



Take5 for the Week of April 18-22, 2016

Confusion to Clarity

By Pastor John King

MONDAY

The New Covenant

Galatians 1

This week, we embark on a new series through the book of Galatians. Following Christ's death and resurrection, a new covenant was instituted. A covenant is a promise between two parties. In this case, the new covenant is the promise that salvation is available through faith in Jesus, and not through works. Justification happens by faith alone, not by obedience to the law. Paul speaks to this freedom found in Christ as he dispels the notion that the ceremonies of the Mosaic Law are what save you. Christians are now to live in the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

Under this new covenant, we have freedom in Christ. As we study this book together, we will see how that freedom brings transformation to our lives.

FOR TODAY – Pray that God would help you embrace the freedom found in Him.

TUESDAY

The Gospel

Galatians 1:1-5

Paul is writing this letter to the churches in Galatia. A few teachers were teaching a gospel different than the gospel Paul had taught when the churches were established. At the beginning of the letter, he seeks to clarify the Gospel; it is the basis of what he will address with them.

He begins by stating, 'Paul, an apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead'. (vs.1) This recalls, for the reader, Paul's own conversion experience on the road to Damascus where he had an encounter with Jesus. It establishes the authority of Paul because he received the gospel from Christ and not from another person. When he speaks of the gospel, he speaks under authority from Christ, having received it directly from Him.

The gospel is... Jesus came to earth, lived the perfect life, died as the perfect sacrifice, and rose again, conquering death so that we can know God. Jesus gave Himself for us, to deliver us from evil, and to present us holy, blameless, and above reproach before God. It's not anything we do; it's all on Jesus and His work on the cross.

FOR TODAY: Listen to the song, 'O Great God' (Sovereign Grace Music), on iTunes or YouTube.

WEDNESDAY

Quick Deserters

Galatians 1:6-10

We can be quick to forget. As time passes, experiences or lessons we have learned can fade quickly from our memories. We can find ourselves being swayed by what is new, or what is now compelling to us, no matter what truth may be. In so doing, we can open ourselves up to replacing the true Gospel with one that has been distorted.

Paul tells the Galatians, "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel..." (vs. 6) He is encouraging them to know, and hold dear, the message of the gospel... Christ died and paid the full price for our sins. Nothing we do adds to His sacrifice. God's faithfulness, through His Son, has been proven; we can anticipate that same faithfulness into the future.

FOR TODAY: Listen to the song, 'I Will Look Up' (Elevation Worship), on iTunes or YouTube.

THURSDAY

Distorted

Galatians 1:11-17

When I was a child, my view of God was distorted by what I thought were the *rules of Christianity*. I needed to dress a certain way, cut my hair a certain way, not listen to various types of music, or watch certain kinds of movies. By living like this, God would be pleased with me and my standing with Him would be good. If I did not, my standing with God would be bad and God would be angry.

There are people who try and add requirements to salvation by faith; some are well intentioned. The things for which they advocate are good and needed in our life, such as attending church or helping people in need. Both of these things are good, and should be part of our lives as Christians, but they are not required for our salvation.

FOR TODAY: Listen to the song, 'Alive in You' (Bethel Music), on iTunes or YouTube.

FRIDAY

Set Free

Galatians 1:18-24

The book of Galatians is about freedom. It is God's work through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross that has set us free from the law and made us alive in grace. This freedom in Christ draws us more to Christ because it is built on a love relationship. No longer is it ritualistic duty that teaches us conformity; instead, it is grace-filled love that creates in us a longing to change. We love Him because He first loved us. This response becomes our worship. It's much bigger than rules. It rushes in and changes our entire mindset. We don't gather with other believers on Sundays because it gives us something; we gather to respond to God's goodness in our life. We are set free from the confusion of the law, to clarity in the person and work of Jesus.

FOR TODAY: Thank God for the gift of His Son.