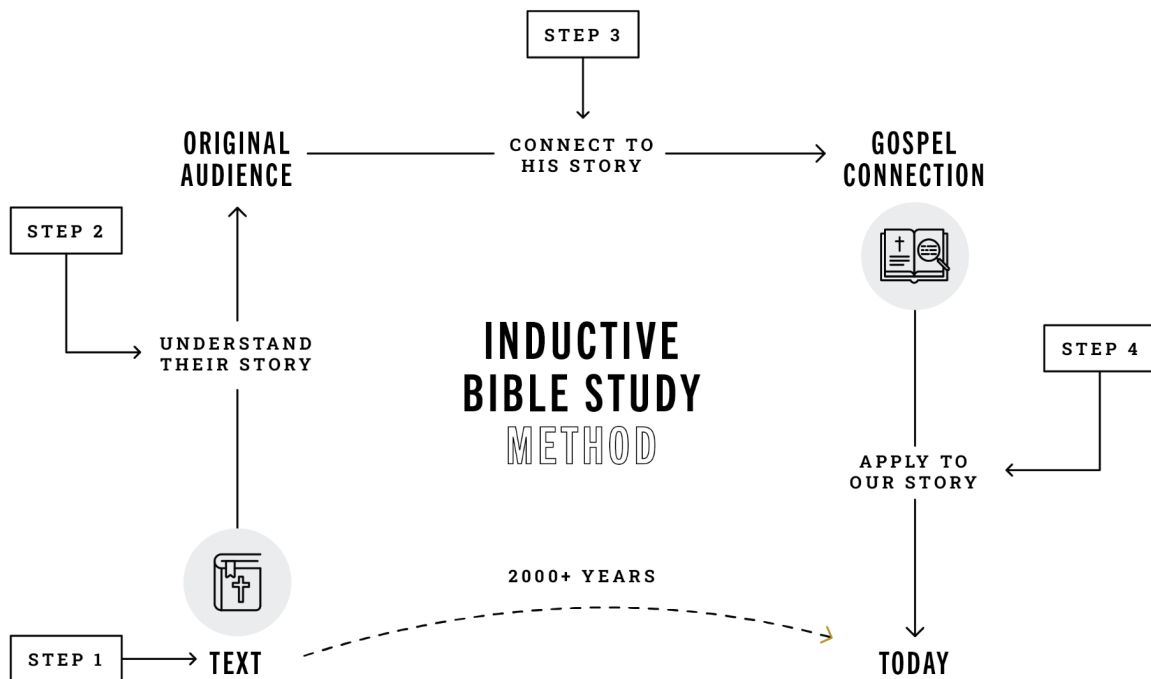
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?



GALATIANS

Lesson 5 | Why? Because of Your Experience and the Experience of Abraham

Galatians 3:1-14



- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
- ☐ **Step 2:** Understand their story by completing the observation questions in the first half of the lesson *SO THAT* you understand what the original author is communicating to his audience.
- ☐ **Step 3:** Connect to God's story by completing the gospel connection questions in the second half of the lesson *SO THAT* you can understand where this passage fits in God's larger story of salvation.
- ☐ **Step 4:** Reflect and Apply to Your story by completing the last page of each lesson *SO THAT* the teaching of the passage helps you to practically grow as a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus.

Galatians 3:1-14

LESSON FIVE

¹O foolish Galatians!

Who has bewitched you?

It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.

²Let me ask you only this:

Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?

³Are you so foolish?

Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

⁴Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

⁵Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—⁶ just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”?

⁷Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.

⁸And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.”

⁹So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

¹⁰For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.”

¹¹Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.”

¹²But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.”

¹³Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—¹⁴ so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Lesson 5 | Why? Because of Your Experience and the Experience of Abraham

Galatians 3:1-14

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

Last week we learned about Paul confronting Cephas' hypocritical actions that distorted the truth of the gospel. He used that example to explain his main thesis for the next section: that both Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith in Christ alone, not through works of the law. He will work through a series of arguments defending this gospel truth over the course of the next couple of chapters. This week, we'll start with two arguments: the Galatians' own experience, and the testimony of Scripture.

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 3:1-14 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.

1. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?

a. *The Galatians*

i. **WHAT** words does Paul use to describe them?

i. **WHAT** does this language tell you about how Paul is feeling? **WHAT** is the tone of this section?

ii. **WHAT** do the language and tone communicate about the situation Paul is addressing amongst them?

ii. **WHAT** does Paul say the Galatians have experienced? (vs. 1-5)

i. **WHAT** should these experiences convince them of regarding the law and faith?

iii. **WHY** do you think Paul used a series of rhetorical questions in this section instead of statements?

iv. *What kind of experiences have you had in your own life of faith that could help confirm your salvation and justification? How have you seen the Spirit at work in you?*

- b. *Jesus* - **WHAT** does this passage teach us about what Jesus has done?
- c. *The Spirit* - **WHAT** does this passage teach us about how people receive the Spirit?
- d. *God* - **WHAT** does this passage teach us about God the Father?
 - i. *Reflect on how all three members of the Trinity are at work in our salvation. What does this teach you about God? What is encouraging or challenging to you?*
- e. *Abraham*⁸
 - i. **HOW** was Abraham made righteous?
 - j. **WHO** are the sons of Abraham, according to Paul?
 - k. **HOW** was “the gospel” preached to Abraham “beforehand”? What was he promised?
 - i. **WHAT** do you think it means to be blessed along with Abraham (vs. 9) or to receive the blessing of Abraham (vs. 14)?

2. Key Words

- a. *Righteousness/Righteous*
 - i. Last week you defined righteousness. **WHAT** does this passage teach us about what makes a person righteous? **WHAT** does a righteous person do?
- b. *Curse*
 - i. **WHO** is under a curse? **WHY**?

⁸ Abraham was the forefather of the Jewish people. He is introduced in the Bible in Genesis 11:31 and his story can be found from Genesis 12-25. He was the man God chose to bless with covenant promises and begin revealing His plan of redemption.

ii. **WHO** redeemed us from the curse? **HOW**?

iii. **WHAT** do we receive instead of a curse?

1. *Stop and read through Galatians 3:10-14 again. Consider how the logic of Paul's argumentation connects to his statement in Galatians 2:21. What might you need to praise, confess, or ask God for in response to these verses?*

c. *The Law*

i. **WHAT** does this passage tell us about the law and works of the law?

ii. **HOW** does Paul **APPEAR** to feel towards the law based on this passage?⁹

3. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?

a. Galatians 3:1-5

b. Galatians 3:6-14

i. Galatians 3:6-9

ii. Galatians 3:10-14

4. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?

a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?

b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

⁹ Keep this impression in mind as we keep studying to see if it changes later on!

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

1. ***“...Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?”*** Paul reminds the Galatians of their own experience of faith, receiving the Spirit and seeing His work in their lives. Paul’s question could cause us to ask another question: when do we receive the Spirit and how is He connected to our salvation? Let’s look at some other passages to see why Paul points to the Spirit as evidence of the Galatians’ salvation.
 - a. Read Ephesians 1:13-14. What happens when a person believes the gospel?

- i. What does this **GUARANTEE**?

- b. Read 2 Corinthians 1:21-22. How does God establish and give a guarantee to those who believe?

- c. Read Romans 8:5-13. Notice how Paul contrasts the flesh and the Spirit. Fill in the chart to note the differences (the first one is done for you):

Verse:	Flesh	Spirit
5-8	<i>Mind is set on fleshly desires</i>	<i>Mind set on what the Spirit desires</i>
9-11		
12-13		

- i. Putting all these things together, why does Paul point to the Galatians’ experience with the Spirit (in verses 2-5) as an argument that they are justified (saved) by faith and not by the flesh?

2. **So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham...for all who rely on works of the law are under a curse...** The theme of blessing and curse is interwoven throughout the entire Bible as God works out His plan of redemption. Let's trace this thread through several Scripture passages to get a better understanding of the big picture story that Paul alludes to and continues in this passage.
- a. **BLESSING:** Genesis 1:26-30. In what ways did God bless people when He created them?
 - b. **CURSE:** Genesis 3:14-19. After Adam and Eve chose to disobey and rebel against God, sin and the curse entered. What were some of the effects of the curse on creation and people?
 - c. **CURSE:** Genesis 6:5-13 What did God determine to do because of people's wickedness?
 - d. **BLESSING:** Genesis 8:20 - 9:5. What blessings came after the flood despite the fact that Genesis 8:21 confirms that people's hearts are unchanged? Do God's words in Genesis 9:1 sound familiar?
 - e. **BLESSING:** Genesis 12:1-3. What did God's blessing to Abraham include?
 - f. **CURSE:** Skim Deuteronomy 27:9-26 (note verse 26 is quoted in Galatians 5:10). Summarize what types of actions would cause a person to be cursed. Why?
 - g. **BLESSING:** Skim Deuteronomy 28:1-14. How was a person to receive blessing? What did that blessing look like?
 - h. **CURSE:** Skim Isaiah 53. How does this prophecy of Jesus illustrate how Christ became a curse for us?
 - i. **CURSE:** Jeremiah 11:1-8. What was Jeremiah told to warn the people and remind them of?
 - j. **BLESSING and CURSE:** Read Malachi 4:1-6. How does the Old Testament end with both promises of blessing and warnings of curse (utter destruction)?

- k. **BLESSING:** Matthew 5:1-12. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus teaches about who is blessed in the kingdom of heaven. What types of people are blessed? What are they blessed with?
- l. **BLESSING:** 1 Peter 3:14-17, 4:12-14. Who is blessed? Why? How is this different from our culture's view of blessing?
- m. **BLESSING and CURSE:** Revelation 21:1-4, 22:1-5. How do these descriptions of the new heavens and earth relate to what happened in Genesis 1 & 3? What will happen to the effects of the curse?
- n. *Reviewing all you have read and observed about blessing and curse, how would you summarize this biblical theme and how it progresses throughout Scripture, climaxing in Christ, and being resolved in Revelation?*

3. The righteous shall live by faith. But the law is not of faith, rather “the one who does them shall live by them”. In this context the word “live” refers to eternal life. Let's look at the Old Testament passages that Paul quotes to understand what he is teaching about how to have eternal life.

- a. In Galatians 3:11 Paul quotes from Habakkuk 2:4. *(If you have extra time this week, read the book of Habbakuk to better understand the situation of the prophet and his response of faith.)* In the context of this book, the prophet has heard that judgement is coming on his people because of their sin. He questions God about when He will make things right and God says that things are going to get worse instead of better, yet “the righteous will live by his faith”. Read Habbakuk 3:16-19 to see his personal response to God's judgement. How is Habbakuk an example of faith in God?
 - i. By drawing on the context of Habakkuk, what is Paul teaching in Galatians 3:11 about what it looks like for the “righteous” to receive eternal life?
- b. In Galatians 3:12 Paul quotes from Leviticus 18:5. Read Lev.18:1-5. What did God promise His people when He brought them out of Egypt?
 - i. Read Luke 10:25-28. Jesus also quotes this same verse from Leviticus. What does He affirm a person must do to receive eternal life?
 - ii. With the context of Galatians in mind, what is the problem with trying to get eternal life in this way?

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?

- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?

- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?

- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?

- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 3:1-14 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

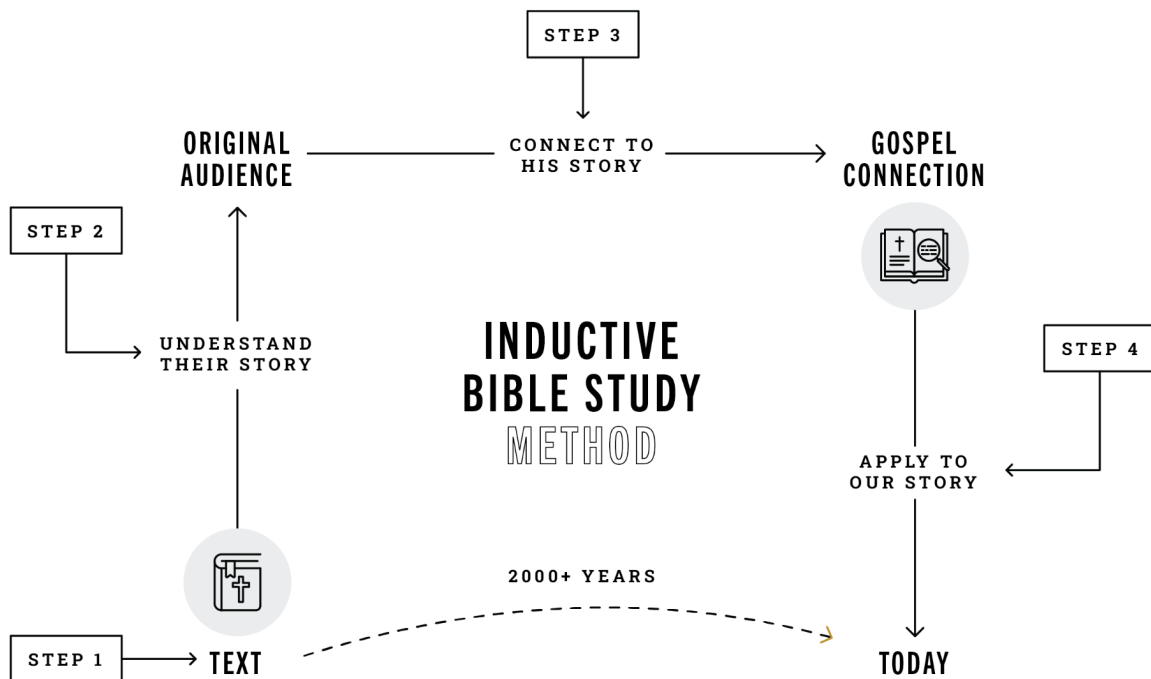
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?



GALATIANS

Lesson 6 | Why? Because of the Law and the Promises!

Galatians 3:15-29



- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
- ☐ **Step 2:** Understand their story by completing the observation questions in the first half of the lesson *SO THAT* you understand what the original author is communicating to his audience.
- ☐ **Step 3:** Connect to God's story by completing the gospel connection questions in the second half of the lesson *SO THAT* you can understand where this passage fits in God's larger story of salvation.
- ☐ **Step 4:** Reflect and Apply to Your story by completing the last page of each lesson *SO THAT* the teaching of the passage helps you to practically grow as a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus.

Galatians 3:15-29

LESSON SIX

¹⁵ To give a human example, brothers: even with a man-made covenant, no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified.

¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring.

It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.

¹⁷ This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void.

¹⁸ For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

¹⁹ Why then the law?

It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.

²⁰ Now an intermediary implies more than one, but God is one.

²¹ Is the law then contrary to the promises of God?

Certainly not!

For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.

²² But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

²³ Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.

²⁴ So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Lesson 6 | Why? Because of the Law and the Promises

Galatians 3:15-29

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

Last week we saw Paul calling out the Galatians for the utter foolishness of adding anything to their faith in Christ. He clearly teaches them that no one can be justified by works of the law or flesh and it is only by faith we receive the Spirit. He points to the example of Abraham's belief and seems to portray the law in a pretty negative way. Does Paul think the law was useless and contrary to God's plan of redemption? Let's get into this week's study to find out!

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 3:15-29 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.

1. Since this passage focuses on the law so much, we're going to start by piecing together what Paul teaches us about it.
 - i. **WHEN** did the law come? (In relation to God's covenant with Abraham.)
 - i. **WHY** is this important for Paul's argument to the Galatians? **WHY** is the covenant still valid?
 - ii. **WHY** was the law given?
 - iii. Read through verses 19-24 again. **WHAT** terms/images are used to describe the law and its effect on people?
 - i. What comes to mind when you think of "imprisonment" and being "held captive"?
 - ii. What comes to mind when you think of the word "guardian"?
 - iii. *How do these descriptions help you understand some of God's purposes of the law?*
 - iv. According to Paul, was the law ever meant to be permanent? Was it ever intended to lead to righteousness and eternal life?

2. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?
- a. *Abraham* - **WHAT** else do we learn about him in these verses to add to last week?
 - b. *“Abraham’s Offspring”*
 - i. **WHO** is called Abraham’s offspring in this passage?
 - j. **WHAT** is important for us to know about the offspring?
 - c. *Christ/Christ Jesus*
 - i. **WHAT** happened to the law when Christ came?
 - j. **WHAT** are all the different words Paul describe how we relate to Christ in this passage? (example: “faith in Jesus Christ” - vs. 22)
 - i. *How do these descriptions encourage or challenge you today as you consider your personal relationship with Jesus?*

3. Key Words

- a. *Promise*
 - a. **WHAT** do you learn about the promise(s) made to Abraham?
 - b. **WHY** does Paul argue that the law is NOT contrary to the promises?
 - c. **WHO** receives the promise and therefore the inheritance?
- b. *Inheritance* (Paul will expand much more on this in the next chapter)
 - a. **HOW** does someone receive the inheritance? How is it connected to the promise?

c. *Faith*

a. **WHAT** was our situation BEFORE faith came? (vs. 23–24)

b. **HOW** did things change AFTER faith came? (vs. 25-26)

4. **Read** vs. 27-29 again. **WHAT** three categories disappear when we “put on Christ” and become one in Him?

i. *These are both beautiful and yet potentially confusing verses. In what ways do you think people could take these verses out of context and use them to distort what unity in Christ means?*

ii. *How might you respond to these distortions? What do you think Paul is really saying here in the context of Galatians? (We’ll look at this more in the Gospel Connections.)*

5. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?

a. Galatians 3:15-18

b. Galatians 3:19-25

c. Galatians 3:26-29

6. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?

a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?

b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

1. ***Why then the law?...Is the law then contrary to the promises of God?*** Paul both defends the law of Moses as purposeful and yet explains how it is temporary and cannot give eternal life. This topic comes up a lot in the New Testament so we know it was clearly a challenge that early believers had to deal with, especially as Gentiles interacted with Judaism and Jewish people themselves came to saving faith.
 - a. To understand the original giving of the law from God to Moses and Moses to the people, read/skim Exodus 19:9-20:21.
 - i. What do all the preparations, warnings, and boundaries (Exodus 19:9-25, 20:18-21) convey about the relationship between God and people?
 - ii. The “Ten Commandments” given in Exodus 20:1-17 were followed by many more commands detailing things from food laws to ceremonial laws to laws about marriage and war. Why do you think God needed to give Israel these laws after they left Egypt?
 1. What do the laws reveal about God and what He desires for His people?
 2. *Do you think fulfilling these laws could ever remove the boundaries and distance that exists between God and people? Why or why not?*
 - b. Read Romans 3:21-31. According to this passage, how has the righteousness of God been manifested/shown?
 - i. What then does Paul say about the law?
 - c. Read Romans 7:7-12. How does Paul explain the interaction between the law and sin?
 - i. How does the power of sin in our lives help us understand the purpose of the law as Paul describes in Galatians 3:19-21?
 - d. Read James 2:8-11. Why is it impossible for us to keep the law?

e. Read Matthew 5:17-20. How did Jesus view the law?¹⁰

i. How does this passage help explain why Paul says in Galatians that we need to be “IN” Christ by faith in order to be justified?

1. *Putting all of this together and considering Paul’s message in Galatians 3:15-19, how would you explain the purpose of the law for Christians to someone who asked you why God gave it?*

f. Read Psalm 19:7-11. How do the descriptions in this Psalm make it clear that the law is good and NOT contrary to the promises of God?

1. *Use this Psalm as you pray today. What do you need to praise, confess, or ask of God today when it comes to loving His law, but not depending on it for your justification?*

2. ***And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.*** Sometimes Christians can have a tendency to disconnect the Old Testament and God’s dealings with Israel to the New Testament and our own lives today. There can be a temptation to assume the Old Testament stories are irrelevant for us. But Paul says the very opposite in this passage! He connects not only Christ, but you and I, to Abraham and the covenant God made to him. How amazing is it to understand that when God began His plan of redemption with promises to Abraham, He had you and I in mind as well!

a. Read Genesis 12:1-9, 13:14-17, 17:1-8. What promises did God make to Abraham and his offspring?

b. Read Romans 4:13-25. How does Paul describe Abraham’s faith? What example does he give of Abraham living out his faith in God’s promise?

i. How can those who aren’t biological descendants of Abraham be counted as his offspring? How can we have righteousness counted to us like Abraham did?

¹⁰ See Appendix #1 on page #123 for more information on the relationship between the Old and New Testament, especially the moral and ceremonial laws.

- ii. *What circumstances or trials in your own life could cause you to waver, or have made it hard (or are currently making it hard) to hope against hope and continue to believe?*

- c. *Consider Paul's argument in Galatians, along with these passages. How would you summarize how you are an "heir to the promise" (Gal. 3:29)?¹¹ How does this encourage you to grow strong in faith?*

- 3. ***There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*** John Stott wrote: "*When we say that Christ has abolished these distinctions, we mean not that they do not exist, but that they do not matter. They are still there, but they no longer create any barriers to fellowship.*"¹² This verse could be ripped from its context and misused, but it is NOT a call for Christians to act as though different ethnicities, social status realities, and genders are no longer important or affect our lives. We need to know Paul's purpose here, so we don't make assumptions. In the context, Paul is emphasizing the unity and equality found in the gospel and the body of Christ.
 - a. Look up the following verses and note who is invited into relationship with God:
 - i. Isaiah 55:1-3

 - ii. John 1:12-13

 - iii. Revelation 21:5-6

 - b. Look up the following verses and note how these people should live in relationship with one another.
 - i. 1 Corinthians 12:4-13

 - ii. Ephesians 4:1-6

 - iii. Colossians 3:5-11

¹¹"The promises given to Abraham included land and universal blessing, and they were given specifically to his "offspring" (Gen 12:1-3; 15:1-5; 17:4-8; 18:18; 22:17-18; 26:4). Even though the promises were given to Abraham's offspring, they also forecasted blessing for the whole world through Abraham (cf. Gal 3:8)." (Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 227-228.) In Christ are the nations blessed with salvation to all who repent and believe, His people are as innumerable as the stars, the promised land is the whole redeemed earth (Hebrews 11:10, Romans 4:13) in the new creation.

¹² John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Galatians: Only One Way*, The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester, England; Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 100-101.

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?

- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?

- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?

- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?

- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 3:15-29 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

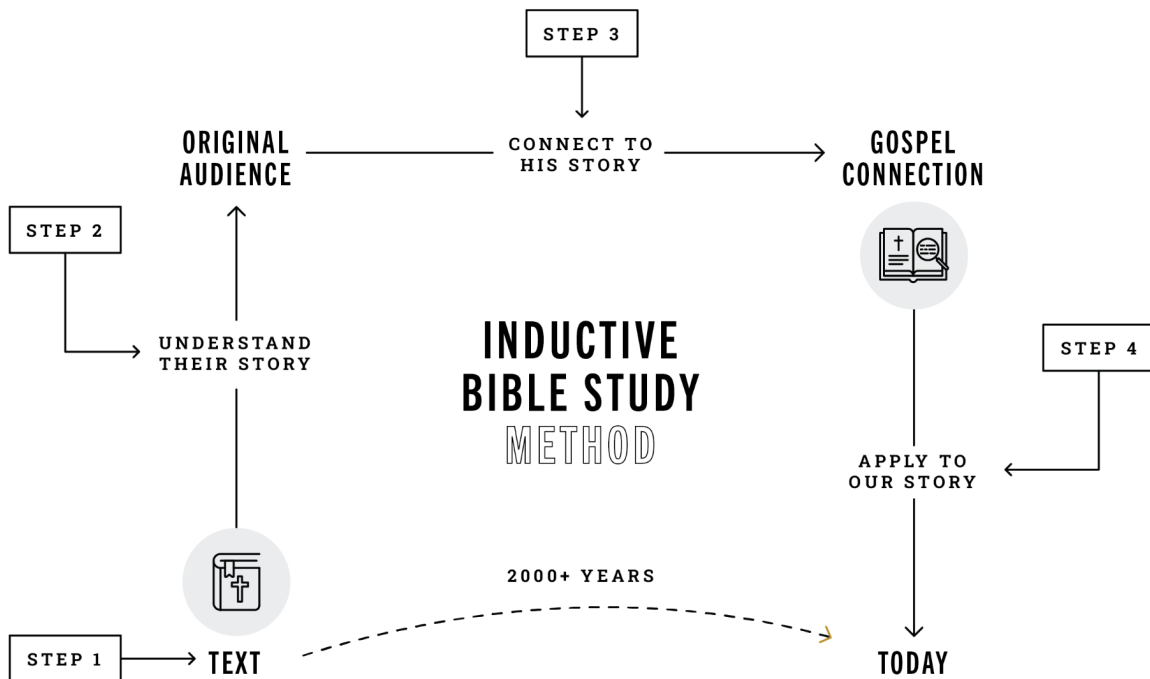
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?



GALATIANS

Lesson 7 | Why? Because you were Slaves and are now Sons

Galatians 4:1-11



- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
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- ☐ **Step 4:** Reflect and Apply to Your story by completing the last page of each lesson *SO THAT* the teaching of the passage helps you to practically grow as a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus.

Galatians 4:1-11

LESSON SEVEN

⁴ I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything,

² but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father.

³ In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

⁸ Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods.

⁹ But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?

¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years!

¹¹ I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain.

Lesson 7 | Why? Because you were Slaves and are now Sons

Galatians 4:1-11

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

Galatians 4 continues the same line of argumentation that Paul began in chapter 3. Last week Paul introduced the idea of being an heir and in today's text he fleshes out this idea, teaching how in Christ we move from slavery to sonship!

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 4:1-11 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.

1. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?

a. *God, the Father*

i. **HOW** is God similar to the father in the opening illustration (vs. 1-2)

ii. **WHO** does Paul say God *sent* in these verses? (2 persons)

iii. **WHAT** do you think is the difference between knowing God and being known by God?

b. *Jesus/God's Son*

i. **WHEN** was Jesus sent?

ii. **WHAT** details does Paul include about how He came? **WHY** do you think these are important for the Galatians to know?

iii. **WHY** did Jesus come, according to this passage?

c. *The Recipients of the letter (the Galatians), anywhere Paul says "you"*

i. **WHAT** does Paul say the Galatians **WERE**?

ii. **WHAT** does Paul say the Galatians now **ARE**?

d. *Paul*

i. **WHAT** is he afraid of?

- ii. **HOW** is this similar to previous statements he has made in the letter? (see Gal 1:6, 2:2, 3:1-4).

2. Key Words

a. Heir/Son¹³

- i. **HOW** is a child no different from a slave according to Paul's opening illustration? (vs. 1-3)
- ii. **WHEN** does a child become the heir?
- iii. **HOW** is this similar to our own situation according to Paul?
- iv. **HOW** does someone go from being a slave to an heir? (vs 4-7)
- v. If you are a son/heir, **HOW** can you now address God? **WHY**?

1. *How might this shape your prayers in the future? How does this reality help you bring your current prayer requests to God?*

- vi. Look back to last week's passage. **WHAT** connections do you see between being adopted as sons in this passage and becoming Abraham's offspring?

1. *What does it mean for you personally to be an heir with Christ? How does this give you hope today?*

b. Slave/Enslaved

- i. **WHAT** were the Galatians enslaved to?

¹³ Using the term "son" for believers does not signify maleness, but rather is used to point to the *status* of sonship and therefore being an heir.

- ii. From what you know about the Galatians, **WHAT** kinds of things could be tempting them to turn back to this slavery?

c. *Elementary Principles*

- i. **WHAT** does Paul tell us about “the elementary principles of the world”?
- ii. **WHAT** do you think he means by this term?
- iii. **WHAT** connections do you see between this term and the law as discussed in last week’s passage?

1. What “enslaved” you before you came to faith in Christ? What kinds of things could tempt you to turn back to “slavery” even after coming to know God?

1. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?

a. Galatians 4:1-3

b. Galatians 4:4-7

c. Galatians 4:8-11

2. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?

a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?

b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

1. ***In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world...you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods.... How can you turn back to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world?*** The “elementary principles” could point to the ancient understanding of the elements of nature: earth, air, fire, water (metaphorically speaking of this world order and culture, the old creation) or they could refer to the fundamental rules of life, or they could refer to angelic/demonic powers¹⁴. Either way, Paul is using this term in connection with his discussion about the Law and also seems to be integrating it with the paganism of the Galatians’ past. Let’s look at some other places where God’s people have been enslaved to “those that by nature are not gods”.

- a. Read the following passages and note how the Old Testament prophets viewed the “gods” of other nations:

i. Isaiah 37:14-20 - How do the Assyrian gods compare to the LORD?

- ii. Jeremiah 2:4-13 - What two evils did Israel commit according to verse 13? What do these images symbolize?

1. How are the false gods described? (How is the description similar to Gal. 4:9?)

- b. Flip to the New Testament and read 1 Corinthians 8:1-6. Why is Paul not overly concerned about eating food offered to idols? (*For further discussion on this read verses 7-13.*)

- c. Now, read 1 Corinthians 10:14-22. Even though the idols are nothing, what does Paul warn about?

- d. Skim Colossians 2:6-23. What kinds of things is Paul warning about in this passage?

- i. Why/how can we be free from these things that want to take us captive?

- e. *People can be enslaved to many types of gods that “are not gods” (paganism, mysticism, moralism, legalism, consumerism etc). How have your experiences with these things shown them to be weak and worthless as Paul says in Galatians 4:9?*

¹⁴ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 268.

2. **...so that we might receive adoption as sons.** Paul is the only one to use the term “adoption” in the New Testament. Let’s look at the four other places it’s used to better understand what this means for us as believers.
- a. Romans 8:12-17.
 - i. What is the role of the Spirit in our adoption?

 - ii. How should we live differently, by the Spirit, since we are now adopted?

 - b. Romans 8:18-24
 - i. What are we still looking forward to, groaning for, and hoping for?

 - c. Romans 9:1-5
 - i. Note the list of blessings Israel received from God.

 - ii. The people of Israel were slaves in Egypt and God redeemed them. Read Exodus 4:21-22 and Hosea 11:1-4. How did God describe his relationship with Israel in this rescue, and how is this relationship a foreshadow of our relationship in redemption?

 - d. Ephesians 1:3-12
 - i. What does this passage teach us about **WHY** we have been adopted?

 - ii. What does this passage teach about the **TIMING** of God’s plan for redemption?

 - iii. What other spiritual blessings are we blessed with in Christ?

 - e. *As you consider all these passages, how does understanding your adoption as a “son/daughter of God” motivate you to stay faithful and not turn back to a life enslaved to sin?*

3. ***But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God...*** What does Paul mean by distinguishing between these two relational descriptions? He seems to be pointing to the need for divine initiation for our salvation. Read the following passages and note how our part in salvation is described and how God's part is described.
- a. Romans 8:28-30
 - b. Ephesians 1:4-6, 13-14
 - c. 1 John 4:7-19 (note especially vs. 10 & 19)

The idea of "knowing" comes from the Old Testament Hebrew word "*yada*" and refers to more than just knowledge about someone, but rather an intimate affection and choosing of a person. Look up the following passages and see how the word "know" is used.

- i. Genesis 4:1
- ii. Genesis 18:16-19 (the word translated "chosen" is the word "*yada*")
- iii. Jeremiah 1:1-5

- 1. What do these passages indicate about what it means to know God and be known by Him?
How does this challenge or encourage you today?

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?
- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?
- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?
- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?
- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 4:1-11 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

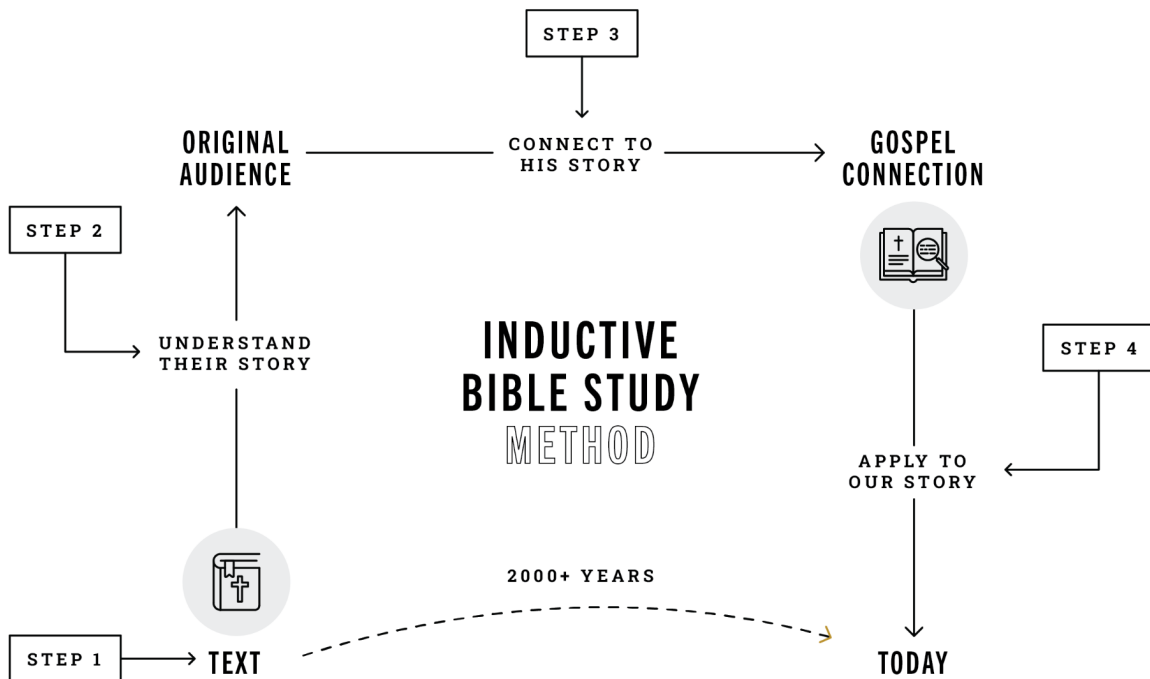
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?PRAY IN



GALATIANS

Lesson 8 | Why? Because of our Relationship

Galatians 4:12-20



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- ☐ **Step 2:** Understand their story by completing the observation questions in the first half of the lesson *SO THAT* you understand what the original author is communicating to his audience.
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- ☐ **Step 4:** Reflect and Apply to Your story by completing the last page of each lesson *SO THAT* the teaching of the passage helps you to practically grow as a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus.

Galatians 4:12-20 (ESV)

LESSON EIGHT

¹² Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are.

You did me no wrong.

¹³ You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, ¹⁴ and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ What then has become of your blessedness?

For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me.

¹⁶ Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?

¹⁷ They make much of you, but for no good purpose.

They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them.

¹⁸ It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you, ¹⁹ my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!

²⁰ I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

Lesson 8 | Why? Because of our Relationship!

Galatians 4:12-20

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

So far in our study of this book, we have gained a sense of Paul's passion and zeal for the purity of the gospel, the *only* true gospel. Last week we learned of the transformation for all believers from slaves to heirs, servants to children — now redeemed and adopted! But the temptation to return to our former slavery follows us, as it did the Galatian church.

This week, we'll see Paul soften a little in his frustration to recall past friendship and time spent with these Galatian Christians. We'll get a sense for just how deeply he loves and cares for his spiritual children, and the relational cost he's willing to pay for the sake of the truth of the gospel. Begin your study in prayer and then read Galatians 4:12-20 several times. Mark every reference to the main characters and note any commands or questions that are raised. Then, work through the questions below.

1. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?

a. *The Galatians*

i. **WHAT** words does Paul use to describe them? **WHAT** does his language reveal about their relationship to him?

ii. **HOW** did they treat Paul when he first came to them? **WHAT** were they willing to do?

1. *Why do you think his ailment might have been a trial to them?*

b. *Paul's opponents (identified as "they" in verse 17)*

i. **WHAT** two actions does Paul accuse them of?

ii. **WHAT** does he identify as their motivations?

c. *Paul*

i. **WHAT** does Paul command the Galatians to do? **WHAT** is his reasoning?

1. Considering the previous section (4:8-10), **WHAT** could Paul mean by this command in verse 12? **Note: this is the first command in the whole letter!*

ii. **WHEN** Paul was sick, **WHAT** did he do?

1. *If you were dealing with a "bodily ailment", do you think you would be preaching the gospel to others? Why or why not? How does Paul's example challenge or encourage you?*

iii. **WHAT** two questions does Paul ask the Galatians? **WHAT** does this reveal about the state of their current relationship?

iv. **WHAT** state does Paul say he is in **AGAIN** for their sake? **WHEN** will it end?

1. **WHAT** does this tell you Paul was willing to endure for the sake of his "children?"

v. **WHAT** is Paul's final desire?

1. *What words would you use to describe Paul's tone in this passage?*

d. *Christ*

i. **WHAT** does verse 19 tell us about the relationship between Christ and the believer?

1. **WHO** is the giver and **WHO** is the recipient of this act?

2. **WHAT** was Paul's main concern in these 9 verses?

- a. In our passage this week, Paul uses his relational currency with the Galatians to call them back. Go back and read Paul's initial comments in Galatians 1:6-7 — what is he calling them back *to*? What is at stake?

3. **WHAT** was Paul willing to risk for the sake of the truth?
 - a. *What are you willing to risk for the sake of the truth, relationally or otherwise?*
 - b. *Are you in community with other Christians, to the point where they could/would hold you accountable to the truth? If not, why do you think that is?*
4. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?
 - a. Galatians 4:12-14
 - b. Galatians 4:15-17
 - c. Galatians 4:18-20
5. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?
 - a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?
 - b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

1. ***Become as I am, for I also have become as you are.*** This is not the only time Paul desires for his readers or listeners to become like him. What does he mean by it? And how did he become like them? Let's look at two other examples.
 - a. Read 1 Cor 9:19-23.
 - i. What is Paul's current status according to verse 19? What does he make himself instead?
 - ii. Make a list of all he is willing to *become*, despite not being those things himself.
 - iii. What does this text tell us about his motivation and reasoning?
 - b. Later in his life, Paul finds himself a prisoner on trial before King Agrippa, his sister Bernice, and the governor. After giving an account of his conversion and a defense for his actions, read Acts 26:28-29 for Paul's finale.
 - i. What does King Agrippa ask Paul?
 - ii. What does Paul desire for all those listening, King Agrippa included?
 - iii. What did Paul possess, even as a prisoner, that the King and those listening did not?
 - c. How do these 2 accounts help you understand Paul's plea and command in Galatians 4:12?
 - i. With what you know of the Galatians, how do you think Paul became like them?
 - d. "In seeking to win other people for Christ, our end is to make them like us, but the means to that end is to make ourselves like them" — John Stott
 - i. *When you consider one person in your life who doesn't yet know Christ, what would it look like for you to 'become like them' in order to **win them to Christ**?*

- 2. *Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?*** Paul was willing to risk relationships and people's approval of him for the sake of them remaining in the truth of the gospel. Let's explore what else Scripture has to say about this.
- a. Read Ephesians 4:11-16.
 - i. What is the unified finish line of the work of ministry (vs. 13)?
 - ii. What does the 'maturity,' referenced in verse 13, protect and keep us from?
 - iii. According to verse 15, what ought to be our motivation for speaking the truth?
 1. *What other motivations do we tend to have instead?*
 - iv. When the body (the church) functions as it should, what happens to it? (ie. What is the result of truth spoken in love?)
 - b. Read Proverbs 27:5-6.
 - i. What does the author say is better than love that is hidden or quiet?
 1. *Why might you restrain from giving a necessary rebuke?*
 - ii. What are the "wounds of a friend" considered?
 1. *Why do you think that is?*
 - iii. In contrast, what does an enemy give extravagantly? Which feels better in the moment?
 1. *Can you think of a time when someone has spoken the truth in love to you, and it has at first felt like a painful wound? In hindsight, do you now count it as a faithful wound?*
 2. *Is there anyone towards whom you have lacked courage to 'speak the truth in love' to? What would it look like for you to be a faithful friend and sibling in the faith?*

3. ***They make much of you...they want to shut you out...*** Paul was deeply hurt by the fickle affections and shifting loyalties of these Galatian Christians he loved so deeply. He takes a moment to expose and call out his opponents for their evil intentions and selfish motivations. It seems they tried to flatter and charm the Galatians into siding with them, and keep them from continued fellowship with Paul — all for their own gain. In contrast, Paul experiences suffering and difficulty over and over again as a minister of the gospel. What does this imply about his motivations?

a. Read 2 Cor 11:23-29.

i. Make a list of all that Paul endured while carrying the gospel message.

1. When considering the extent and severity of this list, what do you think made Paul continue?

ii. Apart from all these physical hardships, what else did he suffer according to vs. 28? How often?

1. What does this tell you about his love for the churches?

b. Read Acts 20:17-35.

i. How does Paul describe his service to the Lord?

ii. Where and what did he teach? Who did he teach?

iii. What awaited him in Jerusalem?

iv. Paul tells these Ephesian Christians that this is the last time they will see him before his death. What is Paul's final warning to them?

1. What words would you use to describe Paul's tone in this passage?

c. With these two passages in mind, and what we have learned from our passage this week, what motivated Paul?

i. How does this contrast with the motivations of his opponents?

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?

- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?

- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?

- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?

- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 4:12-20 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

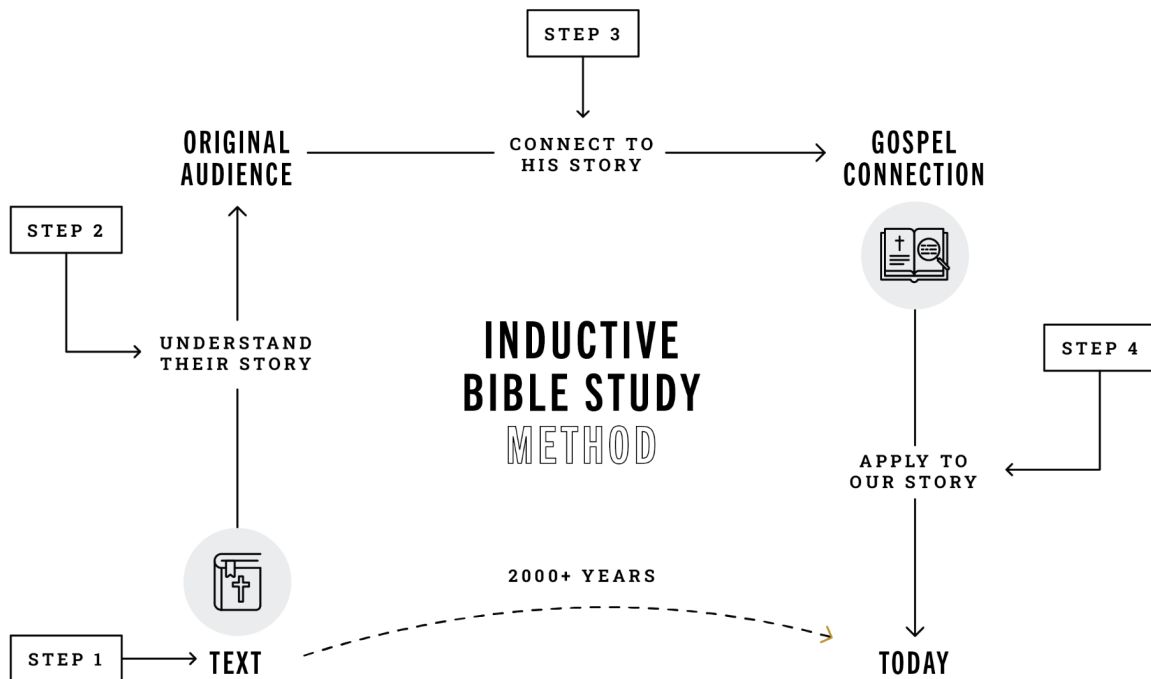
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?



GALATIANS

Lesson 9 | How? Stand Firm in Your Freedom!

Galatians 4:21-5:1



- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
- ☐ **Step 2:** Understand their story by completing the observation questions in the first half of the lesson *SO THAT* you understand what the original author is communicating to his audience.
- ☐ **Step 3:** Connect to God's story by completing the gospel connection questions in the second half of the lesson *SO THAT* you can understand where this passage fits in God's larger story of salvation.
- ☐ **Step 4:** Reflect and Apply to Your story by completing the last page of each lesson *SO THAT* the teaching of the passage helps you to practically grow as a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus.

Galatians 4:21-5:1

LESSON NINE

²¹ Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law?

²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman.

²³ But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.

²⁴ Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants.

One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar.

²⁵ Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.

²⁶ But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

²⁷ For it is written,

“Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear;
break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor!

For the children of the desolate one will be more
than those of the one who has a husband.”

²⁸ Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.

²⁹ But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now.

³⁰ But what does the Scripture say?

“Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.”

³¹ So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

5¹ For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Lesson 9 | How? Stand Firm in Your Freedom

Galatians 4:21-5:1

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

If you look back to the table of contents on page one, you'll note Galatians shifts emphasis in today's text. As Paul began the letter, he warned the Galatians not to desert God's gospel. From Galatians 1:11 - 4:20, he explained *why* this warning is so important. Now, in Galatians 4:21-5:12 (the texts for this week and next), he focuses on *how* to remain true to the gospel.

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 4:21-5:1 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.¹⁵

1. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?
 - a. *The Galatians*
 - i. **HOW** does Paul confront and challenge them as he begins writing this section?
 - ii. **WHAT** does Paul want them to know about their identity and status?
 - iii. **WHAT** does Paul command them to do, in light of their identity and status?
 - iv. **WHAT** does Paul command them **NOT** to do, in light of their identity and status?
 - b. *Jesus*
 - i. **WHAT** has Christ done, according to Paul?
 - ii. **WHY** has He done this? (eg. for what)?

1. *What does this mean?*

¹⁵ Since Paul's argument is complicated and is rooted in Old Testament ideas, we decided it would be best to provide more background questions than our regular pattern. Consequently, there are two pages in the "Understand their Story" section and four in "Connect to His Story" section (instead of the regular three pages for each).

Two mothers and two sons. Paul's argument in this chapter is built around the Old Testament story of Abraham and two of his wives: Hagar and Sarah. Fill in the chart to **BEGIN** to understand how and why he is comparing them. We'll fill in additional details in the Gospel Connections section.

	Hagar (slave woman)	Sarah (free woman)
How was her son born?	V 23	V 23 & 28-29
What mountain and/or city does she represent?		
What were her children born "for"?		
What does Scripture say about her future?	V 30	V 27
What does Scripture say about her son's future?	V 29-30	V 29-30

3. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?

a. Galatians 4:21-27

b. Galatians 4:28-31

c. Galatians 5:1

4. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?

a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?

b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

1. ***“For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.”*** For us to more clearly understand Paul’s argument, we need to read some of the Old Testament texts which he is referencing here.
 - a. Read Genesis 16:1-16
 - i. What details do you learn about Hagar (the slave woman) in this text?
 - ii. What details do you learn about her son in these verses?
 - iii. Based on the details given in Genesis 16 about her son’s conception and birth, what do you think Paul means in Galatians 4:23 when he says that he was born “according to the flesh”?
 - b. Read Genesis 17:15-17
 - i. What details do you learn about Sarai (the free woman) in this text?
 - ii. What details do you learn about her son in these verses?
 - iii. Based on the details given in Genesis 17 about her son’s conception and birth, what do you think Paul means in Galatians 4:23 when he says that he was born “through promise”?
 - iv. In Galatians 4:28-29, Paul draws two parallels between this son, and the Galatians.
 1. How is their spiritual birth similar to this son’s physical birth?
 2. What parallel does he draw between their present day experiences and what this son experienced?
 - c. Read Genesis 17:16-21
 - i. What will God do for & with the son of the free woman (Sarai)?

ii. What will God do for & with the son of the slave woman (Hagar)?

d. Read Genesis 17:22-26

i. What does Abraham do to himself and 'the son of the slave woman' in these verses?

ii. Does this action change his son's "status"? (eg. Does it make this son part of God's covenant promise & people)?

1. How does the answer to ii above, relate to Paul's argument throughout Galatians?

e. Read Genesis 21:1-21

i. Why are Hagar and Ishmael cast out in these verses?

ii. What does God reaffirm in verses 12-13?

Now that we know some of the Old Testament background to this story, we'll look to see how these people and stories are developed in other New Testament texts.

f. Read John 3:1-8

i. In this text Jesus tells Nicodemus how someone enters His kingdom and "inherits" the promises. What needs to happen to them?

ii. Where do we see this same language in Galatians 4:21-5:1?

g. Read John 8:31-37

i. What makes someone a follower of Jesus according to this text?

ii. What parallel concepts and ideas are in John 8:31-37 and Galatians 4:21-5:1?

- h. Read Romans 4:1-17.
 - i. Why was Abraham himself included in God's promises?
 - ii. Who are Abraham's true children according to this text?

1. *Bring these ideas back with you into Galatians 4:21-5:1. Are you a child of the slave woman, or a child of the free woman? Will you inherit the promises? How do you know?*

2. ***"Now this may be interpreted allegorically¹⁶: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery... but the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother."*** In Galatians 4:21 - 5:1, Paul draws a parallel between the Old Covenant which was ratified at Mount Sinai, and a new covenant, ratified through the death of Jesus. We'll investigate a few key texts to see how this difference is drawn out by other biblical authors.

- a. Read Exodus 19:16-20, 20:1-21, and Exodus 24:1-8.
 - i. Where was Israel at this time? At what mountain?
 - ii. What do they receive from God, and promise to obey at this time?
 - iii. What is their experience of this situation? (eg What are they seeing? What feelings are they expressing?)
- b. Now read Hebrews 12:18-25
 - i. Where are believers situated in this text? At what mountain?
 - ii. How is their experience different from that of Israel at Mount Sinai?

¹⁶ Scholars debate whether or not Paul is actually using allegory here, and whether the Greek word translated "allegory" here should be more accurately translated "figuratively". As Timothy George explains, *"Allegorical interpretation seeks to discern a hidden meaning in a given story or text, a meaning that may be entirely divorced from the historical referent alluded to in the narrative itself. A good example of an allegory in English literature is John Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress. This famous story is a Christian fantasy that Bunyan said came to him 'under the similitude of a dream' and in which he depicted the various stages of the Christian life through a series of coded characters, events, and places—Pliable, Faithful, Hopeful, Giant Despair, Doubting-Castle, Hill Difficulty, City Beautiful, and so on...Clearly Paul was not advocating the evaporation of biblical events or a departure from the basic meaning of Scripture as found in its natural and literal sense. What he here called allegory might be better termed typology: a narrative from Old Testament history interpreted in terms of new covenant realities."* George, T. (1994). Galatians (Vol. 30, pp. 338–340). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers. Tom Shreiner adds, *"Scholars debate whether we have a strict allegory here. Some contend that the passage should be identified as an allegory ...Others maintain that the text should be classified as typology, even though Paul uses the word 'allegory.' They argue that Paul's exegesis of the text, though creative, is rooted in the OT, and fits with a salvation-historical reading."* Schreiner, T. R. (2010). Galatians (p. 292). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

iii. How is their relationship with God different from that of Israel at Mt. Sinai?

1. *If you are a child of the promise, what do you find most encouraging about the imagery and truths taught in Hebrews 12:19-25? Spend some time thanking and praising God for the freedom you have through Christ.*

3. ***“For it is written, “Rejoice O barren one who does not bear; / break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! / For the children of the desolate one will be more / than those of the one who has a husband.”*** In this text, Paul quotes from Isaiah 54. Commentator Timothy George explains the link this way, “This famous passage of Scripture likens the city of Jerusalem to a barren widow sitting at the gates of Jerusalem. She has been covered in sackcloth and ashes because her husband has been carried away into captivity and she has no children to care for her in her old age. In the midst of this desperate situation, the voice of God breaks in [and tells her to rejoice]...” Why?

“Later in the same chapter (Isaiah 54:5) God himself provided the answer: ‘For your Maker is your husband - the Lord Almighty is his name - the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth.’ Again, Paul was pointing to God’s gracious sovereignty and infinite love that is the foundation of our justification, freedom and hope.”¹⁷

The Galatians (and us) cannot be saved by following the law; but God can and will create children of promise! In the midst of great barrenness, Isaiah pointed forward to the day when Jesus would fulfill God’s covenant with Abraham, allowing his children to inherit the promises given to Abraham. Because of God’s faithful love for his people, He would cause children of the promise to be born according to the Spirit, into his family and his kingdom! God’s perfect plan, accomplished through the blood of Jesus, who mediated a new covenant (Hebrews 12:24), allows us to be enrolled in heaven and to be made perfect!

1. *How does this truth challenge or encourage you today?*

4. In the first half of this letter, Paul provided an extended argument for *why* they shouldn’t desert God’s Gospel, and now he transitions to *how* they can stand firm. As you think back to the rationale he has provided:
Lesson 2. Because it’s God’s Gospel
Lesson 3. Because a Lot is at Stake
Lesson 4. Because of Your Own Experience and the Experience of Abraham
Lesson 5. Because of the Law and the Promises
Lesson 6. Because You were Slaves and are now Sons
Lesson 7. Because of Our Relationship,
Which argument was most convincing to you, or which argument most impacted you? Why?

¹⁷ George, T. (1994). *Galatians* (Vol. 30, p. 344-5). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?
- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?
- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?
- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?
- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 4:21-5:1 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

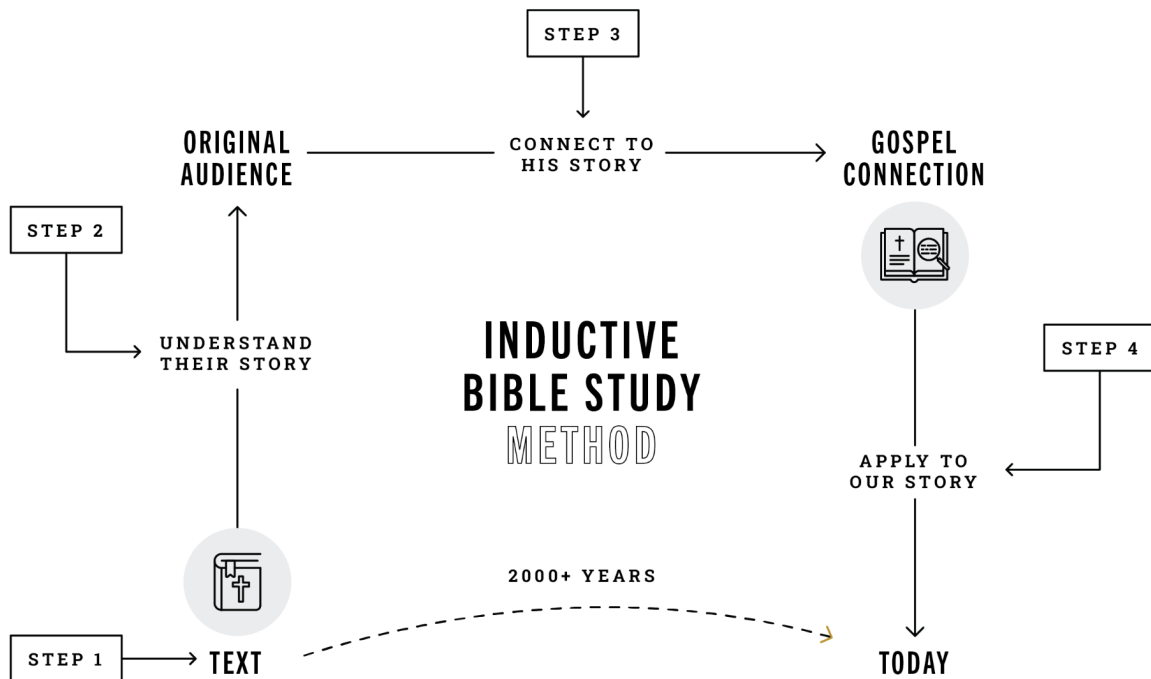
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?



GALATIANS

Lesson 10 | How? Don't Fall away from Grace

Galatians 5:2-12



- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
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Galatians 5:2 - 5:12

LESSON TEN

² Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.

³ I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law.

⁴ You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

⁵ For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.

⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

⁷ You were running well.

Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

⁸ This persuasion is not from him who calls you.

⁹ A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

¹⁰ I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is.

¹¹ But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted?

In that case the offense of the cross has been removed.

¹² I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

Lesson 10 | How? Don't Fall away from Grace!

Galatians 5:2-12

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

Our text last week ended with a crescendo! For four chapters Paul laid out a systematic argument weaving together a variety of personal encounters with the gospel and arguments from scripture in order to prove that God has always, and will always, save people by grace through faith. Throughout, he warned the Galatians that they are in great danger if they try to justify themselves before God through 'works of the law', and ended his argument with an exhortation, "For freedom Christ has set us free: stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1).

In Galatians 5:13, Paul will turn his attention to explaining this notion of Christian freedom, but before he does, he wants to hammer home one specific truth. What is that truth and why is it so important? Work through this week's text and find out!

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 5:2-12 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.

1. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?
 - a. *The Galatians*
 - i. **WHAT** 'work of the law' are they in danger of accepting?
 - ii. **WHAT** are all the potential consequences of accepting this 'work of the law'? List as many as you can see in the text.
 - iii. **WHY** would they accept this 'work of the law'? **WHAT** is their motivation, according to Paul?
 - iv. **HOW** does Paul contrast their past response to the gospel and their current response? **WHAT** were they doing before? **WHAT** has happened to them?
 - v. **WHO** does Paul blame for the Galatians's situation? **WHAT** words does he use to describe these people?

b. *Paul*

- i. **WHO** should the Galatians listen to, according to Paul in verses 2-4?
- ii. **WHY** should they listen to him? **WHAT** kind of authority does he have? (if you're not sure, re-read the very first thing that Paul told them in Galatians 1:1).
- iii. **WHAT** does Paul eagerly wait for?
- iv. **HOW** will he receive what he eagerly waits for?
 1. *What contrast is Paul drawing between the nature of true faith and false faith in Galatians 5:2-6?*
- v. **WHAT** two things does Paul have confidence in?
 1. *Are you surprised that he has confidence in these two things? Why or why not?*
- vi. **WHAT** is the basis of his confidence?
- vii. **HOW** does Paul describe his present reality as an apostle? **WHAT** is he experiencing? **WHY?**

c. *Christ Jesus*

- i. **WHAT** are all the things you learn about Jesus Christ in these verses? Make a list!
 1. *Which truth encourages or challenges you the most today?*

d. *The ones troubling them*

- i. **WHAT** is Paul attempting to communicate in Galatians 5:9 about these individuals?
- ii. **WHAT** does he wish these individuals would do?

1. *What questions or thoughts do you have about Paul's final words in this text?*

2. **WHAT** do you think Paul means by "This persuasion" in Galatians 5:8? (eg. **WHAT** idea(s) in Galatians 5:2-12 is "This persuasion" referring to?)
3. **WHO** is Paul referring to when he references 'him who calls you' in Galatians 5:8?
 - a. **WHAT** is the message of 'him who calls you' according to Galatians 1:6?
4. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?
 - a. Galatians 5:2-6
 - b. Galatians 5:7-12
5. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?
 - a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know? Why should they stand firm in freedom?
 - b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do? How can they stand firm in freedom?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

1. **Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law.**
Throughout the letter to the Galatians, Paul has been warning people in these churches not to seek justification through works of the law in general. Now, he finally gets specific! The ‘circumcision party’, which he identifies as a problematic group in Galatians 2:12, were obviously promoting one specific ‘work of the law.’ Why would any Gentile be tempted to accept circumcision? Read the following texts to find out.
 - a. Read Genesis 17:1-14, which describes God making a covenant with Abram and his descendants.
 - i. What is God’s role in this covenant? (eg. What does He promise to do?)
 - ii. What is Abram’s role in this covenant? (eg. What must he (and his descendants) do?)
 - iii. What does this action signify and what happens to those who refuse to obey this command?
 - b. Read Exodus 12:43-49, which describes God’s rules for eating the Passover meal¹⁸.
 - i. Who is the Passover meal for?
 - ii. Can a slave, foreigner or stranger be included in this meal? If so, how?

1. Based on the verses from Genesis 17 and Exodus 12 above, what do you think ‘the circumcision party’ believed was necessary for Gentiles to become God’s people?

Now, that we understand the initial meaning behind circumcision, let’s see how circumcision imagery is developed within the Old Testament

- f. Read Deuteronomy 10:12-22, which describes another of God’s commands regarding circumcision.
 - i. What are people called to circumcise in these verses?
 - ii. What would God’s people do (how would they act) if they circumcised themselves this way?
- g. Read Jeremiah 4:1-4.

¹⁸ Passover is an annual celebration which commemorates God delivering his people from slavery in Egypt. God killed the first-born sons of people in Egypt, but “passed over” the homes which were marked by the blood of a lamb, sparing their sons.

- i. What does God command the people of Israel/Judah to do in these verses?
- h. Read Jeremiah 9:23-26.
 - i. What should people boast in, according to these verses?
 - ii. Who will God punish, according to these verses?

1. *In light of these passages, did circumcision in the flesh justify people in the Old Testament?*

- i. Read Jeremiah 31:31-34.
 - i. In what way will God's future covenant be different from the first covenant?

As we turn the pages into the New Testament, we see Jeremiah's prophecy slowly get fulfilled. Read the texts below to see how Jesus reframes our identity as covenant people.

- j. Read Matthew 5:17-20
 - i. What does Jesus say about His relationship to the Old Testament law?
- k. Read Luke 22:14-20
 - i. What meal is Jesus celebrating with His disciples in this text?
 - ii. How will Jesus' death (and blood) affect the covenant relationship between God and His people?
- l. Read Hebrews 9:11-15
 - i. What has Jesus' blood done for us?
 - ii. What is Jesus' role in this new covenant? What title does He have?

1. *With all this scripture in mind, what did 'the circumcision party' fail to grasp about the practice of circumcision from Genesis onwards?*

m. Read Romans 9:30-33

- i. Why have the Gentiles attained righteousness?
- ii. Why has Israel NOT attained righteousness?

1. *How does Romans 9 help you to understand Paul's emotion in Galatians 5:2-12? What is at stake?*

2. **I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view...** in the midst of this impassioned plea that the Galatians not accept circumcision, Paul steps back and settles himself and his hearers. It's as if he's saying, "God's got you: He won't let you go." How can he say this? What does he know about God?

a. Read Philippians 1:3-6 and focus on verse 6.

- i. Who began the work in the church in Philippi?
- ii. What will happen to this "good work" which began in their church?

b. Read Philippians 3:12-16 and focus on verse 15.

- i. Who does Paul trust will reveal the truth to the Philippians?

c. Read Acts 20:17-35. These verses record Paul's last words to a group of church elders. He warns them that false teachers will arise to draw people away, but he doesn't despair. Why?

- i. Who, and what, is able to build them up and give them an inheritance, according to verse 32?

1. *How does Paul's confidence 'in the Lord' (Gal 5:10) encourage or challenge you today, as you pray for people who once were running well, but are now being hindered from obeying the truth (Gal 5:7)?*

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?

- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?

- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?

- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?

- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 5:2-12 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

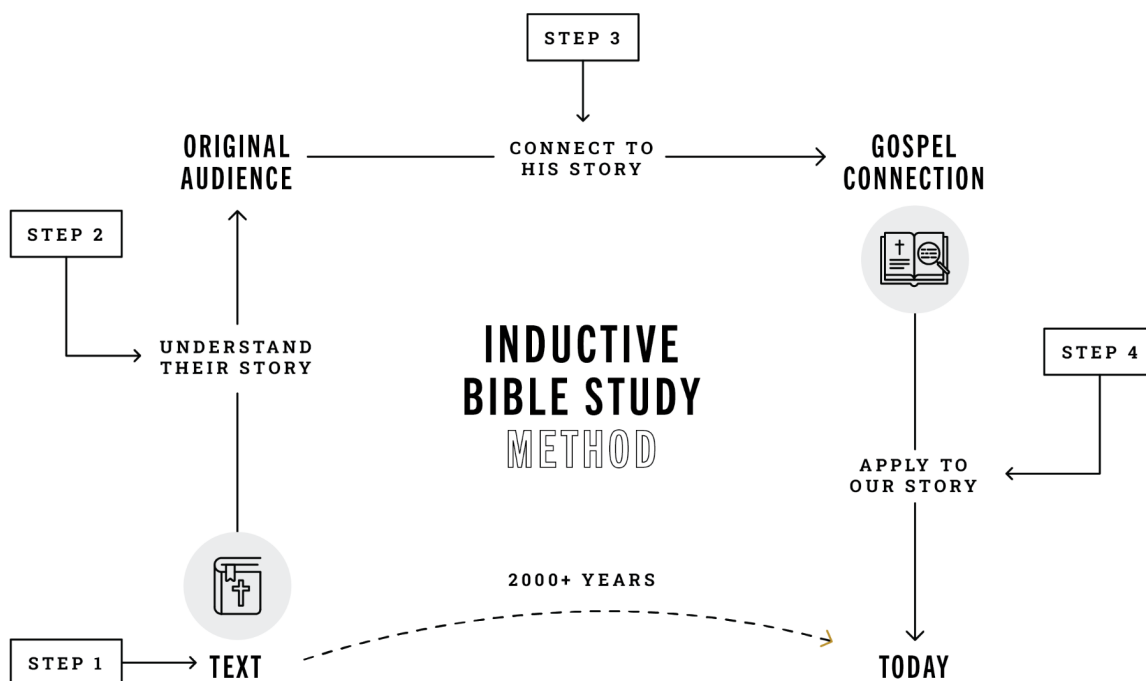
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?



GALATIANS

Lesson 11 | What Now? Live Free by the Spirit

Galatians 5:13-26



- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
- ☐ **Step 2:** Understand their story by completing the observation questions in the first half of the lesson *SO THAT* you understand what the original author is communicating to his audience.
- ☐ **Step 3:** Connect to God's story by completing the gospel connection questions in the second half of the lesson *SO THAT* you can understand where this passage fits in God's larger story of salvation.
- ☐ **Step 4:** Reflect and Apply to Your story by completing the last page of each lesson *SO THAT* the teaching of the passage helps you to practically grow as a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus.

Galatians 5:13-26

LESSON ELEVEN

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers.

Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

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

²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Lesson 11 | What Now? Live Free by the Spirit!

Galatians 5:13-26

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

Last week we wrapped up Paul's long argument against justification by works of the law. As he ended one topic in order to change the emphasis of the letter, Paul summarized the transition with these words: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love" (Galatians 1:6). As he ends this letter to the Galatians, love will become Paul's major theme. He will exhort the Galatians to become a community known for love rather than doctrinal squabbles. What does faith working through love look like, and how does love influence our Christian freedom? Read today's text to find out!

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 5:13-26 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.

1. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?
 - a. *The Galatians*
 - i. **WHAT** does Paul say they are called to?
 - ii. **WHAT** are the positive and negative commands which flow from this calling?
 - iii. **WHY** should they "through love serve one another" according to Paul?
 - iv. **HOW** can they "through love serve one another" according to Paul? What (or who) will empower them to live this way?
 - v. **WHAT** insight do the warnings in verses 15 and 26 provide? What do these warnings teach you about the state of their churches?
 - b. *The Spirit*
 - i. **WHAT** four things does Paul encourage the Galatians to do "by (or with) the Spirit"?
 1. *WHAT do you think each of these instructions means? Write out a brief explanation of what you think Paul is trying to communicate by each verb phrase.*

ii. **WHAT** do you learn about the relationship between the Spirit and the flesh?

iii. **WHAT** is true about those who are led by the Spirit?

1. *How does this idea tie into Paul's argument in the rest of Galatians?*

iv. **WHAT** fruit does the Spirit produce in a believer?

1. *If you are a Christian, do you see evidence of this fruit being produced in you over time? How does Galatians 5:22-23 encourage or challenge you today?*

2. *While the Spirit is the one who produces fruit, how might you position yourself for the Spirit's work, according to Galatians 5:13-26?*

2. Key Words

a. *Flesh*

i. **WHAT** do you think Paul means by the "flesh?"

ii. **WHAT** do you learn about the desires of the flesh?

iii. **WHAT** are the works of the flesh, according to this text?

1. *What different categories of actions do you see in this list? Could you group some of them together?*

iv. **WHAT** is the end result of those who do such things?

v. **WHAT** are those who belong to Christ supposed to do to the flesh?

1. *How do these reflections on the flesh challenge or encourage you today?*

b. *The law*

i. **WHAT** three things do you learn about the law in this text?

c. *One another*

i. **WHAT** does Paul tell the Galatians to do to one another?

ii. **WHAT** does Paul tell the Galatians NOT to do to one another?

3. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?

a. Galatians 5:13-15

b. Galatians 5:16-24

c. Galatians 5:25-26

4. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?

a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?

b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

1. **For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.** In Galatians 5:1, Paul declared, “For freedom Christ has set you free!” but what does this freedom look like? We get some clues from the text we’ve been studying this week, and also from other places in Scripture. Look up the following verses to round out your understanding of Christian freedom.
 - a. Read 1 Corinthians 8:1-13.
 - i. What does love do, according to this text?
 - ii. The word freedom isn’t used in this text. What word does Paul use to get across the same idea?
 - iii. What limitations should we put around our ‘freedom’ according to Paul? Why should we limit it?
 - iv. Read 1 Corinthians 8:8-9, and then compare it to Galatians 5:6. What similarities are in these texts?
 - b. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-21.
 - i. What does Paul say he has done with his freedom in these verses?
 - ii. Why? What is his motivation?
 - c. Read 1 Peter 2:13-17.
 - i. How does Peter tell people to use their freedom?
 - d. Read Jude 1-4, 10-13.
 - i. What danger is Jude warning the church about in this text?
 - e. Read 2 Peter 2:17-22. In this text, “these” people Peter is referring to are false teachers.
 - i. What does he say these false teachers have promised?
 - ii. What is the truth about these false teachers, according to Peter? Are they free?

iii. How do Peter's words in these verses echo Paul's ideas in Galatians 5:13-26?

1. *When you reflect on what you've learned from working through these five texts, how would you explain the idea of Christian freedom to someone?*

2. *What questions do you still have about Christian freedom?*

2. **"For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."** As Paul sums up the law, he goes back to the Old Testament and then also alludes to the ministry of Jesus.

a. Read Leviticus 19:9-18.

i. What does it look like to love your neighbor as yourself according to these verses? What kind of things should a person do and not do?

ii. What kind of person can do these things, according to Galatians 5:13-26?

b. Read Mark 12:28-34.

i. According to Jesus, what are the greatest commandments?

ii. What does the scribe add to the discussion, which agrees with Paul's argument in Galatians?

c. Read John 13:31-35.

i. What 'new commandment' is Jesus giving His disciples in this text?

1. *Take some time to evaluate your own life with this command in view. Is the Holy Spirit convicting or challenging you to love your neighbor? Do you need to ask for His help in fulfilling the law of love?*

3. **But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.** Since all of us struggle to conquer sin throughout our whole lives, these verses are challenging to understand and apply! Throughout history, people have argued that ‘spiritual Christians’ can live sinless lives, but that doesn’t seem to line up with the scriptural witness. How should we understand the ongoing struggle between flesh and spirit?

a. Read Romans 7:4-6

- i. What was true of us while we were living in the flesh?
- ii. What has happened to those of us who now belong to another [Christ]?
- iii. What two things are now possible for us to “do” because we belong to Christ?

b. Read Romans 7:15-25

- i. Despite this new standing, Christians still have an on-going battle against the “flesh”. How does Paul explain our warring motivations and desires?
- ii. What emotions does he express as he summarizes this battle?
- iii. To whom does he turn, as he summarizes this battle? Who can save us from it?

c. Read Romans 8:1-17

- i. What is true of those who are in Christ Jesus?

1. *Stop and praise God for this reality! If you are a follower of Jesus, this is true of you!!!*

- ii. What are we supposed to **DO** in light of this reality (verses 5-8)?

- iii. **HOW** can we do this (verses 12-14)?

1. *How have the passages on the flesh and the Spirit in Galatians and Romans challenged or encouraged you this week?*

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

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- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?

- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?

- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?

- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 5:13-26 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

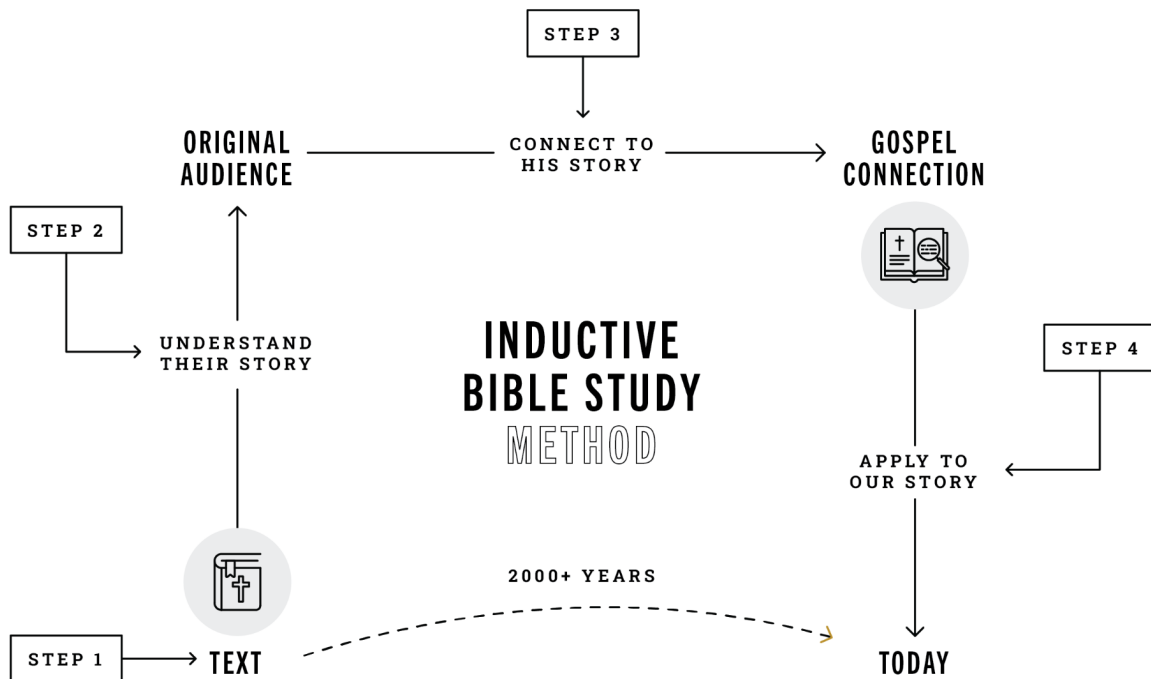
PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?



GALATIANS

Lesson 12 | What Else? Bear each other's Burdens and Boast in the Cross

Galatians 6:1-18



- ☐ **Step 1:** Observe the text by reading it several times and marking characters and key words/phrases *SO THAT* you grasp what the passage is about.
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Galatians 6:1-18
LESSON TWELVE

¹ Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.

Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

³ For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

⁴ But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor.

⁵ For each will have to bear his own load.

⁶ Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.

⁷ Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

⁹ And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

¹¹ See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

¹² It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

¹³ For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.

¹⁴ But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

¹⁵ For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

¹⁶ And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

¹⁷ From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.

¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

Lesson 12 | What Else? Bear each other's Burdens and Boast in the Cross

Galatians 6:1-18

Look at the Text: Understand their Story

Last week we studied Paul's exhortation to the Galatians to become a community known for love rather than doctrinal squabbles. The passage was full of practical commands and a contrast of the works of the flesh versus the fruit of the Spirit. This week, as we read the conclusion of Paul's letter, he will finish off his words of exhortation and then summarize his main points once again.

Begin your study in prayer. Read Galatians 6:1-18 several times, marking every reference to the main characters and noting any words or concepts which are repeated. Then, work through the questions below.

1. **WHO** are the people in these verses and **WHAT** do you learn about them?

a. *The Galatians*

- i. **HOW** does Paul address them as he closes his letter? (vs 1 & 18) Why is this significant in the context of this letter?
- ii. **WHO** do you think Paul means by "you who are spiritual"? (Consider what you learned in last week's passage.)
- iii. **HOW** are they to care for one another in verses 1-5? (2 ways)
- iv. **WHAT** is the "law of Christ"? (look back to last week for a clue)
- v. **WHAT** commands does Paul give regarding how each person should view him/herself?

b. *Paul*

- i. **WHAT** does he note about his writing? (**WHY** do you think this is?)
- ii. **WHAT** does Paul boast in? **WHAT** has the cross done for him?
- iii. **WHY** does he say no one should cause him trouble from now on? **HOW** does this connect to the rest of the letter?

c. *Paul's Opponents*

- i. **HOW** were they treating the Galatians?
- ii. **WHY** did they want the Galatians to be circumcised? (2 motives)
- iii. **WHAT** do these verses add or clarify about the false teachers from what we already know in this letter?

2. **KEY WORDS**

a. *Sow/Reap*

- i. **WHAT** does Paul warn the Galatians not to be deceived about?
- ii. **WHAT** does one reap if they sow to their flesh?
- iii. **WHAT** does one reap if they sow to the Spirit?
- iv. **WHAT** should we not grow weary of? **WHY?**
 1. **WHO** are we to do good to?
 2. **HOW** does this connect to last week's passage (Galatians 5:13-26)?
 3. **WHY** might believers grow weary and give up?

b. *Circumcision*

- i. **HOW** does Paul view circumcision and uncircumcision?

ii. **WHAT** does he focus on instead?

1. **WHAT** kind of outward things might we think “count for something” rather than the inward new creation by the Spirit?

c. *The Cross of Christ*

i. **HOW** did the false teachers treat the cross of Christ?

ii. **HOW** does Paul view the cross?

1. *Are you ashamed of the cross or any other aspect of the gospel? Or do you openly “boast” in what Jesus has done for you? Why do you think this is?*

3. **HOW** would you summarize each section of this text? **WHAT** is the flow of thought?

a. Galatians 6:1-5

b. Galatians 6:6-10

c. Galatians 6:11-18

4. **HOW** would you summarize the main points of this passage?

a. What does Paul want the Galatians to know?

b. What does Paul want the Galatians to do?

Gospel Connections: Connect to His Story

1. **Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.** Part of living by the Spirit is caring for one another especially when it comes to our spiritual walk. Sin puts us in a state of brokenness that requires restoration and Paul says instead of rejecting or judging each other - restore each other! Let's look at some other passages that teach us what this should look like in the church.
 - a. Read Matthew 18:10–14.
 - i. How do you think the story of the shepherd and the sheep is connected to believers?
 - ii. What is God's will when it comes to straying "sheep"?
 - b. Read the passage that comes directly after this parable of the sheep: Matthew 18:15-17
 - i. What is the process you should follow when a fellow believer sins against you?
 - ii. How does the instruction in Galatians 6:1 help you understand **HOW** this confrontation should happen?
 - c. Read 2 Timothy 2:24-26-. What kinds of things should characterize the Lord's servant? How should he treat his opponents?
 - d. Read James 5:19-20. What is the warning in this passage? What is the hope?
 - e. *How do you tend to treat others when they sin? For example, do you distance yourself from people? Or react with judgement or hostility?- With your natural reactions in mind, what specifically challenges or convicts you as you read the verses above?*
 - f. *What might need to change in light of the cross? How can you "fulfill the law of Christ"? Spend some time praying about this passage and your reflections. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you to respond according to His word!*

2. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Paul continues to contrast the flesh and the Spirit as he has for much of his letter. In this passage he has an eschatological¹⁹ focus, pointing to the **END RESULT** of all our sowing. There is both great hope and great warning in this passage. Paul has made it clear that our works do **NOT** save us, and yet they are evidence of our salvation. Read the following passages to learn more about how our works connect to the final judgement.

a. Romans 6:20-23.

i. What was the fruit and end result of our works when we were slaves to sin?

ii. As slaves of God, what does the fruit we get lead to?

iii. What does Paul emphasize about *how* we became free and got eternal life?

b. Romans 14:10-12.

i. How should the future judgement of God affect how we treat other Christians?

c. Revelation 20:11-15 describes a vision the apostle John received of the final judgement.

i. What do you notice about **WHO** is judged? What are they judged according to?

ii. What saves a person from the lake of fire?²⁰

d. *In Galatians Paul has been emphasizing justification through faith alone, so how do we reconcile what he seems to be teaching about the importance of our works? How do the two fit together?*

e. *Why do you think it's important for us to understand the eternal results of our "sowing"? How is it both challenging and encouraging?*

¹⁹ Eschatology refers to the final events of history as Timothy George writes: "the final consummation of salvation that will be ushered in by the return of Christ and the resurrection of the dead." Timothy George, Galatians, vol. 30, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 424.

²⁰ Read more about the "book of life" in the following: Luke 10:17-20, Philippians 4:3, Rev. 3:5, 13:5-8, 21:22-27

3. See with what large letters²¹ I am writing to you with my own hand. It was common practice for people to dictate a letter to a scribe and then to sign/close the letter with their own hand. In this letter Paul closes the letter not just with a signature or benediction, but he also reiterates many of the main themes of his letter one more time, relaying the importance of these things. Using Paul's last few lines, let's review what we learned in this letter to the Galatians. As you flip back through your homework, summarize what you have learned.

- a. Vs. 12 - *It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.*
 - i. What false teaching was Paul refuting and how could similar teachings tempt Christians today?

- b. Vs. 14 - *But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*
 - i. What did we learn about Christ and His saving work for believers? What is the only true gospel?

- c. Vs. 15 - *For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.*
 - i. In light of the gospel and the work of the Spirit in us (making us a new creation), how did Paul teach us to live? How did he contrast the flesh and the Spirit?

- d. Vs 16 - *And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God*
 - i. How did Paul use the Old Testament Scriptures and history of Israel to argue justification by faith alone?

- e. Vs 17 - *From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.*
 - i. In what ways did Paul defend his authority and the gospel he preached?

 - ii. What details did we learn about his relationship with the Galatian churches?

²¹ The large letters are not due to Paul's poor eyesight or hands that are deformed, or to a crucifixion! They signify the importance of the conclusion, provoking the readers to pay special heed to Paul's final thoughts. Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 376.

Reflection: Apply to Our Story

The following questions are designed to help us summarize the main point that we've seen God making in this text, in the light of the whole Bible and our call to discipleship. Our reflection on the text leads to prayer in light of the text, as we worship God as He has revealed Himself in the text, and ask for His guidance, forgiveness, and power as we seek to become more deeply rooted followers of Jesus.

- What do we learn about who God is?

- What do we learn about the relationship between God and man?

- What do we learn about the problem of sin and how Jesus has dealt with it?

- What does it look like to be a disciple? How are we empowered to be a disciple?

- What does this text teach me about who I am in Christ, or what Jesus has done for me, in order to empower or convince me to obey?

SO WHAT? *How can Galatians 6:1-18 help you become a more deeply rooted follower of Jesus? What are **you** called to know or do in this passage?*

PRAY IN ADORATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I PRAISE God for?

PRAY IN CONFESSION- In light of this passage/lesson, what do I need to CONFESS or repent of?

PRAY IN SUPPLICATION - In light of this passage/lesson, what can I ASK God for?

APPENDIX 1

Relation Between Old & New Testaments

- **God's nature does not change.**
 - His character and priorities are consistent throughout scripture. The "God of the Old Testament" is the same as the "God of the New"
 - Father, Son, Holy Spirit - coexistent, coequal, coeternal,
 - Hebrews 13:8
- **God's plan does not change (Ephesians 1:3-10),**
 - but it was revealed to people in progressive stages. Covenant promises build on each other until they are fulfilled in the work and person of Jesus.
- **The nature of salvation does not change.**
 - In both the Old and New Testaments people are saved by God's grace, through faith, not by works (Exodus, Galatians, Hebrews).
 - But, in both the Old and New Testaments "true faith" is authenticated by works. Our lives must be in alignment with our profession, or our profession of faith is false.
- **God's Moral Law does not change.**
 - The 10 Commandments, and other laws which communicate ethics do not change. (eg. Love the Lord Your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and love your neighbour as yourself).
 - Jesus teaches God's moral law and emphasizes that this isn't an outward show. Hearts must be right before God.
 - NT Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
 - 1 Peter 1:15 - You shall be holy for I am holy
 - Moral laws define sin
- **God's Ceremonial Law / Levitical Law is fulfilled in the New Testament**
 - OT Laws which highlight our need for purification, cleansing and atonement are fulfilled in the work and person of Jesus.
 - "[In the old covenant] ... gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation." (Heb 9:9-10)
 - "Israel was to observe various ceremonial laws - for example those pertaining to clean and unclean food. To be ceremonially clean was symbolic of being morally holy. This explains why the text on clean and unclean food is bracketed by references to Israel being "a people holy to the LORD" (vv 2,21).
 - In the new covenant the requirement to observe these ceremonial laws has been abrogated (*repealed, revoked, rescinded*), because they have served their purpose of pointing to the perfect holiness of Christ (Col 2:16-23, Heb 9:1 - 10:26)" Source: Gospel Transformation Bible Footnotes - Deuteronomy 14:1-21

- The requirements of God's moral and ceremonial Law is fulfilled in the work and person of Jesus.
 - Jesus lived a life of perfect obedience to God's moral law
 - Jesus died as the perfect sacrifice
 - Jesus is now our prophet, our priest and our king

"And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." Luke 22:19-20

Ezekiel 36, Jeremiah 31

- **The "mediator" changes under the new covenant.**
 - In the OT, Moses "mediated" between God and the people (Deut 9:25-29). Through the Mosaic Law, God showed them how to live. **The law stood between God and the people. To please God, one had to follow the law.**
 - In the NT, Jesus "mediates" between God and us (Hebrews 9:15, 12:24). Jesus has fulfilled the requirements of the ceremonial law. **Jesus now stands between God and us. To please God, we have to follow Jesus:** relying on the sufficiency of His sacrifice for our salvation, and by living in obedience to His teaching - the Law of Christ (Gal 6:2), (1 John 2:3-6).

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK ONE

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK TWO

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK THREE

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK FOUR

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK FIVE

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK SIX

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK SEVEN

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK EIGHT

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK NINE

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK TEN

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK ELEVEN

[illegible]

Group Prayer Requests Log

WEEK TWELVE

[illegible]