

FREEDOM — IN THE — IN-BETWEEN

Introduction:

The gospel is not just the ABC of the Christian life; it is the A-Z of the Christian life. The book of Galatians uses the words *free* or *freedom* 11 times (ergo: *Freedom in the In-between*). This week's study will remind us of the great freedom the gospel brings and how quickly we can be tempted to stop resting in the gospel as our absolute means of salvation. Affirming and rebuking each other in the gospel gives life and freedom to the believer and glory to God.

This Week's Main Point:

**God's pleasure in you is not based on your performance for Him,
but through faith alone in Christ.**

Sometimes Galatians two is frustrating to study because we forget what Paul is trying to do. Remember, these 21 verses are less like narrative (Gospels or Acts) and are illustrations of the point Paul is making back in chapter one. Verse four introduces us to a group of "false brothers" who caused damage to the church. To help in your discussion, it will be important to understand what Paul means here by "false brothers." The group Paul calls "false brothers" in Jerusalem are insisting on the same things as the Judaizers who are troubling the Galatian church. These false brothers wanted to impose the law as the means for which one becomes justified before God - this was not a minor mistake. This additional requirement of the law changed salvation from being a work of God to a work accomplished by human beings. These false brothers were still in bondage to sin and the law and are described like prisoners coming to see what freedom in Christ is like. However, they did not want to view freedom so that they could pursue it; they wanted to bring others into their bondage. Paul says these brothers were not believers with errant understanding but that they never trusted Christ for salvation. Culturally they looked like upstanding people, but they had never become transformed followers of Jesus Christ.

In Galatians two, Paul continually recounts: we are justified by faith alone, not by anything we do. We (I) will be prone to make one of two errors in studying this chapter. First, I will want to speak really generally about the false brothers or Peter's errors. Second, I will forget that I do the exact same thing (as Peter) all the time. At this point in Peter's life he had been a disciple of Jesus for almost two decades, and he still needed to be reminded of the gospel.

It is so easy to get our security and significance from what we do. We see this in our vocations, relationships, and faith. Studying the book of Galatians will seem like examining an extended argument where we think we already know where we stand. But as we dive back in this week, remember that the case God is making through Paul is of utmost importance: We are only made right with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Sermon Response Question:

1) In Pastor J.D.'s sermon he explains the objective and subjective ways in which the gospel changes the lives of those who trust in Jesus for salvation. If you are a believer, what was the first subjective change you remember God making in your life after your conversion?

Bible Study Questions: (Read Galatians 2:1-21)

2) Why did Paul go to Jerusalem according to verses 1-10?

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- 3) What do these verses tell us about the result of Paul, Barnabas, and Titus' visit?

- 4) Read verses 11-14. What three applications can we make from Peter's error and Paul's rebuke?

- 5) What is the meaning of justification according to verses 15-21?

- 6) Paul says in verse 19 that when he was trying to save himself by obeying the law, he was not able to "live for God." Why can't we "live for God" and the law at the same time?

- 7) How does verse 20 apply to the life of a believer every day?

Application Questions:

- 8) Often, we insist other Christians act as we do (or even hold them to a higher law or standard than we hold ourselves). Share one "requirement" you are prone to add to the gospel for yourself or others when you think about being righteous before God.

- 9) Next week, in our Discipleship Group (D-Group) time, we will ask and answer questions about our walk as disciples of Jesus. Verse 12 points out that Peter's error did not come from wrong belief (v 7) but that he was afraid of what others would think. What is a fear or hesitation you have about intimacy and transparency with other believers?

Prayer:

- Have one or two people from your group pray that your whole group would be quick to affirm and rebuke one another in the gospel this year.