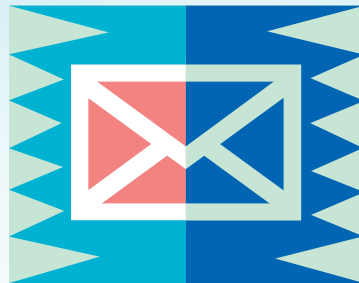


New Testament Survey

The Truth About Faith

Studying James and Galatians



For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

1



CBLT

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The Truth About Faith

James and Galatians



LESSON OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
- II. Practical Christianity
 - A. Exploring James
 - B. Establishing the Historical Perspective
 - 1. Authorship
 - 2. Audience
 - 3. Date
 - 4. General Background
 - 5. Geography
 - C. Examining the Content
 - 1. Theme
 - 2. Key Verse
 - 3. Topics and Teachings
 - 4. James: Jesus Christ, Our Pattern
- III. Grace and the Law
 - A. Exploring Galatians
 - B. Establishing the Historical Perspective
 - 1. Authorship
 - 2. Audience and Geography
 - 3. Date
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 - C. Examining the Content
 - 1. Theme
 - 2. Key Verse
 - 3. Topics and Teachings
 - 4. Galatians: Jesus Christ, Our Liberty
- IV. Conclusion

Self Test

Appendix 1. Let's Look At James

Appendix 2. Let's Look At Galatians

LESSON OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson you should:

1. Have a fresh perspective on the books of James and Galatians.
2. Be able to identify the author, audience, basic outline, key verse, and primary themes of James and Galatians.
3. Be able to place Galatia on a modern day map.
4. Appreciate the importance and place of both God's grace and human works in relation to salvation.
5. Be able to preach or teach about the practicalities of the grace of God.

LESSON ASSIGNMENTS

1. Read through the entire lesson completing questions and exercises as you come to them.
2. Read through the entire books of James and Galatians at least once during this lesson.
3. Read *A Look at the New Testament* Chapters 10 and 20 in the appendices.
4. Complete Practical Assignments 1 and 2.

WORD STUDY

Diaspora—typically refers to the scattering of Jews outside of Israel after the Babylonian exile; may refer to any scattering of people with a common culture

Ethics—the rules of conduct in regards to morality in a people group or culture

Grace—a favor rendered by one who need not do so¹

Judaizer—a Christian Jew during the New Testament times who believed that in order to become a Christian a person must also become a Jew and follow the law; these men actively converted Christians to Judaism

Treatise—a discourse, essay or article

I. Introduction

This lesson will give you an introduction to the books of James and Galatians. These two epistles are believed to be the earliest two New Testament books written. And they have more in common than that: both books deal with the issues of faith and works. James addresses the importance of works as a sign of the inner change that is generated in a person through salvation. Galatians focuses on the fact that works without grace mean nothing, they are only legalism. Although these two books approach the issue of works from very different angles, it is obvious that they are both built on the same foundation: God's grace.

Even a quick study of these two books reveals that the early church struggled with many of the same issues that we struggle with now. James and Galatians along with the rest of the New Testament

¹ *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993), 589.

were written nearly 2,000 years ago, yet they are just as relevant today as they were then! Although written by two different men to different churches in a different time, James and Galatians provide us with the foundation for understanding the necessity of faith as the basis for works today.

This lesson consist of questions, exercises and assignments that will help you to dig into these epistles, opening up your understanding to the context in which they were written, and helping you to interact with God's Word. There are answers in the workbook to help you if you get stuck. In addition there is a self test included so that you can review what you have learned.

You need to have a Bible or New Testament which you will feel free to mark up as you will be required to make many markings. When you read, always keep a pen beside you so that you can mark whenever you find something particularly important to you. You will also need a personal notebook for written assignments. In addition there is a supplement, *New Testament Geography and Chronology*, which you must have to complete some of the exercises. If you did not receive one, please ask your leader.

You can do this study on your own, but it will be much more beneficial if you meet with a group and discuss what you are learning and discovering. We are meant to help and encourage and share with each other. It gives all of us more insights and greater joy. And then there is the issue of accountability. So often we have good intentions, but... Life is full and we easily lay aside a study, and then it gets buried. We need to spur each other on! Knowing that you are going to meet with a group often provides that extra incentive to dig in and learn. And every moment spent in the Word of God will build truth into your life and faith in your heart.

II. Practical Christianity

James is a treatise on the Christian life. This little book contains many important instructions for every Christian who wants to live a victorious Christian life. Many of the teachings in this book are closely connected to the teachings of Jesus in the "Sermon on the Mount".

A. Exploring James

Take time to read through James in one sitting now. Please do the following exercise while you read.



Exercise 1

Read and mark James. As you read through James mark the following words in your Bible in the colors indicated.

Blue — References to God, such as "Jesus", or "Lord"

Purple — "Faith"

Green — "Works"

Do you have new observations or impressions? Write them down in your notebook and be prepared to share at your group meeting.

As you read James refer to the following simple outline to help you follow the flow of this letter.

OUTLINE OF THE LETTER OF JAMES	
Introduction	1:1
I. Genuine Religion	1:2-1:27
II. Genuine Faith	2:1 — 3:12
III. Genuine Wisdom	3:13 — 5:20

B. Establishing the Historical Perspective

1. Authorship

Read James 1:1 again. The author does not give us any clue to who he is, except that his name is James, and he obviously expected the recipients of the letter to know who he was. There are only four men by the name of James mentioned in the New Testament and it is fairly safe to assume that the author was one of these men.²

1. James the son of Zebedee (Matt. 4:21; Mark 1:19; Luke 5:10)
2. James the son of Alphaeus (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18, 15:40; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13)
3. James the father of Judas the apostle (Luke 6:16)
4. James “the Lord’s brother” (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19)

It is traditionally held that the author of the Epistle of James was James, a brother of Christ Jesus. The Bible gives us some interesting information about this man. Use the Scripture references provided to discover a little more about the family of Jesus.



Question 1 Read John 2:12, Matthew 12:46-50 and John 7:1-9. What did Jesus’ family think of him?

James was a half-brother of Jesus and would have been one of Jesus’ brothers in the above passages. But in later passages we find him mentioned by name.



Question 2 According to Acts 1:9-14 when did James begin to be involved in the church?

According to Galatians 1:11-19 James was involved in the church at Jerusalem for many years and even met with Paul a few years after he was saved. Acts 12:11-17 shows us that James was quickly recognized as a leader in the Jerusalem church. A few chapters later we see James giving judgment at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:1-29). This means that he was accepted as a leader not just for the Jerusalem church, but also for the church as a whole.



Question 3 Apparently Paul went to Jerusalem in between his first visit and the Jerusalem council, what does he say about James from that meeting? Galatians 2:1, 9-10.

2. Audience



Question 4 To whom is the book of James addressed? (see James 1:1)



Question 5 Who do you think this refers to? Jews, Gentiles, the Church or another group? Explain briefly.

² Irving L. Jensen, *Jensen’s Survey of the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), 422.

3. Date

As mentioned earlier James is believed to be one of the first New Testament books written. Most likely it was written around A.D. 46. However, there are some people who believe that James was written later around A.D. 60 just before James was martyred. A couple of the reasons that an earlier date is suggested include the simplicity of the church structure referred to and the fact that no reference was made to the Jerusalem Council, which was held in A.D. 48 or 49³, and dealt specifically with the issues of grace and works (Acts 15). Because of this early date it is also most likely that James was writing his letter to Christian Jews who were part of the Diaspora.

4. General Background

James was written only about fifteen or twenty years after the crucifixion. Christianity was making its debut in the world and the world was not very accepting. At this point in time the church was still mainly made up of Jews although Paul was beginning his ministry among the Gentiles. Some of the Jews were stirring up trouble for Jewish Christians and causing them to be persecuted. The church was young and did not know how to deal with this persecution, especially since they were daily expecting their Lord's return. The focus was all on faith. Most of these Christians had not heard Jesus' teachings themselves. They knew only the story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection and that He had promised to return to take those who believed back to heaven with Him. Their lives did not reflect Jesus' teachings because they were not aware of them.

Into all of this James sends his epistle. He focuses on the issues at hand, such as righteous living and dealing with persecution. James stresses the importance of works as an outward sign of inward faith. His message is, "Yes, Jesus is coming back soon, but until that time we need to live as He lived so that others may also see and believe."

In the *Message* Eugene Peterson introduces the book of James like this⁴:

When Christian believers gather in churches, everything that can go wrong sooner or later does. Outsiders, on observing this, conclude that there is nothing to the religion business except, perhaps, business — and dishonest business at that. Insiders see it differently. Just as a hospital collects the sick under one roof and labels them as such, the church collects sinners. Many of the people outside the hospital are every bit as sick as the ones inside, but their illnesses are either undiagnosed or disguised. It's similar with sinners outside the church.

So Christian churches are not, as a rule, model communities of good behavior. They are, rather, places where human misbehavior is brought out in the open, faced, and dealt with.

The letter of James shows one of the church's early pastors skillfully going about his work of confronting, diagnosing, and dealing with areas of misbelief and misbehavior that had turned up in congregations committed to his care. Deep and living wisdom is on display here, wisdom both rare and essential. Wisdom is not primarily knowing the truth, although it certainly includes that, it is skill in living. For, what good is a truth if we don't know how to live it? What good is an intention if we can't sustain it?

According to church traditions, James carried the nickname "Old Camel Knees" because of thick calluses built up on his knees from many years of determined prayer. The prayer is foundational to the wisdom. Prayer is always foundational to wisdom.

³ Jensen, 426.

⁴ Eugene Peterson, *The Message //Remix: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002), 2204.

5. Geography

We have already seen that James was written to Jews who were part of the Diaspora. The Diaspora at this time covered almost all of the Roman Empire as well as some of the eastern countries. It is likely that James was writing to those from the places mentioned in Acts 2:9-11.

There is no record of James ever leaving Palestine, so it can be safely assumed that this epistle was written from Palestine and possibly from Jerusalem.



Exercise 2

Fill in Map 1. Read Acts 2:9-11 and in your notebook write the names of the people groups that are mentioned there. Then turn to Map 1 in the Supplement and using a green pencil shade in the areas where these people came from.

C. Examining the Content

1. Theme

The theme summarizes the book's central subject and the author's treatment of it. When we study the Bible it helps to establish what the major theme is for each book. Obviously there may be many topics covered, and this is definitely the case in James. But our goal is still to look for an overall theme. The central theme is

Works are the evidence of a living faith.

Many people consider faith and works to be two separate items. However James presents them as one teaching. The thrust of James' writing is that faith and works must go hand in hand. Often people argue that if we are saved by grace (as Galatians makes clear) that we do not need to worry about "works". James argues that while it is true that our salvation is "by grace through faith" that same faith should be evidenced by the changes in our lives. In Galatians Paul agrees with this as in chapter five he lists the fruit of the spirit of this world and the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

2. Key Verse

A key verse should summarize or represent the main theme of the book. It should state the central theme of the book or the reason why it was written. There is often more than one possibility of a key verse, especially for a whole book. Two suggestions for the book of James are 1:22 and 2:26. We have chosen James 2:26 as our key verse because we feel that it fits better with the overall theme of the book as stated above.



Question 6 Write James 2:26 on the lines below.



Question 7 Why are these verses considered key verses?

3. Topics and Teachings

We could say that James is primarily an instruction manual for Christian living. The focus has been on the importance of works in relation to faith, but there are many other things to learn from James as well. A few of these include prayer, the tongue (our speech) and Christian ethics.

You may have noticed that there are very few references to Jesus in this little book. One man commented “James says less about the Master than any other writer in the New Testament, but his speech is more like that of the Master than the speech of any of them.”⁵ A simple comparison of James and the Sermon on the Mount proves this is true. Compare James 1:6 and Matt. 14:28-31, James 1:9-11 and Matt. 5:3, 6:28-30, James 1:12 and Matt. 5:10-12, etc. James and Jesus both use the Old Testament as a base for many of their teachings although you can also see that James was simply building on or paraphrasing what Jesus had taught. In one sense the book of James is a compilation of the practical teachings of Jesus.

If you glance again at the book you will also notice that there is no systematic theology in James. Unlike Romans or many of Paul’s writings James does not focus on theology, but rather on application to life. This epistle is comparable to Proverbs or the Sermon on the Mount because it gives us practical instructions on how to live the Christian life. You will see this more clearly as you complete the following question.



Question 8 The first chapter in James covers some key topics that come up in the other 4 chapters. In the chart below, fill in the verses and name of the topic that is picked up again. We have filled in the first one as an example. Fill in the remaining blanks with either the topic or the verses which pertain to that topic.

Topic	1	2	3	4	5
Patience	3-4				7-11
_____	5-7			2-3	13-18
Riches	9-11	_____		13-16	_____
Faith and Works	_____	_____	13-18		
_____	26		1-12	_____	12

4. James: Jesus Christ, Our Pattern

Take time to answer these questions as you read through Chapter 20 *A Look at the New Testament* in Appendix 1.

You will notice that Mears mentions with every book how Jesus is portrayed in it. She does not always explain the titles she chooses, but a little thought often shows that her idea is true.



Question 9 How does James portray Jesus as “Our Pattern”?

Faith Victor over Temptation



Question 10 Why should we count our trials “all joy?”

⁵ D.A. Hayes, “Epistle of James,” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 3:1564, as quoted in Jensen’s *Survey of the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), 427.



Question 11 How does Dr. Mears describe temptation? Do you agree with this description? Why or why not?



Question 12 What is the difference between a test and a temptation?



Question 13 Where does the wisdom to solve conflicts come from?

Faith Shown in Our Actions



Question 14 James uses the mirror as an illustration for our need for God's Word. How does Dr. Mears explain this illustration?



Question 15 The textbook states, "Faith without works is unseen of men, as works without faith is unseen by God." Which do **you** believe is more important: faith or works? Why?



Question 16 What is the difference between saying, "I am as good as you," as opposed to, "You are as good as I am"?

Some thoughts for meditation on James 2:10-11: Are you a lawbreaker? How "good" are you? What excuses do you give yourself when you commit sin? Think of a sin that you committed recently. How did you excuse or justify what you did at the time? If you saw someone else doing that same thing, or heard that they had, what would you think of that person?

Faith Shown in Our Words

In James we read about the evil of the untamed tongue. Dr. Mears expands on this and explains about the damage

that can be done by the tongue. James 3:10 says, “from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing.” So, we know that good things can come from the tongue. Complete this exercise now to discover some of those things.



Exercise 3

Tame your tongue. What good things can come from the tongue? Make a list in your notebook of the ways the tongue can “bless and not curse.”

Faith Shown in Our Purity of Character



Question 17 What aspects of the world have their strongest pull on you?



Practical Assignment 1: Prepare a Sermon on Faith

Using your studies of the book of James prepare a sermon on faith and how it relates to practical Christian living. If possible, choose only one text in James to base your sermon on. Make sure that your sermon has a practical application for your audience and that you are not preaching a set of rules (legalism). Bring an outline to your course coach at the next seminar.

III. Grace and the Law

A. Exploring Galatians

You have already studied Galatians in-depth in the course *Galatians and Romans*. Since this is a survey we will only touch on some of the important issues. If you have not yet taken *Galatians and Romans*, you may want to make it a priority as there is much more to be learned from Galatians than we will cover here!

Galatians may seem to be a rather small insignificant book, but it has had a dramatic impact on the history of Christianity. You will see that it was written to address a critical problem in the early church—one which continues to be an issue to this day. It is the book that opened Martin Luther’s eyes and started the Reformation. So don’t let its size deceive you!

Since there are only six chapters in this book, it should only take a half hour to read through it out loud. Find a quiet spot away from distractions, turn off your cell phone and make sure others know not to interrupt you for one hour. Sit quietly for a moment before beginning and think about what you are about to do and what you want to learn from it. Ask God to help you understand what you are about to read. Then read Galatians out loud. You may wish to follow the outline below as you read.

OUTLINE OF GALATIANS	
Introduction	1:1-3
I. Paul Defends His Gospel	1:4-2:21
II. Paul Explains His Gospel	3:1-4:31
III. Paul Explains Freedom in the Spirit	5:1-6:10
Conclusion	6:11-18

There are many other ways to outline Galatians. The above outline is very simple. You could also outline Galatians to show the emphasis on grace or to focus more on Paul's testimony or on the importance of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.



Exercise 4

Mark Galatians as you read. Using the color code below mark every occurrence these words in your Bible.

Green — “Gospel”

Red — “Law”

Purple — “Faith”

Review your marking and notice the contrast between the Law and faith as Paul presents it. The Law required only blind obedience, but the Gospel calls for a response of faith.

God's Word is timeless. These words were written hundreds of years ago, yet they are relevant to us today! Not only that, but we can read them over and over again and learn new things or gain a new understanding each time. We can never be too familiar with the Bible.

B. Establishing the Historical Perspective

1. Authorship

By this point in our study you should already know who the author of Galatians is. If you do not, look at Galatians 1:1-2.



Question 18 Who wrote Galatians?

There is much to be learned about this man. We have more personal information about Paul than any other person in the New Testament, except Jesus Christ. Much of it is contained in Galatians and Acts where we find Paul's personal testimonies. We will continue to learn about Paul in other lessons.

2. Audience and Geography

You will have already noticed that this letter was addressed to “the churches of Galatia” (Galatians 1:2). If you look at Map 2 in the Supplement you will see that Galatia was not one city (like Ephesus), but a whole province, which encompassed many cities. There is some dispute as to whether Paul was writing to cities in Northern Galatia or Southern Galatia. We will assume that he was writing to the cities in Southern Galatia based on the account of Paul's first missionary journey in Acts 14. If you would like a more in-depth study of the issue, please refer to the course *Galatians and Romans*.



Question 19 To which churches was Paul referring when he addressed his letter to “the churches of Galatia?” (refer to Acts 14)



Exercise 5

Locate Galatia on a map. Note the locations of the cities mentioned in Acts 14 on Map 2 in the Supplement. Using a blue pencil shade in all the areas that are included in Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13-14).

Now, turn to Map 3. Find and trace with your finger the area where Galatia was in New Testament times. Locate cities that Paul visited or their modern day equivalent. Circle the cities that are still in existence.

3. Date⁶

As with James, Galatians was written before the Jerusalem Council in A.D. 49. Since Paul's first missionary journey took place between A.D. 47 and 48, we know that Galatians must have been written in the latter part of A.D. 48 or the beginning of A.D. 49. During this time Paul was probably in Syrian Antioch (see Acts 14:26-28). Keep in mind as you study each of the letters from Paul to the church of his day that these letters were all written within a period of 20 years.

As you study Galatians remember that this was one of the first books of the New Testament to be written. When the Galatians received this letter, they did not have the Gospels or Acts, most likely they did not even have James' epistle!



Question 20 Where was Galatians written from?



Question 21 How many books of the Bible pre-date Galatians?



Question 22 How many Bible books were written after Galatians?

4. General Background

Paul wrote Galatians in response to a letter from the Galatians with certain accusations and questions. Answer the following question based on your reading in Galatians.



Question 23 How does Paul identify those who were accusing him? See Gal. 1:7; 4:10 and 12.

Food for Thought

Consider Grace vs. Works. Do you feel this is a legitimate concern? How do you personally feel in regards to this issue? Do you tend to take advantage of God's grace or do you try to earn your salvation? What do you or others preach and teach on this? What **one** thing would you like to change about your attitude or practice in this area?

Although the Bible does not say this, it is generally believed that these troublemakers were Judaizers.⁷ These men were Jewish Christians who saw Christianity as a sect of Judaism, rather than a separate faith. Because of this they could not accept the fact that salvation comes through faith alone—not by works (Galatians 2:16).

Even today there are many who struggle with this very same issue! Some of them have separated themselves from Christianity and formed other religions or cults, such as Islam, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses. Other groups have simply made up a list of "do's and don'ts" for their own churches, such as women must wear skirts, men must have a beard, you may not drink any alcohol. There are many other examples, and no doubt you know of some specific to your area. Paul's letter is just as needed today as it was two thousand years ago!

C. Examining the Content

1. Theme

Because this book was organized to refute a specific problem it makes it easy to find the theme, unlike some books which address a number of issues. This is a theme that we need to hold up in

⁶ Irving L. Jensen, *Jensen's Survey of the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 303.

⁷ Jensen, 298.

the church regularly. Human effort has always been the means by which man has tried to make himself acceptable to God. Christianity is unique in that God Himself made the provision for man to be reconciled to Him, and nothing we can do can add to that. However it seems to be an ongoing temptation to try to add something to what God has done.

Salvation is by grace through faith, not by any human effort.

When you begin to question your assurance of salvation, this is the place to go to affirm once again that it is NOT what you do. One of our greatest temptations is to think somehow we can make ourselves acceptable to God. Praise Him! It is just His grace and resting our faith upon Him.

2. Key Verse

Galatians is all about freedom and grace. Not licentious freedom, but freedom in Christ. As we stated in the theme the whole point of Galatians is that salvation is by the grace of God. We have no ability to make ourselves acceptable by obeying the Law. With these thoughts in mind Galatians 2:16 has been chosen as the key verse. This is one of several verses that state this topic. In the *Galatians and Romans* course 3:11 was chosen. You may want to underline both of them in your Bible.



Question 24 Write the key verse of Galatians on the lines below.

3. Topics and Teachings

Galatians is a book full of important teaching and fascinating analogies.

Paul's Testimony

This is the only epistle in which we have a record of Paul's testimony. The three other times it appears are all in Acts. Here in the first two chapters of Galatians we have in Paul's own words his life story and calling by God.

In addition to defending himself against the false accusations, Paul used his testimony as an example for the Galatians of how faith frees the Christian from the Law (legalism).

Analogies

The main focus of Galatians is undoubtedly salvation by faith, not by the Law. To illustrate this Paul uses a variety of analogies including

- (1) the Abrahamic covenant,
- (2) a slave and heir,
- (3) Sarah and Hagar, and
- (4) adoption.

Contrasts

It is interesting how he uses contrasts to develop the people's understanding of the difference the death of Christ on the cross has made for us.



Question 25 In the following chart you have been provided with one side of the contrast, namely what was true before Jesus came to the cross. Fill in the opposite, which explains our present situation, from the answers below. If you need help refer to the chapters listed.

- a) Faith
- b) New covenant
- c) All live spiritually in Christ
- d) Genuine gospel
- e) Standing firm in grace
- f) Walking in Spirit
- g) Saved in Christ
- h) God's revelation
- i) Sons in freedom
- j) Cross — sole object of glorying
- k) Blessing of life
- l) Fruit of Spirit
- m) Grace
- n) Justification by faith

Contrasts in Galatians		
Chapters 1-2	Lost in Adam	1)
	All die physically in Adam	2)
	Another (false) gospel	3)
	Man's reasoning	4)
Chapters 3-4	Law	5)
	Works	6)
	Curse of death	7)
	Condemnation by works	8)
	Servants in bondage	9)
	Old covenant	10)
Chapters 5-6	Living in the flesh	11)
	Works of the flesh	12)
	Falling from grace	13)
	World/self object of glorying	14)

Holy Spirit

There is also a definite emphasis on the Holy Spirit and His role in our lives. As he wrote about the place of faith in salvation, Paul also reminded the Galatians that all the good works that we do as Christians come from the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. He pointed out that without the Holy Spirit we would not be able to consistently do good works or consistently obey the Law.

4. Galatians: Jesus Christ, Our Liberty

Read *A Look at the New Testament* Chapter 10 in Appendix 2 as you answer these questions. Don't forget to check your answers when you have finished this section!



Question 26 How does the book of Galatians portray Jesus as "Our Liberty"?



Question 27 What kind of liberty is Paul writing about in Galatians?

Introduction



Question 28 What do we need to recognize in regards to salvation?

Paul Defends the Gospel



Exercise 6

Contrast Christianity and religion. In your notebook make a chart with the headings “Christianity” and “Religion” at the top of two columns. Now underneath each of those list their contrasting elements. Make sure that you include the ones that Dr. Mears has mentioned.



Question 29 What concern does the textbook note that many people have in regards to grace?

The Law's Work



Question 30 What is the purpose of the Law?

Paul Desires the Gospel be Applied

Dr. Mears comments that, “Many people are afraid to live under grace instead of law for fear it will lead men to ‘live as they please and do as they like.’”⁸



Question 31 What is her response to this?



Question 32 What connection does the Holy Spirit have with grace?

It is very easy to look at a passage in a book or in the Bible and assume that it means one thing, but only when we look at it in its immediate context and larger context can we really understand what the author was trying to say. We need to be careful not to use Biblical material or any other kind of material out of its original context. As you continue this survey, remember that if a verse or passage does not make sense or seems contradictory you should compare it to its context before making any conclusions about the issue.

Dr. Mears writes, “The fault of so many Christians is that after they are converted they do not cut loose from their old habits and worldly friends and unbelief.” She goes on and gives a little illustration. Mears appears to be suggesting that Christians should shut themselves off from the world. However, if we look at the immediate context of the chapter and the larger context of the whole book it is easy to realize that she is referring to “being in the world, but not of it.”

⁸ Henrietta Mears, *A Look at the New Testament* (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, 1971), 107.

Her concern is for the individual's spiritual growth, but that does not mean that she would advocate cutting off communication with worldly friends—unless that communication is hampering spiritual growth.

How do you handle the issue of living in the world, but not being of it? What does your church teach on this subject? How do these views (your own and your church's) affect evangelization?



Practical Assignment 2: Examine Your Life for Spiritual Fruit

Take some time right now to pray. Ask the Lord to show you the truth about your life. Are you really bearing the fruit of the Spirit or are you taking part in the deeds of the flesh?

As God opens your eyes to see your life from His perspective, write down which of the nine areas you are strongest in and which you are weakest in. Notice that Dr. Mears has divided the fruit into three subsets; mark your strong and weak points in each of these sets. Give thanks to God for the areas where you can see the Holy Spirit's work in your life and ask for continued grace for the areas that need development.

Now write out one practical way that you can begin to work on each of your three weakest areas. You may choose a verse to memorize, do a Bible study on it, or purpose to look for ways to demonstrate that attribute during the next week. Whatever you decide, mark it down in your notebook and be prepared to show it to your leader or share it in your group along with proofs that you followed through with your commitment.

IV. Conclusion

James and Galatians were written within a few years of each other. They were written to two very important, but very different audiences about the same subject: grace. James dealt with the importance of works as proof of salvation, thus dealing with the tendency towards licentiousness that some of the churches exhibited. Paul reminded the Galatians that salvation is by faith alone, not through works. He taught them that salvation cannot be earned; it is a gift of God. This helped to prevent those churches from turning into legalistic law-followers. Together these two books give us a treatise on how we as Christians should respond to God's great grace in extending salvation to each one of us.

After a few of the usual Sunday evening hymns, the church's pastor once again slowly stood up, walked over to the pulpit, and gave a very brief introduction of his childhood friend. With that, an elderly man stepped up to the pulpit to speak. "A father, his son, and a friend of his son were sailing off the Pacific Coast," he began, "when a fast approaching storm blocked any attempt to get back to shore. The waves were so high, that even though the father was an experienced sailor, he could not keep the boat upright, and the three were swept into the ocean."

The old man hesitated for a moment, making eye contact with two teenagers who were, for the first time since the service began, looking somewhat interested in his story. He continued, "Grabbing a rescue line, the father had to make the most excruciating decision of his life...to which boy he would throw the other end of the line. He only had seconds to make the decision. The father knew that his son was a Christian, and he also knew that his son's friend was not. The agony of his decision could not be matched by the torrent of waves. As the father yelled out 'I love you, son!' he threw the line to his son's friend. By the time he

pulled the friend back to the capsized boat, his son had disappeared beyond the raging swells into the black night. His body was never recovered.”

By this time the two teenagers were sitting straighter in the pew, waiting for the next words to come out of the old man’s mouth. “The father,” he continued, “knew his son would step into eternity with Jesus, and he could not bear the thought of his son’s friend stepping into an eternity without Jesus. Therefore, he sacrificed his son. How great is the love of God that He should do the same for us.” With that the old man turned and sat back down in his chair as silence filled the room.

Within minutes after the service ended, the two teenagers were at the old man’s side. “That was a nice story,” politely started one of the boys, “but I don’t think it was very realistic for a father to give up his son’s life in hopes that the other boy would become a Christian.”

“Well, you’ve got a point there,” the old man replied, glancing down at his worn Bible. A big smile broadened his narrow face, and he once again looked up at the boys and said, “It sure isn’t very realistic, is it? But I’m standing here today to tell you that that story gives me a glimpse of what it must have been like for God to give up his Son for me. You see...I was the son’s friend.”⁹

This is the message of Paul in Galatians and James in the book of James. We are saved by grace and our Christian lives should show a consciousness of that. The man gave up his son based on his beliefs as a Christian. The pastor also was living out the grace extended to him, by sharing it with others.

Now it is up to each one of us to respond appropriately to this grace. Will we develop a set of rules and procedures in an effort to earn our salvation or prove that we are worthy of it? Or will we actively seek to live out this grace in our lives because we can do nothing else when we experience all that Jesus Christ has done for us?

If you have enjoyed this lesson please note that it is one in a series of 12 lessons which cover the epistles of the New Testament and the Revelation. These lessons do not necessarily need to be done in order but we would encourage you to pursue your study of the scriptures both for your personal spiritual growth and so that you will be prepared to help others.

Other lessons are:

Lesson 2—1 and 2 Thessalonians — ***Standing Firm in Persecution***

Lesson 3—1 Corinthians — ***Problems of the Church***

Lesson 4—2 Corinthians — ***Ministry Defended***

Lesson 5— Romans — ***Righteousness by Faith***

Lesson 6— Colossians and Ephesians — ***Christ and His Church***

Lesson 7— Philemon and Philippians — ***Joy and Forgiveness***

Lesson 8—1 Timothy and Titus — ***Church Leadership***

Lesson 9—1 Peter, 2 Timothy & 2 Peter — ***Encouragement and Warnings***

Lesson 10— Hebrews — ***The New Covenant***

Lesson 11—Jude, 1, 2 & 3 John — ***Love in Action***

Lesson 12—The Revelation — ***Climax of the Ages***

⁹ Carla Muir, “The Father’s Anguishing Decision” in *Stories for a faithful Heart* compiled by Alice Gray (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 2000), 228-229.

Self Test

Score: ____/100

Matching (5 points each, ____/40)

Match the book with the information.

- a. James
- b. Galatians

1. ____ Key word: "Works"
2. ____ For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.
3. ____ Salvation is by grace through faith, not by any human effort.
4. ____ Key word: "Gospel"
5. ____ Outline

Introduction
I. Paul Defends His Gospel
II. Paul Explains His Gospel
III. Paul Explains Freedom in the Spirit
Conclusion

6. ____ Outline

Introduction
I. Genuine Religion
II. Genuine Faith
III. Genuine Wisdom

7. ____ Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.
8. ____ Works are the evidence of a living faith.

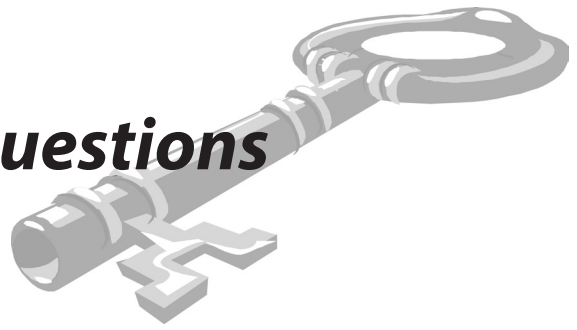
Fill in the Blank (4 points each answer, ____/60)

Write the correct answer in the blanks.

1. The author of James was _____ brother.
2. The Epistle of James is comparable to the book of _____ in the Old Testament because it is practical Christianity.
3. Works vs. _____ is a key contrast in Galatians.
4. Prayer is a key topic in _____.
5. _____ was the first New Testament book to be written.
6. James was most likely written in the city of _____; it was addressed to the _____.

7. Galatians was written before the Jerusalem Council met in A.D. _____.
8. For the book of James Mears gives Jesus the title _____.
9. _____ was written as a response to certain accusations and questions.
10. Sarah and Hagar are used as illustrations in _____.
11. Galatians was written by _____ to _____.
12. "Jesus Christ, Our _____" is the title that Mears gives for Galatians.
13. James includes some important teaching on _____ in chapter 5, encouraging us that the righteous man will succeed.

Answers to Questions



Question 1

According to these passages Jesus' family were not convinced that He was the Messiah.

Question 2

James was involved in the church from the very beginning.

Question 3

Paul calls James one of the pillars of the church, along with Peter and John.

Question 4

The twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad.

Question 5

Your answer.

Question 6

See James 2:26 in your Bible.

Question 7

James 1:22 and 2:26 are considered key verses for James because they summarize the main teachings of James.

Question 8

Answers are in bold.

Topic	1	2	3	4	5
Patience	3-4				7-11
Prayer	5-7			2-3	13-18
Riches	9-11	1-13		13-16	1-6
Faith and Works	22-25	14-26	13-18		
Tongue	26		1-12	11-12	12

Question 9

James is based on the teaching of Jesus as we have learned in this lesson.

Question 10

We should count our trials all joy because of the good that they will work out in us and because they can demonstrate God's great grace.

Question 11

Dr. Mears alludes to temptation as wanting to satiate our desires through inappropriate methods. However, she does not claim that this is a complete definition of temptation.

Your answer.

Question 12

A test comes from God and is meant to strengthen us, reveal a need for God in an area of our life that we had not recognized before, or bring glory to God (i.e. Job's loss of earthly possessions). A temptation comes from Satan and is meant to tear us down, to discourage us, and to dishonor God's reputation (i.e. Job's wife, "Curse God and die").

Question 13

God

Question 14

We need to keep looking into the mirror of God's Word to "remember how we look", to find sin in our life.

Question 15

Your answer should be faith. Although works are important, not everyone is able to do works. There are many who have come to Christ on their deathbeds. Others do works which are not seen easily. We cannot discount a person's salvation just because they do not do the works that we want them to do.

Question 16

The first is selfish and provides a way to escape our conscience—we are always "as good as" or "better than" someone else. The second makes way for humility and unity. It is always more difficult to admit that someone is "as good as we are" or "better than I," than it is to tear that person down. And yet through the work of Jesus Christ we are all equal.

Question 17

Your answer.

Question 18

Paul.

Question 19

Lystra, Derbe, Iconium and Psidian Antioch

Question 20

Paul was most likely in Syrian Antioch when he wrote Galatians.

Question 21

Forty Bible books pre-date Galatians (all of the Old Testament and James).

Question 22

Twenty-five New Testament books were written after Galatians.

Question 23

Paul identifies them as “those who are disturbing you” and “troublemakers.”

Question 24

See Galatians 2:16 in your Bible.

Question 25

- | | | |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 1) — g) | 6) — a) | 11) — f) |
| 2) — c) | 7) — k) | 12) — l) |
| 3) — d) | 8) — n) | 13) — e) |
| 4) — h) | 9) — i) | 14) — j) |
| 5) — m) | 10) — b) | |

Question 26

Your answer should include the idea that Christ is the one who has set us free from slavery to the law to try to receive salvation. Instead, through faith in Him we are free (Galatians 5:1).

Question 27

Paul writes about the liberty that we have *in* Christ, liberty *in* law, not liberty *from* law.

Question 28

We can never be good enough to be saved; we must recognize that we are bad enough that we need salvation.

Question 29

“If people don’t have to do a thing for their salvation or for an atonement for their wrongdoings, then they will become shiftless and will not even try to do good.”

Question 30

The purpose of the Law is to direct or drive us to Christ.

Question 31

Mears writes, “Grace will always lead a man to live as God pleases and like what He likes.”

Question 32

The Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to live by grace. It is through His presence in our lives that we desire to live for God; we do not have that desire if He has not been working in us.

Answers to Exercises



Exercise 1

There are about 33 uses of “God”, “Jesus” or “Lord” in James.

There are 16 references to “faith”.

“Works” occurs 12 times.

Exercise 2

Your answer.

Exercise 3

Encouragement is one example of a way the tongue can bless and not curse. You should have at least four or five items on your list. Be prepared to share at the next seminar.

Exercise 4

“Gospel” can be found 11 times in Galatians.

“Law” occurs 32 times.

“Faith” occurs 21 times.

Exercise 5

Your answer.

Galatia was located in what is now Turkey.

Derbe is still in existence today, although it is no longer a major city.

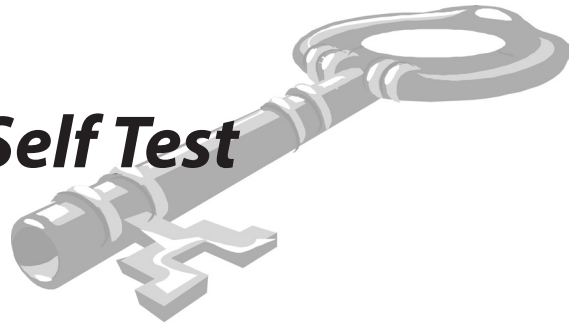
There are now other cities on the same spot or near where Psidian Antioch, Iconium and Lystra used to be.

Exercise 6

Your answer. We have only included a few of the possible answers as an example for you.

Christianity	Religion
1. Relationship with Jesus	1. Empty actions
2. God’s best	2. Man’s best
3. Based on Faith	3. Based on Works

Answers to Self Test



Matching

1. a.
2. a.
3. b.
4. b.
5. b.
6. a.
7. b.
8. a.

Fill in the Blanks

1. Jesus'
2. Proverbs
3. faith
4. James
5. James
6. Jerusalem, Diaspora
7. 48 or 49
8. Our Pattern
9. Galatians
10. Galatians
11. Paul, the Galatians
12. Liberty
13. prayer

Let's Look At James

James Portrays Jesus Christ, Our Pattern

APPENDIX



Chapter 20 from A Look at the New Testament by Henrietta Mears¹⁰

Faith Victor Over Temptation

(Read James 1:1-21)

Spiritual arithmetic is of value. The arithmetic of the Bible is important and none of us can afford to ignore it. James invites Christians to “count.” *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations* (1:2). We usually count it joy when we escape temptation and sorrow. Instead we should count testing as a glorious opportunity of proving our faith, just as the automobile manufacturer knows that the best proof of the car’s worth is the road test. Why we must count it joy is not because of the trial itself but what it will work out. In other words, use your trials. What is the purpose of the testing? (1:3) God makes our trials the instrument of blessing. Too often our trial works impatience, but God will give grace that His real purpose may be accomplished. Patience is more necessary than anything else in our faith life. When you can endure, you are a mature Christian.

Let us be careful where we lay the blame of temptation. Read 1:14 carefully. Testings of character come from God (Gen. 22:1), but temptations to evil never come from Him, but from the adversary through our own corrupt nature. (James 1:13) The appeal is made to meet a proper desire in an improper way. (1:14) Instead of wrong things coming from God, we find that only good and perfect gifts come from above, from the Father of lights, who never changes. (1:17) Our God is a God who loves to give. Alexander the Great said to one overwhelmed with his generosity, “I give as a king!” Jehovah gives as the infinite God.

When you are wronged and insulted ask God how you shall act. *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him* (1:5).

¹⁰ Used by permission.

What a sad lack! What a mess such a lack can lead us into. Does James say, “If you lack wisdom, sit down and think or study?” No, he says the wisdom we need is from above.

James begins and ends with prayer. (1:5-8; 5:13-18) Prayer is one of the easiest subjects to talk up-on, but one of the hardest to practice. James had much to say about prayer. Find all you can on this subject in this epistle. What about his practice? Tradition tells us that on his death they discovered that his knees were worn hard as a camel’s through constant habit of Prayer.

Faith Shown In Our Actions

(Read James 1:22-2:26)

Don’t be merely listeners of God’s Word, but put the Gospel into practice. What is the good of a man saying that he has faith, if he does not prove it by actions? We must not be satisfied with only “hearing.” We must go on doing. (1:22) If anyone is a hearer and not a doer, he is like a person looking at himself in a mirror and then going away and forgetting how he looked, or what was wrong—*straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was* (1:24).

Try this experiment to prove the truth of this statement. Look in a mirror and then turn away. Close your eyes and try to remember how you look. You can’t picture yourself. Now try to recall how your best friend looks. It is easy to remember another face, but not your own. That is the reason James says we must keep looking into the mirror of God’s Word to remember how we look, to find out the sin in our life. He who looks carefully into the Scriptures and practices them, will be blessed in what he does. If anyone thinks he is religious and bridles not his tongue, this man’s religion is vain. The religion that does not influence the tongue is not a true or vital one. An uncontrolled tongue in a Christian is a terrible thing—guard it. Control your temper. It is dangerous. Under trial, be slow to speak. Keep the draft closed and the fire will go out. (1:26)

What Shall We Do With The Word?

Receive it.....	1:21
Hear it.	1:23
Do it.	1:22
Examine it.....	1:25

Works do not save us, but they are a pretty good evidence that we are saved. *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me* (Matt. 25:40) is not a saving text, but a sign text. What He has done is our salvation. What *ye have done* is the proof of it. Keep faith and works in their proper place. Works are the fruit of your faith.

“I hear you are opposed to works,” someone said to Spurgeon. “No, I am not,” the great preacher replied, “nor to chimney pots, but I would not put them at the foundation.” Let faith always come first. Faith without works is unseen of men, as works without faith is unseen of God.

Because of all this, James says in effect, “The faith you have is the faith you show.” *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world* (1:27). True religion produces a pure life, “unspotted from the world,” and a useful life, “visit the fatherless and widows.”

Christianity is a brotherhood that has no “respect of persons.” (2:1-4)

James Russell Lowell once said, “We have gone on far too long on the principle, ‘I am as good as you.’ This is a principle of selfishness that has made the world sick almost unto death. We should

act rather on the other principle, ‘You are as good as I,’ for this is the note of brotherhood and of humility, which the Lord and His apostles first declared unto men.” (2:1-13)

How the world today ignores James’ command not to have respect to persons! The world worships the successful, strong and wealthy, and despises the man who is poor. A Christian must not show partiality to the man of wealth and position, James tells us, but it seems that money and honor are the only things that men worship today.

To disobey God’s law is sin. It is human to gloss over sin. A little girl said when excusing herself for something she had done, “I haven’t broken the commandment; I have only cracked it.” James says that whosoever obeys the whole law, and only makes a single slip, is guilty of everything. (2:10,11) He is a lawbreaker. If a man is brought into court for violating a traffic ordinance, he does not plead that he has kept all the others. The judge is only interested in the fact of whether he has broken this one with which he is charged. That classifies him as a lawbreaker. We may have a fine chain, but of what use is it if all the links are good except one? That broken link renders the entire chain useless.

It is clear that the one sin thought of here is mentioned in 2:9—”respect of persons.” There are few, who if left to themselves would ever dream of reckoning such behavior as sin.

“Faith and works” are like two oars on a boat. If you pulled with just one, the boat would move round and round. You must pull on both to go forward. So faith without works, or works without faith, will not suffice to bring us into our desired haven. But let there be both, and the haven will be safely reached. Just as a body without a spirit is dead, so faith is dead without actions. (2:17)

Faith Shown In Our Words

(Read James 3:1-18)

Our speech reveals what and whose we are. It expresses our personality more than anything else.

Anyone who controls his tongue, James says, is a perfect man. (3:2) If he has mastery over that difficult member, the tongue, the rest is easy. He is able to curb the whole nature. Just as we control a spirited horse by a firm hand on the bridle, so the hand of the Man, Christ Jesus, can grip and firmly use the bit and bridle on our tongues. Even as a great ship is controlled by a very small rudder and turned in any direction the captain determines, so the pierced hand of Jesus can firmly control and wisely use the helm of our lives— our tongue. The tongue, though small, is very powerful. It can determine the course of human life.

The Tongue A Dangerous Weapon

A fire as from hell (3:6)

A world of iniquity (3:6)

Full of deadly poison (3:8)

Unruly evil (3:8)

Untameable (3:7, 8)

A single spark can set fire to a whole forest. A signboard in Pennsylvania showed a lighted match dropping into dry undergrowth. Above were the words “The Forest’s Prime Evil.” What it took centuries to grow, the match could burn down in a few hours. Life’s prime evil is the matchstick of the tongue. What has taken years to build is torn down in a few minutes by an unruly tongue. It sets all the affairs of life on fire, for it is set on fire of hell itself. (3:6) Wild beasts can be tamed,

but no one can tame the tongue. (3:7,8) Beware of the sins of the tongue. They are many—lying, swearing, gossiping and slandering.

A woman one day came to her minister in tears, and told of a story she had started, about a person which had made her move out of the community. Now she had found the tale was false. She would do anything to take back her words. “Go to the top of the steeple,” he said, “and take a feather pillow with you. Scatter the feathers far and wide and then come down and gather up every feather.” Of course he asked the impossible. Just so it is impossible for us to take back the words which we so carelessly send forth.

Remember, this same tongue can be used to testify for Christ and praise His holy name. It is the instrument that the Holy Spirit uses to magnify the Lord. (3:9,10) We ought not to praise God and curse men said of him, *He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.*

What hope is set before the oppressed laboring man of James’ day? (5:7,8) How much better than the strike or the boycott! If the rich are at fault today, are not the poor equally so, if God’s Word is the judge? The poor he advises to “be patient” (5:7). This is wise advice. But why be patient? The Lord will come and all wrongs will be righted and each will receive full measure for his labors.

Here again the tongue is brought in. It is amazing how many Christians, in ordinary conversation, take the name of the Lord in vain. (5:12) God says, *The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.* This is a serious indictment.

Prayer Schedule

Pray when in trouble.....	5:13
Pray when happy	5:13
Pray when sick.....	5:14,16
Pray when at fault.....	5:16

This epistle closes abruptly on a high plane. It is with the gracious act of a Christian who finds someone erring from the truth, and converts him. Although only God can save a soul, He uses human instruments to accomplish it. That one, *shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins* (5:20).

Let's Look At Galatians

Galatians Portrays Jesus Christ, Our Liberty

Chapter 10 from *A Look at the New Testament* by Henrietta Mears¹¹

This epistle has done more than any other book in the New Testament to free our Christian faith from Judaism (law), Roman Catholicism, and ritualism which has threatened the simple Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. So many people want to do something to be saved. The question of the Philippian jailor, *What must I do to be saved?* is the question multitudes ask. The answer is always the same. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved.* (Acts 16:31)

A religion without the cross is not Christ's religion. Christ did not come merely to blaze a trail through a tangled forest, or to set us an example of true living. He came to be a Saviour. A gospel without the print of the nails is not the Gospel of Christ.

This epistle of Galatians is the Christian's Declaration of Independence. Our battle hymn is "Christus Liberator." *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free Indeed.* Many imagine that restrictions destroy liberty. The opposite is true. On entering a free public park, the first thing we see is, "Don't walk on the grass," "No dogs allowed," "Don't pick the flowers." And yet this is a free park! We do not complain. These laws preserve the park. Were they not enacted it would be no more a park than any vacant lot in the neighborhood. Thus it is with society at large. If we should revolt against God and His order, civilization would lapse into barbarism. This is what is happening in the world today. Liberty is not freedom from law— that is recklessness. Liberty is freedom in law. Paul speaks of the liberty we have *in Christ*, (Gal. 2:4) for *where the Spirit is Lord, there is liberty.* (II Cor. 3:17, Rotherham.) This is the one great secret of liberty.

¹¹ Used by permission.

Introduction

(Read Galatians 1:1-11)

What was this Gospel Paul preached? Paul's Gospel shuts out all works. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ . . . for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* (Gal. 2:16) The difficulty about salvation is not that we should be good enough to be saved but that we should see that we are bad enough to need salvation. Christ can only save sinners.

Paul shows us the seriousness of our condition outside Christ. When a medical specialist says, "Your only hope is this or that," you know what a critical and serious condition you must be in. Here are the words of a great Gospel expert. Paul declares that our position is so serious that the Gospel of the grace of God is our only hope.

Paul Defends His Apostleship

(Read Galatians 1:12-2:21)

Paul did not consult with anyone as to what he should preach, but retired to the wilds of Arabia for three years and listened to God. He was taught by the Spirit. He had only been with Peter and James fifteen days after the three years in Arabia, so he couldn't have learned much from them.

Paul ended his great apology by a personal word of testimony which gives us a complete picture of the Christian life both positively and negatively. *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.* (Gal. 2:20) It is a paradox indeed.

This verse is true of every believer. We do not need to be crucified with Christ. We have been crucified with Him. He died in my place. Now we live not by law but by faith. Christ was our Sacrifice for sin, our sufficiency for the new life.

Paul Defends The Gospel

(Read Galatians 3:1-4:31)

"I've tried religion for the past five years and it hasn't worked. I gave it up," were the words of a young man when a preacher asked him to accept Christ. "Why, I tried religion for fifteen years and it did nothing for me. I gave it up, too," the preacher said. A pause followed. "Then why are you a minister?" the youth asked. "Then I tried Christ, and He fully met my needs. It is not religion I am recommending to you, but a living, loving Saviour."

People who do not believe in foreign missions say that the heathen have their own religion and why disturb them? Yes, they have so much religion that they are bowed down under the weight of the load, but no "good news" of the Gospel. It is the Gospel we are commanded to preach to every creature. A great bishop once said, "I wouldn't go across the street to give a pagan religion, but I would go around the world to offer him Christ."

Have you ever thought how strange the following statement is? What would you say if someone came up to you and said, "I've good news for you"? On inquiring what it is, he says, "So-and-so

is dead!" You would be horrified. Yet the apostles went about after Christ's death declaring it as good news. This is the only death to be proclaimed as glad tidings, the death on Calvary. Of all the countless deaths upon the earth, only one could be called gospel.

Religion is the best man can do. Christianity is the best God can do. See the results of man's best. *For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* (Gal. 2:16) How can a man be made just? *By the faith of Jesus Christ.* (2:16) Christianity is God's best.

It is hard for us to believe that the priceless gift of forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit are not gained by real effort, but God offers them to us free of charge. Why not take them? Why worry about our own unworthiness? Why not accept them with thankfulness?

Immediately foolish reason says, "If people don't have to do a thing for their salvation or for an atonement for their wrongdoings, then they will become shiftless and will not even try to do good." But we have found that when we have accepted the Gospel with a thankful heart then we get busy on good works. We want to please God. Those who think we ought to be saved by our works think faith is an easy thing, but we know from personal experience how hard it is to simply believe. Luther tells us that a Christian is not sinless, but God no longer chinks sin against him because of his faith in Christ.

Abraham's Example

Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. (Gal. 3:6) Abraham may have had a good standing with men for his upright life, but not with God. In God's sight, Abraham was a condemned sinner. You see righteousness had been given to Abraham on the ground of his faith, not his works. If faith without works was sufficient for Abraham, why should we turn from faith to law? *Abraham believed.* That is faith. Faith says to God, "I believe what you say."

The law cannot give righteousness but it does bring death upon all those who do not keep it. (3:10) Law demands perfect obedience. Many think that they should get something for keeping the law. Really they should get nothing. Men ought to keep the law and get nothing for doing so. You live in a city all your life and during your lifetime you keep the laws of that city. Will the city council present you with a gift because you have not broken the laws? Of course not. You ought to keep the law. But suppose after twenty years of law-keeping you then commit a crime. The authorities will then give you something—a jail sentence for breaking it. The Bible tells us that a curse (a sentence) is upon all who break the law, while a blessing is upon all those who live by faith.

The Law's Work

The law deals with what we are and do, while grace deals with what Christ is and does. What good is the law? We find the answer in Gal. 3:19, 20. Everything has its purpose. The law is given to restrain the wicked by giving a punishment for crime, just as civil laws keep men from murder and theft because of the fear of jail or the electric chair. These restraints do not make men righteous but restrain them from crime.

Law reveals sin but does not remove it. The law proves that every man is a sinner by nature and directs him to Christ! We so often think that we become sinners when we commit some sinful acts. But it is because we are already sinners that we commit the act. A man lies because he is a liar. He steals because he is a thief. He does not become a liar when he utters the lie. It only proves he is a liar.

The law, too, was given to drive us to Christ by showing us our need. The Gospel tells us that Christ is the only One who can meet the need. (Gal. 3:23-4:11) Paul says that the law was our schoolmaster to shock us into a sense of our need of Christ that we might be justified by faith in Him. (3:24) God's law is not like the cruel schoolmaster of former times, a regular tyrant. His law is not to torment us always. God's law is like the good schoolmaster who trains his children to find pleasure in doing the things they formerly detested.

The law really has a place in leading us into a Christian experience. Did you ever see anyone trying to sew without a needle? That person would make poor speed if she sewed with only a thread. This is like God's dealing with us. He puts the needle of the law first, for we sleep so soundly in our own sins that we need to be aroused by something sharp. Then when He has the needle of the law fairly in our hearts, He draws a lifelong thread of Gospel love and peace.

Paul tells us that all are not the children of God. We find that it is faith in Christ, not works of the law, nor the Fatherhood of God, nor the brotherhood of man that makes us children of God. *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* (Gal. 3:26) It is faith, not works, that puts us into the family of God.

Paul Desires The Gospel Be Applied

(Read Galatians 5; 6)

The Gospel of Grace guards against recklessness. (5:13-15) *Ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh.* (Gal. 5:13)

Many people are afraid to live under grace instead of law for fear it will lead men to "live as they please and do as they like." Grace will always lead a man to live as God pleases and like what He likes.

See how the flesh "acts up." Read this list of its seventeen evil works, 5:19-21. These are sins of the mind as well as the body. This is what we are by nature and these are the things that we do. Christ has given the Holy Spirit to make us free from these. *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.* Let the Holy Spirit rule your life.

A child begins to walk by someone holding on to his hand. We begin our walk by the Spirit holding on to us.

The fault of so many Christians is that after they are converted they do not cut loose from their old habits and worldly friends and unbelief. They are like the drunken man who went down to the wharf at night, got into his boat but forgot to untie it. He rowed till morning but when the sun arose he saw he was just where he had started because he had never loosed himself from the dock. That is what happens to many Christians who never grow. They never pull up anchor and the world has a strong hold on them. They work hard but never get anywhere.

In contrast to the work of the flesh we see the ninefold fruit of the Spirit. (5:22-23) If we abide in Christ (John 15), we shall be free to bear fruit for God. Are we showing this cluster of fruit in our lives?

NINE GRACES		
Toward God	Toward Others	Toward Myself
Love	Longsuffering	Faith
Joy	Gentleness	Meekness
Peace	Goodness	Temperance

"The harvest will not be according to how much we know, but how much we sow." We may have a large supply of seed in the barn of the mind but unless it is planted it will bear no harvest.

So many deceive themselves by saying it doesn't matter what I sow if I am sincere. Would that be good advice for a farmer? Self-life will never produce the fruit of the Spirit. *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* (6:7)

Paul bore in his body the *slave marks of Jesus*. I belong to another. The Greek word “stigmata” means a brand, a mark, sometimes burnt into the face, body or arm of a slave.

What were Paul’s stigmata? They were scars he had received by persecution and hardship endured for Christ. (II Cor. 6:4; 11:23)

The false teachers had come armed with letters of authority. I am without letters of recommendation. But behold my scars! They constitute my commission.

In Christ we are free to know the boundless life that is in Him. In Him we are “a new creature.” (Gal. 6:15) Paul cries, *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* (Gal. 6:14) Let the world go by! I have Christ, and having Him, I have all.

