

Fake News: Combating Fickle Faith
(Galatians 5:1-26) “*What’s the Deal with Sin?*”

~ GOOD MORNING ~

GREAT NEWS...

- Pastor Jeff will be back Wednesday to start Exodus!
 - He would like me to finish teaching through *Galatians*
- Turn to the book of (*Galatians 5:1-26*) NKJV

~ INTRO ~

REMEMBER WITH ME...

- We’ve introduced Galatians as...
 - A letter written to people who had a reputation of being fickle...
 - And who were quickly departing from the faith.

SO FAR WE’VE LEARNED...

- Combating fickle faith focuses on pleasing God & not man
 - In a personal experience of God’s amazing grace.
- We have confidence in the Christian life...
 - Because we relate to God based on my position...
 - Not performance.
- How to define the work of salvation...
 - By faith Jesus & His work on the cross...
 - Belief + Action = Faith

LAST WEEK...

- We discussed how special it is that we get to relate to God as his children
 - How it effects how we relate to others in this life...
 - Not religious or legalistic.

AS WE CONTINUE IN THESE LAST TWO CHAPTERS...

- We begin to answer the question...
 - “*I’m saved... now what?!*”

~ STUDY ~

TODAY...

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- We’re exploring (Chapter 5)...
- Where we find the *practical application*...
- Of salvation by faith in Christ.

NOW THAT I’M SAVED BY FAITH...

- How do I deal with the still apparent effects...
- Of living with sinful desires & failures...
- In a godless culture of temptation?

PUAL WILL UNDERSCORE...

- That there is no set of rules or religious guidelines...
- (An external force of law)...
- To keep us in God’s will.

RATHER...WE’VE BEEN GIVEN...

- The inner discipline of God (Holy Spirit)
- Which is far better than any outer discipline of man-made rules!

SO NOTE TAKERS...

- I’ve titled today’s message...
- “*What’s the Deal with Sin?*”

(Read vv. 1-6)

~ LET’S PRAY ~

HERE’S A FEW THINGS...

- For us to walk away with:

~ IDEA # 1 – “Perfected In Grace” (vv.1-6) ~

(vv. 1-4)

#1) NO BENEFIT IN OUR OWN EFFORT

PAUL IS SUMMARIZING CHAPTER 4...

- Regarding bondage & freedom...
- And transitioning to chapter 5...

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- Pleading with the church to “*stay free*”

SIMPLY PUT...

- Christ died to set us free...
 - Not to make us slaves to a list of “do’s” & “don’ts”

BUT ONCE WE’RE SAVED...

- We begin thinking adding more religious effort...
 - Will bring about the perfected holiness we long for.
- To become holier in God’s eyes...
 - We institute some **religious rituals** (Circumcision)...
 - Going to church
 - Study my bible
 - Giving to a good cause
 - Serving those in need

IF... IT’S TRUE...

- Grace is receiving something we don’t deserve...
 - And we’re saved & accepted by God’s grace...
 - Not the good things we do

THEN... A RELATIONSHIP FOCUSED ON THESE GOOD THINGS...

- Moves us into a works-based relationship...
 - Instead of a love & position-based relationship...
 - And now we’ve fallen back into religiosity.

WE HAVE TO CONSISTENTLY BE REMINDED OF THIS...

- Because we’re so prone to fall back into religion...
 - In the weakness of our humanity.

BUT... TO DO THIS IS TO **VOID** THE WORK OF CHRIST...

- And to fall away from the grace-based system...
 - He has set up!

(vv. 5-6)

#2) PERFECTION COMES FROM GOD

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PAUL TEACHES THE CHRISTIAN...

- Not to perform good things in order to become perfect (righteous)...
- (Holiness after salvation)

AND HE REMINDS US...

- We don’t become perfect on our own...
- God will give us our perfect righteousness...
- At the time of glorification.
- (Romans 8:23) NLT

“... We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.”

BUT THAT DOESN’T MEAN...

- We have no part to play as we live on this earth...
- Living by faith should move us to loving actions...
- (James 2:14-18) NLT

THE SIMPLE TAKEAWAY IS...

- Christians don’t become holy by doing good deeds...
- We do good deeds because we’re loved by God

IN OTHER WORDS...

- Don’t focus on religious acts...
- But loving actions!

(Read vv. 12b-20)

~ IDEA #2 – “Bound By Love” (vv. 7-15) ~

(vv. 7-12)

SINCE WE’RE NOT WORKING FOR PERFECTION...

- The Christian is bound by the love that God has shown...
- And should produce loving actions by faith.
- As we walk by faith we grow!

THESE FALSE TEACHERS...

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- Came in and hindered the growth of these new converts...
 - And Paul rebukes their permeating influence.

THEY HAD TIED PEOPLE TO A FALSE GOSPEL...

- And had turned them away from the freedom...
 - God desired them to have.

THE IDEA IS...

- Religious restrictions restrict the love of God...
 - He Intends to show others through us.
 - Ultimately hindering them in the faith.

(v. 13)

HE GOES ON TO EXPLAIN FREEDOM IS FOR A PURPOSE...

- Not to satisfy our sinful desires...
 - But to attract a world estranged from God...
 - (1 Corinthians 9:19) NLT

“Even though I am a free man with no master, I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ.”

(vv. 14-15)

AND HE CONTRASTS...

- The difference between...
 - Sacrificial love (v. 14)
 - (Romans 13:10) NLT

“Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God’s law.”

- Self-focused love (v. 15)
 - “*Biting*” – wound the soul; rend with rebukes & chides
 - “*Devouring*” – To ruin by inflicting injury
 - “*Destroying*” – To use up, to consume

SO WHAT DOES THIS LOVE REQUIRE?

- Turn with me to...

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➤ (1 Corinthians 13:1-7) NLT

WHAT’S THE POINT:

SOME WHO LEARN ABOUT “FREEDOM” IN CHRISTIANITY...

- Think it condones living with no restraint.

BUT WE SEE HERE...

- We’re no longer required to follow religious law...
 - Only to ask the question: “*What does love require?*”

BUT THIS IS NOT NATURAL...

- If this is truly what God desires...
 - How can someone do this...
 - And be successful?

(Read vv. 16-26)

~IDEA #3 – “Led By the Spirit” (vv. 16-26) ~

(vv. 16-18)

ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN A CHRISTIAN...

- For more than one moment...
 - Realizes there’s still a struggle to do what’s right...
 - And a desire to do what’s wrong.

WE LEARNED IN (CHAPTER 3)...

- Just because I struggle with sin...
 - Doesn’t mean I’m not saved.

THINK OF IT THIS WAY...

- An atheist doesn’t struggle to follow Jesus or with the battle in sin...
 - Only someone who is alive to God...
 - Can struggle with living for God.

WE SHOULD UNDERSTAND...

- The **answer** to human struggle with sin...
 - Is not laws or threats of being punished...

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- Because laws cannot change a person’s sinful nature.
- It’s not a law on the *outside* but love on the *inside*...
 - That makes the difference
- We need another power within...
 - And that power comes from the Holy Spirit.

(vv. 9-21)

HERE WE LEAN ABOUT THE DISTINCTIVE RESULTS...

- Of following the natural selfish desires...
 - Divided into three categories:
- 1) Sexual sins:
 - a. *Sexual immorality* – any / all sexual acts outside of marriage
 - i. (one man & one woman & one lifetime)
 - b. *Impurity* – Morally wrong thoughts, deeds or words
 - c. *Lustful pleasures* – offensive / unrestrained sexual desires
- 2) Superstitious sins:
 - a. *Idolatry* – putting “things” ahead of God
 - i. We are to worship God, love people, and use things. But too often we use people, love self, & worship things leaving God out of the picture completely. – Wiersbe
 - b. *Sorcery / witchcraft* – The practice of drugging
 - i. intertwined with idolatry
 - 1. Drugs as the source of comfort / healing rather than God.
- 3) Social sins:
 - a. *Hostility* – Hatred; Attitude of mind that defies & challenges others
 - b. *Quarreling* – A result of hostility / hatred disagreement
 - c. *Jealousy* – Selfish & self-centered envy at someone else’s success
 - d. *Outbursts of anger* – Stems from jealousy
 - e. *Selfish ambition* – A desire to put oneself forward
 - i. working to get ahead at another’s expense
 - f. *Dissension & division* – Result of people fighting
 - i. Over issues & personalities causing division
 - g. *Envy* – A wrongful desire to possess what belongs to someone else

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- h. *Drunkenness* – Excessive use of strong drink
- i. *Wild parties (revelries)* – lively / noisy festivals
 - i. Involving drinking large amounts of alcohol.

I THOUGH WE JUST LEARNED...

- Christians aren’t held to a list...
 - Of “do’s” & “don’ts”!!
 - (He’s speaking of habitual practices)

THIS HELPS US TO IDENTIFY THE MOMENTS...

- When we’ve slipped back into...
 - Following the desires of our flesh...
 - Instead of the leading of The Spirit.
- Maybe this will help...
 - (1 John 3:9) NLT

“Those who have been born into God’s family do not make a practice of sinning, because God’s life is in them. So they can’t keep on sinning, because they are children of God.”

(vv. 22-26)

NOW HE GIVES US UNDERSTANDING...

- About the work of The Holy Spirit...
 - In the life of a believer.
- “*fruit*” – That which is produced by the inherent energy of a living organism
- Metaphorically: works or deeds being the visible expression...
 - Of power working inwardly & invisibly.
 - The character of the fruit being evidence...
 - Of the character of the power producing it.

THERE’S A COUPLE IMPORTANT TRUTHS...

- We must underscore before we define some of these terms:
 - This fruit IS NOT produced by the believer...
 - But by the power of the Spirit working through a believer...

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- Who yields themselves to His direction.
- People often point to charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit...
 - As evidence of salvation...
 - **In reality**... it’s the fruit of the Spirit...
 - That points to evidence of salvation.

HERE ARE 9 QUALITEIS & CHARACTERISTICS...

- That come from a Spirit filled Christian’s life:

1) Godward aspect of life:

- a. *Agape* – self-sacrificing love
- b. *Joy* – Deep inner rejoicing...
 - i. Not dependent upon circumstances but God’s sovereignty
- c. *Peace* – Inner response & quietness even in the face of adversity...
 - i. Defies human understanding

2) Manward aspect of life:

- a. *Patience* – Enduring the provocations & frailties of others...
 - i. Does not retaliate when wrongfully treated
- b. *Kindness* – Quality of being well-meaning
- c. *Goodness* – Reaching out to others to do good...
 - i. Especially when not deserved

3) General conduct of a believer:

- a. *Faithfulness* – Trustworthy & reliable
- b. *Gentleness* – Submissive to God’s Word
 - i. (Meekness) Power under control
- c. *Self-Control* – Self mastery
 - i. Curbing the fleshly impulses just described

- How can we produce this fruit in our lives???

➤ (*John 15:1-5*) NLT

THIS REQUIRES US...

- To die to ourselves (*crucify*)...

➤ And allow Christ to live through us.

WHAT’S THE POINT???

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- Righteousness is produced in our life...
 - By yielding to the power & control...
 - Of the Holy Spirit.
- We’re not manufacturing anything...
 - We’re just distributing!

~ IN CLOSING (WORSHIP TEAM) ~

WE’VE COVERED A LOT TODAY...

- But it’s all intended to remove a weight of production off our shoulders...
 - And give us fresh perspective for the battle of sin.
- If we allow ourselves to be perfected in God’s grace...
 - Focus on acts of love...
 - And yield our lives to the Spirit...
 - We can have victory in the battle with sin!