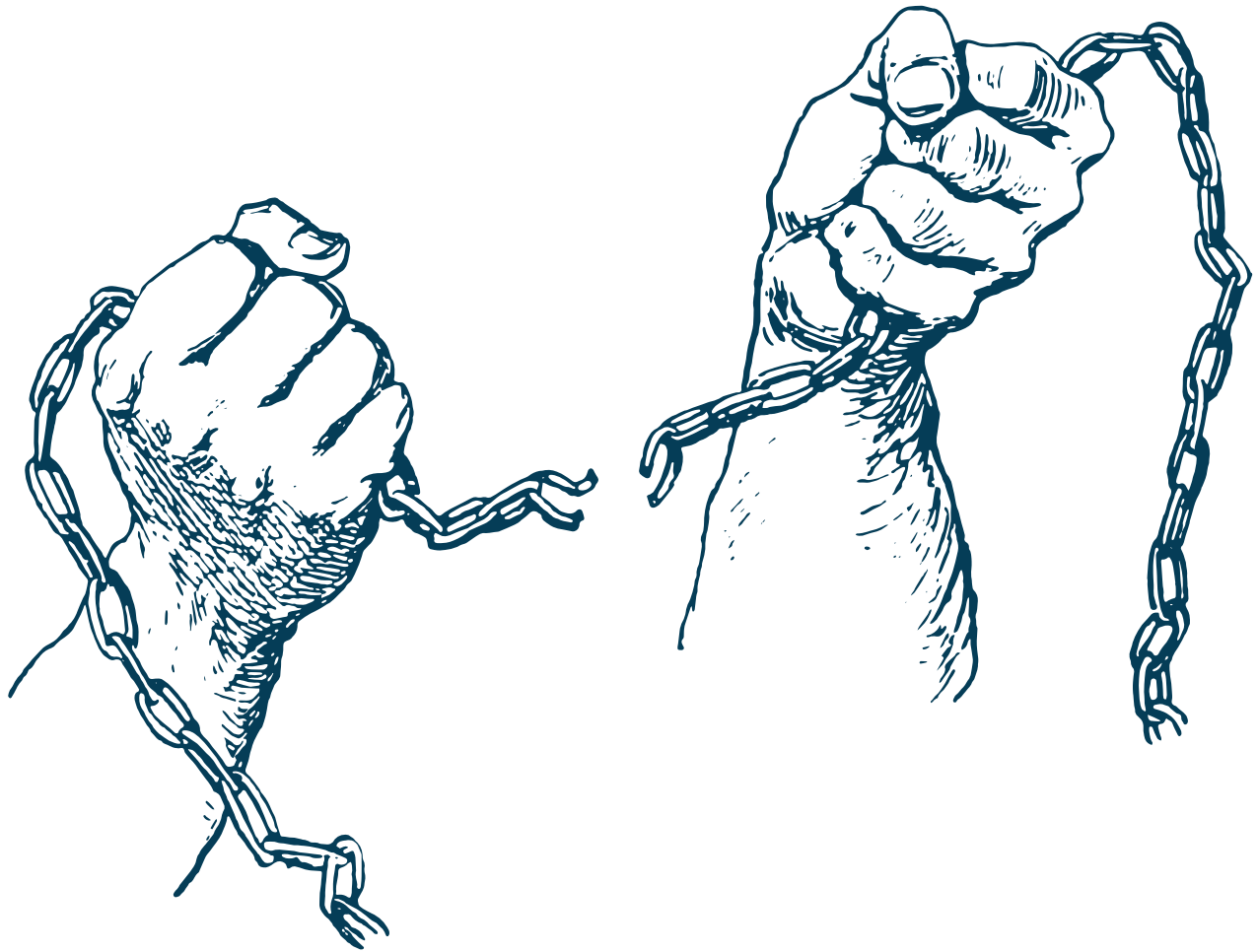




GALATIANS

MICHAEL DEFAZIO • 13 SESSIONS

**NEXT
LEVEL**  **ONLINE**

OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

SESSION 1: A Gospel Worth Fighting For (Galatians 1:1-10)

- Opening Thoughts

- Galatians begins unlike any other Pauline letter.
 - o Paul is in fighting mode...

 - o ...because THE gospel is under attack.
 - The gospel of Paul: “grace and peace”

 - The “gospel” trending in Galatia

- Takeaways:
 - o Some things are worth fighting for, and the _____ is on that list.

 - o Galatians is...
 - Biographical (1-2)
 - Comparative (3-4)
 - Practical (5-6)

Discussion Questions

1. Can you remember the last time you defended something or someone who was under attack (physically, verbally, or otherwise)? What was the situation? Why did you engage?
2. What do you know about the Apostle Paul? Where did you learn it?
3. How would you summarize the gospel in two minutes? How about one sentence? Two words? If you're alone, write out what you would say. If in a group, share your answers aloud.
4. Have you ever wondered if the gospel you believe is the true gospel? What did you do in response to this question?
5. Scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you that the gospel you believe is true? Why?

SESSION 2: Received by Revelation (Galatians 1:11-24)

- Opening Thoughts
 - o Summary and review: What is Galatians?
 - o Paul's basic claim in 1:11-12
 - o *The gospel is neither _____ nor _____, but revealed.*
- Galatians 1:11-24
 - o Main idea:
 - o Supporting details:
 - o *The gospel is neither discovered nor deduced, but _____.*
- To conclude: In Christ we are saved by grace through faith...

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you need to know about someone to trust their advice?
2. What are three things you believe to be true, where did you learn them, and why are you confident they are true?
3. What details stand out to you from Paul's retelling of your story? Which parts would you find compelling if you were hearing this letter for the first time?
4. Read Jeremiah 1:4-5 and Isaiah 49:5-6. What do these passages add to the way Paul tells his story?
5. How often do you think about the fact that the gospel of Jesus is "neither discovered nor deduced but revealed"? What difference would it make if you thought about this more often?

SESSION 3: Supported by Jerusalem (Galatians 2:1-10)

- Opening Thoughts
 - o Scholarly debates –
 - o Our approach –
- Galatians 2:1-10
 - o What actually happened?
 - Paul's report of events:
 - Paul's commentary:
 - o What do we do with this?
 - Universal applications...
 - More immediately for Galatians...

Discussion Questions:

1. Pick three prominent cities from the USA and share what comes to mind when you think of them (e.g., New York, LA, Chicago, Washington). What do you know about the importance of Jerusalem for the people of Israel?
2. How would you summarize the kind of support Paul is and is not looking for from other leaders?
3. How important is it to you to know that the Apostles agreed on the meaning of the gospel and taking care of the poor?
4. What relevance do Paul's words have for our understanding of spiritual authority in the church today?
5. How do you discern when someone is preaching the same gospel in a different context from when someone is actually preaching a different gospel?

SESSION 4: Sustained in Conflict (Galatians 2:11-21)

- Opening Thoughts
- Galatians 2:11-21
 - o Peter's action
 - What Peter did
 - How it impacted others
- Paul's rebuke
 - o Paul's interpretation
 - o Paul's "sermon"
 - "Justification" and its proper basis
 - Paul's logic...
- Takeaways:

Discussion Questions:

1. Describe your group of friends in junior high and/or high school. Why did you end up in that group?
2. Have you ever been on the outside of a group wondering how you could be accepted? What was that like?
3. Talk about what it would have been like to be the different characters in this event: Peter? Barnabas? Gentiles whom Peter had eaten with? Paul? With whom do you most resonate, and why?
4. If you were there to hear Paul's rebuke, what would you have thought or said or done?
5. What do you believe about "justification," and how does this text confirm or adjust your own thoughts?
6. What is something you still don't understand about this text?

SESSION 5: Covenant Blessing: By Law or By Faith? (Galatians 3:1-14)

- Opening Thoughts
 - o New part of Paul's argument: *Comparative* Defense
 - o To get this well, we must *think* like *Israelites*.
- Galatians 3:1-14 – overview and main idea...
- Logical flow:
 - o How your conversion happened (1-5)
 - o How the covenant story began (6-9)
 - o How the Law actually works (10-14)
- Conclusion: By _____ through _____ from start to finish.
- The blessings of the gospel become real to those who....

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever had a friend with whom you could have a conversation without even finishing all your sentences? How do people around you act when they hear you talk?
2. What is a form of “cultural dialect” active today that you just don’t understand?
3. If someone approached you at church and asked, “How can I get more of God’s blessing?” what would you tell them?
4. How much did submitting to the Law of Moses (through circumcision if you are uncircumcised) factor into your conversion story? How about hearing the gospel, faith, and the Holy Spirit?
5. Can you put into your own words the logic of Galatians 3:10-14?

SESSION 6: Covenant Fulfillment: Law or Promise? (Galatians 3:15-29)

- Opening Thoughts
 - o Summary of 3:1-14, which raises a question: What of the Law?
 - o Key claims: The Law (of Moses) is not... but...
- Galatians 3:15-29 – Contrasting Law and Promise
 - o Promise: precedes the Law, not voided by it
 - o Law: preparatory purpose
 - o _____ *promise* _____ *law* _____ *Messiah...*
- Final Thoughts

Discussion Questions:

1. Think about a few of your closest friends in the world. What forms the basis of your relationship? What are some other things that strengthen but don't replace that core?
2. What are some of your favorite Old Testament stories? How do these stories help illuminate the Old Testament covenant as a whole?
3. Which part of Paul's argument in Galatians 3:15-29 seems oddest to you? What will you do to study this further?
4. How do we apply Galatians 3:28 in a way that downplays our differences appropriately (enough but not too much)?
5. What do you remember about your baptism? How does this passage give you a greater understanding of what happened that day (whether you realized it at the time or not)?

SESSION 7: Covenant Identity: Slaves or Sons? (Galatians 4:1-11)

- Opening Thoughts
 - o Review of situation and argument
 - o Pressing the analogy which raises a question...
- What are the “elements of the world” (*stoicheia*)?
 - o Translations:
 - o Thoughts:
 - o Answer:
- Exodus remixed:
 - o Bondage
 - o Redemption
 - o Grumbling
- Hear this personally: God has invited you in. Why go back?

Discussion Questions

1. When is the last time you purchased something that you soon regretted? Looking back, was the original purchase worth it? Why or why not?
2. When you see the Israelites grumbling in the wilderness, are you more likely to feel judgmental or compassionate? Why?
3. In what ways does Israel’s journey map onto *your* faith story?
4. When you feel like following Jesus is not worth it, what do you do to remind yourself of the truth?

SESSION 8: Personal Appeal and Allegorical Summary (Galatians 4:12-31)

- Opening Thoughts
 - o Paul's "comparative defense of the gospel" up to this point:
 - Law or Faith?
 - Law or Promise?
 - Slaves or Sons?
 - o We're adding the two final sections.
- Galatians 4:12-20 – Paul's personal appeal (*Them or Me?*)
 - o Have you forgotten our history?
 - o Who really wants the best for you?
- Galatians 4:21-31 – Paul's allegorical summary (*Slave or Free?*)
 - o Not (quite) as odd as it seems...
 - o The point is how the story ends...

Discussion Questions:

1. In trying to persuade people what is true, when do you think it is appropriate to make personal appeals?
2. Who are some of the people who made sacrifices so you could hear the gospel? Have you thanked them recently?
3. How can you discern when spiritual leaders are seeking your good as opposed to their own?
4. How did the video teaching help you understand Paul's "allegory" in 4:21-31? What do you still not understand about it?

SESSION 9: Taking the Doctrine of Justification Personally

- Opening Thoughts:
 - o Galatians is relentlessly logical, which is both...
 - o Galatians 2:15-21 one (or four) more time(s)!
- Two steps to taking “justification” personally –
 - o *Let God’s opinion of you define you.*
 - o *Let Christ’s death define God’s opinion of you.*
- Justification *then* and *now*...
 - o Justification is not just a religious thing. It’s a human thing.
 - o The question is not *if* you seek justification, but *how*.
- Let the _____ of Christ tell you who you _____.

Discussion Questions:

1. If you could go back and speak to a younger version of yourself, what would you say? Why?
2. What are two truths you believe but you haven’t thought about in a while? What difference could it make for your life if you thought about them more often?
3. When you’ve heard the word “justification” (before the video), what have you understood that to mean?
4. Which of the two “justification” truths is harder for you to believe? Why?
5. Do you really believe that God’s opinion of you defines your worth? Do you really believe Christ’s death determines God’s opinion of you?

SESSION 10: Stand Firm in Freedom (Galatians 5:1-12)

- Opening Thoughts
 - o Remembering Paul’s argument as a whole...
 - o What Paul is offering in Galatians 5-6:
 - Instructions for life
 - Corroborating evidence
- Galatians 5:1-12
 - o Call to STAND FIRM!
 - o Problems with circumcision
 - If some (Law), then all
 - If all that, then none of this (Christ)
- Don’t minimize the surprising temptation of “legalism”

Discussion Questions:

1. If Jesus came into the room where you are sitting and said, “Stand firm!” what would you assume he was talking about?
2. How would you define or explain “legalism”? What do you find desirable or “tempting” about it? Why do others find it appealing?
3. Which of Paul’s metaphors resonate with you most deeply? Why?
4. When is it okay to be sarcastic when opposing false ideas?

SESSION 11: Step Forward in the Spirit (Galatians 5:13-26)

- Opening Thoughts: Paul on Spiritual Formation
- Galatians 5:16-26 – Anchors for “Spiritual Formation” According to Paul
 - o Remember the goal.
 - Not to indulge the flesh but...
 - Freed not just *from* but *for*...
 - o Choose your battle.
 - o Practice Christlikeness.
 - Aristotle and Paul on “virtue” –
 - Practically speaking...
 - o Know the stakes.
 - o Mind your (Spiritual) metaphors
 - Walk in/by the Spirit (16)
 - Fruit of the Spirit (22-23)
 - Life (25)
 - Align/keep in step with (25)
- Freedom is not just freedom _____ but also freedom _____...

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some ways you are different than you were ten years ago? What changed you?
2. Does getting older guarantee that we become better people? Why or why not?
3. If a nonbeliever visited your church for a year, what do you think they would say all of you religious folks are trying to actually do? What would he or she say is your goal?
4. Read through Galatians 5:13-26 again. What do you better understand now than you did before? What still doesn't make sense?
5. Imagine you are explaining Galatians 5:25 to someone who wasn't part of this study. How would you do so?
6. T or F: The gospel of grace does *more* to make us like Jesus than following the Law?

SESSION 12: Stick Together as Family (Galatians 6:1-10)

- Opening Thoughts: Paul's two goals in Galatians 5-6
 - o Instructions for godly living
 - o Defending the gospel...
- Galatians 6:1-6 – *their* sin and *your* maturity
 - o When you notice their sin...
 - o When you notice your growth...
- Galatians 6:7-10 – live today in light of eternity
 - o Evaluate with a _____ scope.
 - o In concrete terms: *don't stop doing good!*
- Why does Paul say these things?

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you prefer playing (or watching) individual or team sports? Why?
2. What do you tend to do when you notice someone else not living in line with God's will?
3. What part of your natural (or practiced) response do Paul's instructions affirm? What part would Paul say needs to change?
4. What does it mean to restore someone *gently*?
5. How often do you think about eternity? What in your daily routine helps or hinders you thinking about this?
6. What can you do to *remind* yourself that doing good is always worth it in the end?

SESSION 13: Signing Off (Gal 6:11-18)

- Opening Thoughts: Summary and Review
 - o The situation / problem
 - o Paul's answer / argument
 - Biographical Defense of the Gospel (1-2)
 - Received by Revelation (1:11-24)
 - Supported by Jerusalem (2:1-10)
 - Sustained in Conflict (2:11-21)
 - Comparative Defense of the Gospel (3-4)
 - Law or Faith? (3:1-14)
 - Law or Promise? (3:15-29)
 - Slaves or Sons? (4:1-11)
 - Them or Me? (4:12-20)
 - Slave or Free? (4:21-31)
 - Practical Defense of the Gospel (5-6)
 - Stand Firm in Freedom (5:1-12)
 - Step Forward in the Spirit (5:13-26)
 - Stick Together as Family (6:1-10)
- Galatians 6:11-18 – Wrapping up
 - o Watch who you...
 - o Watch how you...
 - o Watch what you...

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you expect to get from this study? In what ways did you receive that? What surprised you?
2. What are 2-3 things you learned from Galatians that you hope you never forget? What will you do to keep those things in mind?
3. How much of our “outline” of Galatians do you have memorized? How much could you write down on your own without looking?
4. What do you tend to be proud of or “boast about”?
5. Who are 3-5 people in your life who know you, know the gospel, and have earned the right to speak into your life?
6. How is Jesus calling you to respond to Galatians? What are you doing to trust and obey?

This video was made possible with support from:

