Galatians 5:1-15

Review…

- **1st - Galatians 1:1-2:21 - The Gospel of Grace - a better Gospel…**
  - The message of the Gospel - Grace and Peace through the cross of Jesus...
  - Having been saved by Grace - why try and grow in Jesus through the Law...
- **2nd - Galatians 3:1-4:31 - The purpose of the Law…**
  - Anyone who follows the Law/works - is under a curse - **Deuteronomy 27:26**
    - Grace (*the Promise to Abraham*) came 430 years before the Law...
    - The Law was given to reveal our sin - show us a need for a savior - Jesus...
  - By Grace we have become heir to the Kingdom of God...
    - We are sons - therefore do not go back to bondage - religion and superstitions...
    - Follow a good example - someone who will point you to Jesus...
  - The two sons of Abraham - Ishmael and Isaac...
    - These two sons are an allegory for the Law and Grace - bondage and freedom...
    - Like Ishmael - those who follow the Law - strive in their flesh - are on bondage...
    - But like Isaac - those who follow Grace - transformed by the Spirit - have freedom!

Living in freedom… (*3 things*)

- **Introduction to the 3rd section of Galatians… vs. 1-6**
  - We come now to the 3rd and final portion of the book of Galatians...
    - Chapters 1-2 - Paul personally dealt with Grace and the Gospel...
    - Chapter 3-4 - Paul addressed the doctrine of Grace in light of the Law of Moses...
    - Chapter 5-6 - Now Paul practically deals with Grace in the daily life of the believer...
  - Galatians 5 can be broken down into two sections...
    - 1st - Paul deals with applying freedom to our lives - not living in bondage...
    - 2nd - Paul deals with applying the spirit to our lives - not living by the flesh...

- **1st - The 2 commands Paul gave to the church… vs. 1-6**
  - 1st - Stand fast in the liberty by which Christ has made us free...
    - We 'know' as Christian what God expects – we should do the right things...
      - We also 'know' what God tells us are bad things – what not to do...
      - If given two lists – one good & one bad – we can tell which is which…
      - Read the Bible / pray / go to church / love others / help those who are in need…
      - Gambling / being drunk / cheating / lying / partying / fighting
      - All of us know 'good' from 'bad' – we know what God says we should be doing…
    - The question is not what to do - but how do we do the right things...
      - How do I stand fast - how to I stand firm in Jesus Christ...
      - It is not about going church 3 times a week / reading our Bible 3 hours a day...
      - It is not about my efforts - we cannot make ourselves do the 'right' thing...
      - **Romans 5:2** - "We have access by faith into this grace in which we stand..."

- We stand through faith in Jesus Christ - we stand by Grace!

- 2nd - Do not be wrapped up again with a yoke of bondage...
  - Jesus has liberated us from the yoke of legalism - rules and regulations...
    - But if we are not careful it is very easy for us to settle into a routine...
    - Rather than going to church on Sunday morning to hear from Jesus / the Word...
    - We go to church because it is Sunday morning - it is our routine!
  - Most denominations in the world began as a work of God's Spirit...
    - But before long people fell into a routine - they forgot about the work of the Spirit...
    - And within a generation that routine became the rules for how church is run...
    - And before you know it that Work of God's Spirit - became an empty religion...
    - An empty series of rules attempted to tell people how to live their lives...
    - A new denomination was born - so God moved on to begin a 'New Work'!
- The 3 results of rejecting / and 2 results of following - the two commands...
  - 1st - If we do not obey the commands - Jesus will profit us nothing... vs. 2
    - If we try to 'become circumcised' (*become a Jew*) - try to follow rules and religion...
    - Then we have received no benefit from the death and resurrection of Jesus...
    - Because we have ignored God's gift of salvation - and tried to earn heaven!
  - 2nd - If we do not obey - we will have an abundance of debt... vs. 3
    - Every man who becomes circumcised (*a Jew*) - who tries to live by religion...
    - That person is in DEBT - to keep the whole Law of God!
    - A basic rule of life - if you are not making a profit - you go into debt...
    - In the same way if we reject the riches that God gives us by faith in Jesus...
    - Then we are left to pay off our own debt of sin - an impossible task!
    - **Matthew 18:24** – like the servant who owed his Master 8 billion pesos!
    - We owe an impossible debt to repay to God – no matter how 'good' we try to be!
  - 3rd - If we do not obey - we will fall from Grace... vs. 4
    - If we attempt to be a good person - earn salvation - we are a stranger to Jesus...
      - If we attempt to grow in Jesus by our own efforts - we have fallen from Grace...
      - Thinking the more we do for God - the more we will grow in God...
      - The more we read our Bible / go to church / pray / give...
      - The more God will accept us / bless us / love us - we have fallen from Grace...
      - If you had a friend invite you over for dinner - would you expect to pay...
      - But if you walked into a strange house and asked for food - you would pay...
      - If we think we need to 'earn' our salvation - be 'good' to get into heaven...
      - It shows that we do not have a relationship with Jesus - we are a stranger...
    - Not that reading / praying / church are bad things - but they are the result of Grace...
      - In the same way it not the cart that pulls the caribou...
      - It is not that we read / pray / give - to grow in God...
      - When we grow in God by Grace - we want to read / pray / give!
      - It is God's Grace that saves us - AND matures us in our walk in Jesus!
    - Not that the people in Galatia were not saved...
      - But there was a very real danger to rejecting the Grace of God for growing...
      - Like trying to push a car down the road - rather than putting in some gas....
      - Without the Grace of God we are going to eventually burn out in our walk...

- We will get tired of striving to do the right thing - apart from the power of Grace!
- We may even give up on Jesus - thinking that we just cannot be good enough!

- 4th - Obedience to the commands brings righteousness by faith... vs. 5
  - It is true that we still struggle with sin - we are not yet perfected...
  - We may look at each other and think - you righteous - not a chance!
  - Yet when God looks down on us He sees us as already perfect...
  - He does not see who we are now - He sees us as who we will one day be!
  - And by faith we eagerly hope for that day when we will become that Godly man!
  - **I John 3:2** - "It has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."
- 5th - Religion means nothing - it is about faith working through love... vs. 6
  - You do not get to heaven because you are a Catholic / Baptist / or an Adventist…
  - Religion – any of them - do not / cannot / will not save you...
  - Salvation is through faith in Jesus - who loves us so much He died for our sins!

- **2ND - THE THREE CONCRENS PAUL HAD FOR THE CHURCH... VS. 7-12**
  - 1st - The race the Galatians ran... vs. 7-8
    - The Christian life is like a race - with a beginning and end...
      - We began the race the day we believed in Jesus - it ends the day we die...
      - We run the race to receive the prize - Jesus Christ - **Philippians 3:14**...
      - So often as believers we start off well in our race - but we do not finish well...
    - The Galatians were 'hindered' in their race - it means to be cut off...
      - In a race everyone is supposed to stay in their 'racing lanes'...
      - But if someone runs into your lane - they end up 'cutting you off' - hindering you...
      - There are a lot of things that can hinder our race - get in our way...
      - **Hebrews 12:1** - "Let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us."
      - We need to work hard to avoid the sin that weights us down - wears us out...
      - So we can finish the race with joy - receive the prize waiting for us at the end!
    - It was not God who had knocked them off course...
      - God is not the one who gets in our way in the Race to the finish line...
      - Far too often we put our faith in our own abilities – or the rules of others...
      - Then when we are tempted - and are unable to stand on our own - stumble and fall...
      - When life falls apart - we want to blame God because of our failure...
      - But it is not God's fault - we chose to follow rules rather than the Lord...
  - 2nd - The way the church thought... vs. 9-10
    - A little leaven - spread out quickly...
      - Leaven – also called yeast - the main ingredient that causes bread to rise...
        - Yeast is a micro-organism - plant - begins to decay when it touches flour...
        - The gas given off by the process causes bread to puff up and rise...
        - A little leaven is all that is needed to saturate a whole batch of bread dough...
        - Often used in the Bible as a picture of sin – imitating the ability to spread...
      - It only takes a little bit of legalism - to spread out and infect an entire church...

        - When a pastor tells a church how many hours a day he spends in prayer...
        - When someone in church begins to judge others on the clothes they wear...
        - Before you know it the whole church thinks you need to pray for 6 hours a day...
        - And wear certain clothes in order to be accepted by God!
    - 3rd - The trouble they faced... vs. 11-12
        - Paul was confident in the Lord...
            - That the Galatians would have no other mind - that they would understand Grace!
            - But God would judge the ones who troubled the church...
        - Paul was persecuted because he taught the Gospel of Grace...
            - If Paul had taught the same false Gospel of the Judaizers - they would have like him...
            - But because Paul taught the offensive message of the cross - he was hated!
            - If we are teaching others religion - then they are not going to argue with us...
            - It is when we share the Good news of relationship with Jesus - they get upset...
        - Paul wished those who troubled the church would be cut off (*castrated*)...
            - Paul was using play on words - as they were talking about being circumcised...
                - Those Judaizers who were teaching you had to be circumcised to be saved...
                - Paul wished they would be *castrated* - so they could not produce any children...
                - Speaking of their message - wanting no one to follow their example...
            - Cut off legalism - before it spreads...
                - Legalism / religion is like a virus that can quickly spread if not stopped...
                - Do not stand by - stand up for Jesus - do not let religion go un-answered...
                - People are going through life thinking their religion will save them...
                - Completely un-aware of the impending judgment that awaits them...
                - Take every opportunity to share the love of Jesus with others…
                - We have the cure - not in some religion - but a relationship with Jesus!

- **3RD - WHAT PAUL DESIRED FOR THE CHURCH... VS. 13-15**
    - 1st - Paul desired for the church to have 'Liberty'... vs. 13
        - But the church was to be careful not to use their liberty as an excuse for sin...
            - Our salvation is not based on our work/merit – simply saved by faith in Jesus...
            - No matter how much we sin – no matter what sin – Grace covers our sin...
            - But our lives after we believe in Jesus should also be different – changed…
        - Our works do not save us – but if we are saved – our lives will be different…
            - **Romans 6:14** – "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are... under grace."
            - It is easy to say we have 'faith' and 'believe' in Jesus – but the proof is in our actions...
            - If we say we are Christians – but still live like the world – then do we really have faith...
            - Its like the picture of a mango tree – it can call itself a palm tree – proof is in the fruit...
            - We can call ourselves Christians – but are continually to living in sin – are we really...
            - We are not to fool ourselves - do not use grace as an excuse to live in sin!
    - 2nd - Paul desired for the church to have Love... vs. 14-15
        - All of the Law is fulfilled in this - 'You shall Love your neighbor' - **Leviticus 19:18**...
            - The Law is fulfilled in Love - because God is Love - **I John 4:7-8**
            - But if you bite / devour one another - you will be consumed by each other...
        - Share the Gospel of Grace - but share it in love...
            - People need to hear - people need to know about the Grace of God - the Good News...

- But do not attack those who are bound up in the false hope of religion...
- Harsh words - will only close the hearts of those who need Jesus most...
- Instead show them the Good News - give them the Love of Jesus...
- **John 13:35** "All will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."