

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching out to leaders who can change the world.

Jesus + _____ = Salvation?

May 2012

Lesson #7 - Galatians – *IT'S THE SPIRIT OF GOD – NOT THE LAW?*

INTRODUCTION

What “Christian” rules seem to be important in your circles? What do you think when people don’t do them?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Gal 3:1-14

Note: Paul began with the Galatians’ own personal experience with Christ because it showed how God works. Paul had preached Christ crucified, not obedience to the Law; this message they believed, and it changed their lives. They had received the Spirit (the evidence of salvation, Rom. 8:9) by the hearing of faith, and by believing the Word of God (Eph. 1:13–14), not by obeying some law. Certainly the Gospel Paul preached, the Gospel that changed his life and theirs, was the true message. For them to go back to the Law after all the Spirit had done for them was to act like fools!¹ From the time of Cain’s first works-righteous offering of a grain instead of an animal sacrifice, unbelieving man has sought to make himself right with God through his own goodness and merit.² Some say v. 11 was the watchcry of the Protestant Reformation.

1. What does Paul mean by “did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard”? v. 2

2. How were the Galatians trying to attain “perfection”? V 3 How might we use those methods?

Note: Christians today need the truth of v. 3, for many feel that the same Spirit who saved them is not able to keep them or help them live for Christ. They have the idea that salvation is by grace through faith, but that living the Christian life depends on their own strength. How wrong this is! Romans 7 teaches clearly that believers cannot do anything of themselves to please God; Rom. 8 teaches that the Spirit continues the work of grace and fulfills the demands of the Law in us.³

3. Why did Paul use Abraham (6-7) as an example and not Moses, the recorder of the Law? Gen 15:6

4. How does the example of Abraham support Paul’s argument? Rom 4:1-8

5. What conclusion does Paul draw in verses 8 & 9? Why is that important?

6. How is our faith in Christ a fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham? Gen 12:3

7. How does each Old Testament quote (vv. 10-13) expose the problem of trying to be right with God by one’s ability to keep the law? Deut 27:26

8. How does Jesus Christ solve this problem for us in vv. 13-14? 1 Peter 3:18

9. Why is it easier for us to live by rules than by faith? Hab 2:4

10. Why do think Paul ends this section by faith and with the promise of the Holy Spirit?

APPLICATION

- What is the evidence in your life that indicates you are walking in the Spirit? How would you explain it to someone else?
- Is the tendency your life to follow the rules and the law “or” is it to submit to the Spirit of God? Do you need to make adjustments? What?

^{1 3} Wiersbe, W. W. (1997). *Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament* (522). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

² MacArthur, J. (1996). *Galatians* (62). Chicago: Moody Press.

Wiersbe, W. W. (1997). *Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament* (522). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

Jesus said, "When He the Spirit of truth is come. . . He shall glorify Me." When I commit myself to the revelation made in the New Testament, I received from God the gift of the Holy Spirit who begins to interpret to me what Jesus did; and does in me subjectively all that Jesus did for me objectively. Oswald Chambers