

"Doctrine of Justification and Sanctification"

Galatians 3-4

Part 8

Introduction: To start tonight I want to consider a review of what we have seen starting in chapter 3 and up to where we are tonight. Let us keep in mind that Paul is writing to the Galatians who had been persuaded by the Judaizers that for sanctification they had to be under the Law of Moses. These false teachers had convinced these young Galatian believers that apart from the Law there was nothing to restrain sin. In this letter then Paul is making it very clear to these believers that sanctification comes in the same way that justification happens and that is by grace through faith. So, to make his point clear Paul has recorded these two chapters of doctrine to help the Galatians to understand. He has pointed out spiritual Truth to make them think.

1. **He made them consider how they started as believers.**

Galatians 3:2-3

² *This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

³ *Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*

2. **He reminded them of Abraham.**

Galatians 3:6

⁶ *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*

Abraham was saved 600 years before the Law was given and he was saved 14 years before he was circumcised.

3. **He reminded them that anyone under the Law is cursed because no one can keep the Law therefore no one is saved or sanctified by the Law.**

Galatians 3:10-11

¹⁰ *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

¹¹ *But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.*

4. He answered the question asked by many, "What good is the Law if it cannot save you?"

Galatians 3:24-25

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.

5. He then explained the benefits of being a son of God.

Notice Galatians 4:4-6

Now we have come to where we are tonight.

➤ **Paul's Meeting with the Galatians**

Notice Galatians 4:12

Let us stop and consider the first word of this verse. The word "Brethren" makes it very clear that Paul is writing to believers. He is not writing this letter to win then to Jesus Christ. That happened when he visited them on the first missionary journey. He is writing to them because he desires to teach them the way of sanctification.

In this verse Paul pleads with these believers to become as he is because he was as they were. What is Paul saying here? Paul is pleading with them to enjoy the freedom that they have in Jesus Christ just as he enjoys his freedom. He is beseeching them to not put themselves under the Law because under the Law they would have no freedom. He was calling upon them to be controlled by the Holy Spirit and not by the flesh. Let us remember Paul's words to the Philippians.

Philippians 1:21a

²¹ For to me to live is Christ,

Paul was so satisfied with his life in Jesus Christ that he pleaded with these believers to join him and live under the Holy Spirit and grace and not the Law.

Application:

Every child of God should be able to say to the unbelievers that we know, "I am so satisfied with Jesus and I love the freedom and the joy that I have in Him and I really want you to be like me." We should also be able to make this statement to other believers

who are trying to please the Lord in the power of the flesh. They are walking around all bound up in their legalism in an attempt to be holy and we should live in the power of the Spirit so that they can see the joy we have in our freedom in Jesus Christ. Getting back to Paul, he desired for these Galatian believers to be free as he was free.

Notice Galatians 4:12 again.

He reminds them that he was as they were. This means that when he came to them, he became like them so as to win them to Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

¹⁹ For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

²⁰ And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

²¹ To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

²² To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

²³ And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

Remember what Paul did in Jerusalem at the end of his third missionary journey?

Acts 21:23-24

²³ Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them;

²⁴ Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.

Paul would honor the Law but never as a means of justification or sanctification. Notice the words of Stott.

"Embedded here is a principle of far-reaching importance for ministers, missionaries and other Christian workers. It is that, in seeking to win other people for Christ, our end is to make them like us, while the means to that end is to make ourselves like them. If they are

to become one with us in Christian conviction and experience, we must first become one with them in Christian compassion. We must be able to say with the apostle Paul: 'I became like you; now you become like me.'"

Notice Galatians 4:12-14

The end of verse 12 connects with verse 13. Paul came to them with an illness. We cannot be sure what it was but because of what he writes in verse 14 it seems as though it was repulsive. They did not despise the infirmity nor did they reject him but instead they received him as though he was angel or as though he was Jesus. Many believe that infirmity was the thorn in the flesh.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

⁸ For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

⁹ And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Whatever Paul's infirmity was it is interesting that it was God's will for him to have it. Whatever, it was just like the thorn in the flesh, it kept him dependent upon the Lord and therefore it was the strength of the Lord that worked in the life of Paul.

Application:

This is something that we touched on Wednesday evening. Sometimes it is the will of God for us to walk a difficult path. That path may be a path of resistance like Paul walked as he was on his way to Rome or it may be a path on which we must deal with some kind of sickness. It is very important to understand that it is not always the will of God to heal us. That is why we must pray for the will of God to be done in our lives. Sometimes God heals people and sometimes He does not. When God chooses not to heal a person, we must keep in mind that His ways are best and He always does what is right and best. He has a purpose for what He does and does not do. This is so important to understand because there are many churches today that teach that God does not want us to be sick or struggling in any

way. They say if you are then it is because you do not have enough faith. Those who teach this are people who follow the Prosperity Gospel.

Notice Galatians 4:15-16

These people had lost the love which they once had for Paul. There was a time when they would have given their own eyes to help Paul. But now they saw him as the enemy. How did it happen? There are two points to consider here.

1. The Judaizers had gotten into their minds and caused them to see Paul as the enemy.
2. They believed the teaching of the Judaizers and did not desire to hear the Truth.

Application:

I want to consider how these two points apply to our lives.

1. The Danger of Distance

The Judaizers had planted thoughts in their minds and one reason this happened was the distance between Paul and the Galatians. He was the one who taught them the Truth of the Word. This distance could not be helped because Paul was a missionary but there is a valuable lesson in this for us. When we allow a distance to come between us and the Truth of the Word, we become vulnerable to spiritual attacks. That means when we avoid church or we avoid time in God's Word we can easily be convinced to believe things that are not true. I have watched as people began to separate from church and then as time went on the people whom they were close to started to be seen as enemies. The people they once shared compassion and concern with were now viewed as people that could not be trusted. Distance between the believer and the body of CHRIST IS NOT GOOD.

Hebrews 10:24-25

²⁴ *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*

²⁵ *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

2. The Danger of Accepting False Doctrine.

When a believer gets involved in a false doctrine it can become a strong hold that entraps them to the point that they do not want to hear the Truth.

2 Corinthians 10:3-4

³ *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:*

⁴ *(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of **strong holds**;)*

Strong holds are anything that a person comes to rely upon. In the case of the Galatians, it was the false teaching of the Judaizers.

Notice Galatians 4:17

Here is a vital point that we need to see. These false teachers desired to isolate the believers in Galatia. Isolation is not good for believers because when the enemy isolates us he can then work on us one on one. It is far better that we are in fellowship with other believers when doubts, questions, and fear arise. They also made them zealous but they were zealous about the wrong thing.

Notice Galatians 4:18

Here Paul tells them that it was good for them to be zealous about a good thing even when he was not around. In other words, Paul had no problem with someone else teaching them as long as the teaching was doctrinally correct.

Application:

Here in these two verses, we see some characteristics of false teachers. They desire to isolate their followers in order to keep them from people who teach the Truth. A shepherd who loves the sheep will teach the flock the Truth and he will rejoice when another teaches them Truth. It is a true shepherd's desire for the sheep to be fed with the Word of God. A loving shepherd will do all he can to equip his sheep so they are not deceived by false shepherds. Read Ezekiel 34 to see what God said about false shepherds.

Conclusion:

Notice Galatians 4:19-20

Here we see Paul's desire for these believers. His desire was that Jesus Christ would be formed in them. He desired to see sanctification in their lives. He was not content with justification alone. He desired to see them grow and live holy lives.