
WORSHIP

Suggested worship songs: God So Loved, All Because of Jesus, This I Believe, Living Hope, Solid Ground

WELCOME

What situations in life would you need a guide for, or a standard to follow and adhere to?

WORD

GALATIANS 3:1-11 (Read the rest of the chapter)

You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? ² This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? ⁴ Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? ⁵ So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? ⁶ Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. ⁷ Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. ⁸ The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, “All the nations will be blessed in you.” ⁹ So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. ¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.” ¹¹ Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, “The righteous man shall live by faith.”

"For the believer, joy is central, sorrow is peripheral. For the unbeliever, joy is peripheral, and sorrow is central." – G.K. Chesterton. Pause for a bit and think of what this means. If you are in Christ, there are things in life that bring us sorrow like the death of a loved one. However, at the core of your being, there's joy because you know that a believer goes to be with Jesus in heaven when passing on from earthly life. This is why this series on Galatians is so important---we need to know why we believe what we believe about the gospel.

In Paul's time, Judaizers were already distorting the gospel -- teaching people that they need to do other things in addition to trusting in Christ, for their salvation. But even fulfilling the whole Law cannot save us; we are saved by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. What is the Law there for? The Law leads us to Christ!

REMEMBER – The way you received God's grace.

In his defense of the true gospel, Paul asks the Galatians to recall how they received the Holy Spirit, how their relationship with Jesus begun (**Galatians 3:2-3**). The believers even suffered persecution when they trusted in Jesus; and when God performs miracles among them, it was not through the works of the Law, but through faith (**Galatians 3:4-5**). This shows a pattern of hearing – faith -- receiving in the life of believers (**Romans 10:17**). Then Paul goes to his second argument (**Galatians 3:6**), which refers back to Abraham's faith (**Genesis 15:5-6**). It was all by faith that "GOD considered him right before Him." Abraham was saved by faith, not by rituals or by the Law. Everyone who are justified by faith are sons of Abraham --- as promised by God, all nations will be blessed through Abraham (**Galatians 3:7-9**). Everyone who do not abide by the Law will be cursed (**Galatians 3:10, Deuteronomy 27:26**). No one among us can obey the Ten Commandments all the time! This means that all of us are "cursed" under the Law, we are all guilty of sin and breaking the whole Law even if we committed just one "small" sin compared to others (**James 2:10**). Salvation comes from Jesus alone, who became a "curse" for us when He died on the cross for our sins 2,000 years ago (**Galatians 3:13**). He did that so that through Jesus, Abraham's blessing

might be upon us --- when we receive the Spirit through faith (**Galatians 3:14**).

Paul uses another argument to defend the true gospel: how we honor a will (covenant) between humans. How much more the promise that God made through Abraham that is fulfilled in Christ (**Galatians 3:15-16**)? The Law (which came 430 years later than the promise to Abraham) does not invalidate the covenant already ratified by God (**Galatians 3:17**). The foundation of salvation has always been God's promise, God's grace, through faith --- even with Abraham (**Galatians 3:18**).

REALIZE – Why God gave the Law.

Transgression happens because the existence of the Ten Commandments. God's Law is like a mirror by which we see our imperfections; it reveals sin but cannot remove sin. We received the Law through a mediator (Moses); but when God made the promise to Abraham, He gave it directly (**Galatians 3:19-20**). The Law cannot replace the promise, and only Jesus can fulfill the promise of God. Yet, the Law is still beautiful because though it cannot save us, it restricts evil in this world and gives the basis for morality (**Galatians 3:21**). The Law makes us understand that we don't have an excuse before God, because we can't follow it since we have a sin nature. It makes us realize that we need Christ (**Galatians 3:22-23**). The purpose of the Law is to lead us to Christ (**Galatians 3:24**). God's Law is like our "tutor" (Gk- paidagogos) --- a guardian, custodian, or disciplinarian in ancient Greek households. The tutor was not the one who teaches the child, or the parent of the child, but guides the child. Now that faith has come, we are now under grace and no longer under the Law (**Galatians 3:25**).

RECEIVE – Your new identity in Christ

What does it mean to have a new identity in Christ? The Law leads us to Christ, and our part is to believe in Jesus. In Christ, we are all children of God, and we are all one in Christ (**Galatians 3:26-28**). If and only if you belong to Christ, you are Abraham's descendants, recipients of God's blessings (**Galatians 3:29**). So let God's Law lead you to Jesus!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Where are you still relying on yourself instead of Jesus?
2. Looking at the 10 Commandments, how does that expose your sin?
3. What step can you take this week to live as a beloved, Spirit-filled child of God?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for those who do still believe and live as if it is obedience to the Law, doing good works and religious rituals that provides salvation. Demonstrate grace to them, that they may see an example of God's grace freely offered to those who seek Him. Teach the Bible that the Law may lead them to Jesus. Share the gospel, leading others to Christ, the only One who can save us.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For legislators to promote and support bills and laws aligned with God's Word.
- PRAY for the protection, safety and release of kidnapped American Christian missionary, Kevin, serving in Niger (West Africa). For God to turn the hearts of the kidnappers to repentance and salvation. Peace and comfort for Kevin's family.
- Pray for persecuted Christians in Sudan and Nigeria) --- many have been beheaded and murdered; earnestly seek God's intervention to stop the bloodshed. Pray for freedom from oppression, that God's word and His people bring them comfort and hope.
- PRAISE God that the rest of the living Israeli hostages have been restored to their families safely! Continue to pray that even all the dead hostages will be returned to their families for burial.
- For Israel's war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory. For Jewish people worldwide who are experiencing a surge of antisemitism; may this lead them to the Messiah, Jesus as they turn to God for help and comfort.
- For protection of Iranian, Syrian and Lebanese Christians and other minorities, and freedom from oppression. Pray for the gospel to spread rapidly throughout their region.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.
- Typhoon victims in different parts of the Philippines. Seek God's mercy upon our land. May many more Filipinos turn to Jesus!

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God, and make disciples
 - For elders, pastors, leaders, and

families to become holy, humble, harmonious, happy, and heart-working)

- For ministries and church expansions worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain (MMRC)

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper and intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

Galatians 3:24

24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.