

Bible Study for June 13-19, 2022

Read: Galatians 3:23-29

Notes:

For the next several weeks we are going to be looking at the book of Galatians, so some background material may be helpful.

How does one gain a right standing before God? Paul had come to Galatia with a message of the freedom found in Christ, a message that appealed to the Graeco-Roman world because it was not tied to a bunch of rules and regulations, which explains the speed that the church was able to expand. One quite simply, is justified through Christ and nothing else.

After Paul moved on to other places however, there were those who came from a Jewish background who questioned Paul's authority in general, and insisted that justification came through Christ plus circumcision. To Paul, including such rules and regulations into the matter of justification was just a way to control those who could be convinced of such things. So Paul lashed out furiously against both those who insisted on such rules, and those who blindly accepted them. In Paul's mind, extra rules and regulations just added slavery and bondage to the Christian faith and had nothing to do with the gospel message.

In today's lesson, we hear how for Paul, baptism is a powerful bond that unites people not only with God but with other believers. Those who call themselves children of God experience a transformation that removes prejudices of race, social class, or gender in favor of true unity in Christ.

Questions to Ponder:

Did you ever break the law? Why did you do it? What were the consequences?

What are the purposes of our human laws? What would it take for our society to give up all laws?

What do you see as the difference between a law and a covenant?

How does baptism make us all equal? How does being "clothed with Christ" (vs 27) eliminate major cultural barriers?

How might this passage help you explain gospel to someone who feels that keeping the 10 commandments (or just being "a good person") is all that is required for salvation?