

A Bird's-Eye View for Me and You Galatians

Thank you for joining me once again for "It's a Good Life." On today's program, we'll be looking into the subject once again, "A Bird's-Eye View for Me and You," the books of the New Testament. Our study today takes us into the book of Galatians. We're not going into an in-depth study of these books as we look at them, but my goal is that you and I can have a bird's-eye view, that we can think our way through the New Testament.

First of all, in the book of Galatians, let me give you a little bit of a background on this book. The author, of course, is Paul the apostle. He had first preached the Gospel to the churches of the Galatian region in Antioch and Pisidia and Iconium and Lystra and Derbe. And Galatians 1:1 says, *Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.*

And then we see that the probable date that Paul wrote this book was during his second missionary journey after he had visited the churches a second time around 50 or 55 A.D. And the setting is that, following Paul's departure, some people came to the churches, perverting the Gospel of Christ and telling the Christians they needed to be circumcised and teaching them that they could be justified only through keeping the law of Moses and following Jesus. Let me remind you that anything that perverts the Gospel is wrong. We have some today who would intermingle truth with lies and people doing this are wrong. And this is what Paul is trying to get across to the people in the church of Galatia.

In Galatians 4:21, it says, *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?* In other words, "Don't you understand that you are guilty? That you need help? That you need Jesus Christ as your Savior?" And for those who were saved, he's saying, "Don't you realize that by keeping the law you weren't saved, but it was through the blood of Jesus Christ by faith. And I believe the key verses

here, and there are several in this book of Galatians, but I call your attention to Galatians chapter 5, verses 2-6: *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. ³For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. ⁴Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. ⁵For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. ⁶For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*

Paul's saying that he keeps reminding the people, "You were not saved by works. You were not saved by keeping the law. You were saved by trusting Jesus as your Savior."

Well, the purpose of the book, and there's several things we can look at today, but let me say first of all, a life of law keeping was contrary to the Gospel of Christ, according to Paul. In Galatians chapter 3, verses 21-22, it says, *Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. ²²But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.*

In other words, there's one way to be saved and that is through the blood of Jesus Christ by faith. And then we see that Paul is telling these people, "Remain in your freedom in Christ and stay away from the bondage of law keeping." Galatians 5:1 says, *Stand fast therefor in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* Don't let someone tell you that, after you get saved, you've got to do certain things to remain saved. And that's what Paul is telling these people. "You are saved by grace. You're kept by grace through faith and it's not of

yourselves. It's a gift of God," according to the Word of God.

And then I see that God has always justified people through faith, not by law keeping. Now, some would say that the Old Testament saints were saved by the Ten Commandments, by keeping the law. Not so. The Bible teaches us that everyone who's ever been saved down through history, down through mankind, the only way to be saved is by faith. Galatians 2:15-16 says, *We who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles.* In other words, Paul is separating now. He's saying there are Jews and Gentiles, the nationalities. Verse 16 says, *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* In other words, no works. He says it makes no difference who you are or whether you're a Jew or a Gentile, it makes no difference. We're all saved the same way. It's by faith. We're justified through faith through Jesus Christ.

And the law had a different purpose than justification. It was to bring us to Christ. Let's go back to verse 24 of Galatians chapter 3. It says, ²⁴*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* ²⁵*But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.* In other words, the law was good in that it was bringing us to Christ. It was showing us that we've all sinned. There's no way that we can keep the law, that we can do anything to go to Heaven other than trust in Jesus Christ.

And then the calling of liberty equals law fulfilled, Paul says. In Galatians chapter 5, verses 13-14, it says, *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.* ¹⁴*For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* And Paul is telling us here that, when we get saved, we have liberty. We are not

under the yoke of bondage anymore, and this frees us to help us to love the people around us.

And then we see the fruit of being led by the Spirit, in Galatians chapter 5, and there are so many verses that we could look at under these verses. Chapter 5, verse 13, through chapter 6, verse 10. Galatians 6:1-2 says, *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.* ²*Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.* The law of Christ is love. We are to love that person who is overtaken in a fault. That person that so many people would look down on and say, "That rascal, he's sinned, he's fallen from God. He's not doing what God wants him to do. Let's just stomp him down a little farther."

Well, Paul says that's the wrong attitude. We are to forgive those who have fallen from the... we would say... fallen from the good graces of God. I didn't say he or she was lost. I said he was fallen from the grace of God in the sense that God has not turned His back on them. They have turned from God. Not to be lost, but it would seem that they were acting as though they were lost. And at times they may feel like they're lost, but the Bible says we are saved by grace through faith. It's not of ourselves. When we come to the Lord Jesus Christ, we are saved eternally. And Paul says we should not put that person down who is in a backslidden condition. We are to pray for that brother or sister and we are to help raise them up once again so they can be used of the Lord to win others to Him.

And we see that there will always be struggles between those who are free and those who are in bondage. The Bible says in chapter 4 of Galatians, verse 31, it says, *So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.* We have been made free through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Free. These are those who are confident in what God has done through Jesus on the cross and

His resurrection, and this creates a relationship with God.

Once again, Galatians chapter 5 and verse 1 says, *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* Don't let anyone tell you that you can keep the law and be saved. Don't let anyone tell you that you can work your way to Heaven. There is no way, Paul says. Those who are under bondage see their own abilities to perform or keeping law perfectly as a means of causing God to reward them. Thus, their dependence is on self. Man is self-righteous. Man wants to think that he or she can do what is necessary in their own lives to take themselves to Heaven. "Well, I'm a good person. I haven't done anything really that bad." Well, if you've committed one sin, which you have if you'll admit it, one sin, it's enough to send a person to Hell. And of course, the Bible says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The Bible says those people who have not trusted Jesus are accursed. If they're depending upon themselves to be saved, they are badly mistaken. They will not go to Heaven.

Freedom in Christ is accomplished by serving others, by being imitators of Jesus, obedient to His nature and to His Spirit. Galatians 5:24-25 says, *And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* No one is perfect, but we need to be led by the Spirit of God, not looking for an occasion to sin, but desiring to live for the Lord. Letting Him mold our lives as saved people so that we can help others come to Him. And as we get saved, we need to look to the Lord, not to judge others, not to satisfy our own desires, but to satisfy the Lord Jesus Christ.

Are you saved today? Paul makes it plain in this book of Galatians that we are not saved by any other way other than through Jesus Christ. If you do not know Him today as your Savior, may I invite you to

trust Him today. Ask Him to come into your heart, and He'll save you today. Pray something like this:

"Lord, come into my heart. I'm not going to trust myself to go to heaven. I'm not good enough to go to Heaven, but You have made it possible for me to go to Heaven through Your shed blood on the cross of Calvary. Please come into my heart and save me."

The Bible says, whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. If you pray a prayer like that, God will save you.

Well, it's been good being with you today, and let me remind you to look at our website for more information on how to be saved and helps to help you through the Christian life. Look at our website, www.LRWM.org. On the website, you can leave us an email, you can request prayer, and we'll be glad to pray for you. Or write to me, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731.

Until the next time when you hear me say, "It's a Good Life," may the Lord bless you richly in my prayer.