**Live free – Galatians wk 4 – Cash that Check**

**This letter is about living free! From self, sin, shame, & religion**

**Background: By the Apostle Paul to the Galatians - warriors**

**Judaizers followed Paul - teaching strict adherence to the law of Moses was required to be saved. Paul is furious.**

**The Gospel is simply - Jesus lived, was crucified, buried and rose again to rescue from our sin. That alone is the gospel that saves.**

**Jesus + Nothing = Everything / Jesus + Anything = Nothing**

**Today Chap 3 of this very urgent handwritten letter is most complex.**

**Paul gets salty with the Galatians in the first verse.**

**Imagine you are a consultant hired to review a bankruptcy in a company. As you address the spending problem, you realize a bigger problem. The CEO is corrupt & incompetent. There is a debt problem and a power problem. To fix this, both have to be removed. The challenge of Gal 3.**

* **The gospel is more than just providing a remedy to a sin problem**
* **The gospel also provides a remedy to sins power**

**The gospel is more than a clean slate it is a release from sin’s chains. Some acknowledge salvation, but then decide growing in Christ is up to themselves – then Struggle to find peace or satisfaction in Jesus.**

**Because believers don’t understand this, many struggle to live out the power of God in their relationships and spiritual life.**

**The gospel is mercy and forgiveness – and – grace and power!**

**The cross breaks our sin problem and sins power with a greater power**

**Paul brings this home in Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.**

**The life I life now – is a result of what Jesus is doing in me!**

**I walk and live with the faith that God is doing it - in me!**

**With that let’s jump into - Galatians 3:1 You foolish Galatians! (JB Phillips – You dear idiots! Salty Paul. Read in church, “hey we have a letter from Paul…”) Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. (You understood so clearly - it was as if you could see Jesus on the Cross on a billboard! But now - it’s as if a spell has been cast over you) 2 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? (The first mention of the HS - becomes primary focus next 4 chap.)**

**\*\* The question – How did you receive the Holy Spirt?**

**Something you did, ate, experienced, a ritual, formula, a prize from works - or by faith in the gospel of Christ? At salvation.**

**Gal 3:3 Are you so foolish? (JBP - Surely you can’t be so idiotic. Paul is not questioning their intelligence; he is addressing their lack of spiritual discernment.) After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? (What you received by faith – you are trying finish by the flesh - by keeping religious rules put on you by others) 4 Have you experienced so much in vain - if it really was in vain? (was your persecution for Jesus in vain) 5 So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?**

**3 people: the wise (Paul), evil (false teachers), foolish (the Gal.)**

**If you received salvation and filled w/ the Holy Spirit by faith - why would you think that growing with God is by the flesh (your efforts)??**

**“Thanks God (Training wheels off) I got this now!” God saved and empowered you by faith. Why would you expect to grow by pulling yourself up w/ good works & efforts.**

**Those false teachers were using the OT on those mercenaries – saying now do this… Paul says let show you something… Abraham’s Illus.**

**Gal 3:6 Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” (Gen 15:6) 7 Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. (more in a couple weeks) 8 Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles (the world) by faith and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” (Gen 22:18) 9 So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.**

**In Genesis 15, God makes a promise to Abraham that from him would come a great nation that would provide forgiveness and salvation for the world. But problem - Abe great in age – old!**

**2 things happened when Abe trusted God’s Word (Quoted 4X in NT)**

**1. When Abe believed God - He was credited as righteous (explain)**

**His faith was not his righteousness – righteousness was the result**

**Writing a check – That paper is not the money it is an official legal document that is a promise of payment. It is credit. That paper is used to collect a debt. The paper covers the debt.**

**Abraham wrote a check called faith. Jesus ultimately paid for it on the cross - and now by our faith it is credited to our spiritual account also.**

 **Due to false teaching they were asking, what about circumcision?**

 **\*Circumcision came 14 yrs later – Abe already declared righteous**

 **What about the law of Moses? They say we must do it all.**

 **\*Moses law came 500 yrs later – Abe already declared righteous**

**Paul goes back to Abe - day 1. Abe didn’t close the deal with his efforts. \*It is not circumcision – it is not the Law of Moses – it is faith.**

**2. When Abe believed God – His old body was able to produce fruit**

**(of a child) \*\* His old sterile body & his old sterile wife – had a baby.**

**In the same way, when we believe in Jesus we are credited as righteous and given the power to produce fruit & spiritual life.**

**After he is called righteous - something amazing and strange followed:**

**Right after making this promise to Abram (Genesis 15) God instructs Abraham to get a cow, a goat, ram, dove and pigeon and cut them in two and arrange the halves opposite of each other (v.10). Paint the picture - ????**

**Ancient covenant signing. Each sacrificed their best, passed between the halves, blood on robes said, “let this be done to me if I fail to uphold my end of the covenant.” Sealed w/ blood.**

**Genesis 15 - however, when it was time to pass through the divided animals, God caused a deep sleep to fall on Abram, and God passed through alone.**

**God was saying, “I’ll be responsible to uphold your side, and my side.” He was showing that this did not rely on Abraham in any way, but entirely on God. God would accomplish it all.**

**And at 89 he has a son that would bring Jesus to the world!**

**Paul is asking – what part of this was accomplished by Abe other than his faith? What did he do? It was all God. All Abe did was trust in what God said – and walk in it.**

**The error of Galatians and many Christians is that what starts with faith in the gospel, became faith in ourselves to change.**

**Jesus + is everywhere**

**Liturgical churches: ceremonies, sacraments, baptism.**

**Mainstream churches: rules, dress, ties, haircuts – external conformity**

**Progressive churches: feed the poor, justice work, adopt agendas**

**Mega churches: principles / practical steps driven, 5 steps, 6 ways, etc**

**None of these alone are bad, they are just not the gospel. But that is what many turn the gospel into or trade the gospel for.**

**It is easier to comprehend, communicate, comforts ourselves.**

**Talking about the Law of Moses (OT commands) – Gal 3:10 For all who rely on the works of the law (for salvation) are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” (Det 27:26 – we have to be perfect or we are cursed) 11 Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.” (Hab 2:4 – quoted 4X) 12 The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.” (Lev 18:5 - I love how he uses God’s word to teach them)**

**I thought the OT law is God’s Word and good, seems like Paul is dissing the OT, but he is not.**

**Matthew 22- Jesus said all the Law and the Prophets are summed up with this -**

**37 “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Paul says it in Gal 5:14)**

**Jesus summed up the entire law in 2 verses - Love the Lord more than anything and loves others. That is the entire law summed up.**

**That is amazing, but we must remember that is not the gospel.**

**When I see that passage I am reminded, I am horrible at doing that well and realize I have a problem - I do not love God like I should, and I don’t tread others like I should = that is called sin.**

**-The law - says we fail at loving God and others = bringing judgment.**

 **The gospel - says God still loves you and thru Jesus = brings mercy.**

**-The law says – you did your best but failed.**

 **The gospel says – God sends his best (Jesus) and you win!**

**The law proves - we are not good at being righteous**

**The gospel proves - God does for you what you can’t do for yourself. God himself (JC) walks thru the sacrifice and says - I got U!**

**This passage starts the protestant reform. M. Luther: the law says “do” but it’s never done! The gospel says “believe” for it’s already done.**

**Next week the purpose of the OT law. Why it is called a curse so much in the NT. \*\* But first Paul is talking about a power that cannot be accessed through the following law.**

**The OT law is like railroad tracks that lay out the way you should go but is alone powerless to move the freight along the tracks. Only the engine of the HS has the power to do that.**

* **When you are struggling in your marriage – you don’t need 5 tips to get along, you need the power of gospel - the HS**
* **When you are struggling with sin, you don’t need 3 steps to overcoming tempt, you need the power of the Gospel – the HS**

**Romans 8:11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you.**

**You have in you if you are follower of Jesus – all the power you need!**

**God’s Word, prayer, church – helps us to understand this.**

**Next part - Gal 3:13 Christ redeemed (bought / ransomed / payment / set free) us (Christ did it you didn’t) from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, (bore the curse – paid for with his blood) for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” (Deut 21:23 tree, wood – your hanging corpse = Jesus cross - long before Rome invented crucifixion) 14 He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham (righteousness) might come to the Gentiles (nations of the world) through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. (Salvation and the residence of God in us)**

**Heavy concepts in this section: Salvation – made right with God / Redemption (bought / ransomed) / Justification – declared not guilty / Holy Spirit regeneration – new birth**

**Four thoughts about this passage – from Salty Paul**

**1. Don’t be fooled (Don’t be an idiot) – people can lead you astray**

**It is wonderful to have a soft, tender heart before God. But some people have softer heads than hearts.**

**Some are too accommodating to wrong, unbiblical ideas, and don’t think things through to see if they really are true or not according to the Bible. This is a sign of spiritual immaturity. Just like a baby who will stick anything into its mouth…**

**2. We are saved, filled with the Spirit, and made righteous all once by faith - Don’t be led astray**

**The Holy Spirit is given at your salvation – not later. (Rom 8:9)**

**You are declared holy and righteous – not later.**

**You are bought and owned by Jesus – not later.**

**3. The cross of Jesus is enough - Don’t be led astray**

**Gal 3:13 Christ *(alone)* redeemed us from the curse- by becoming a curse for us**

**The Galatians like a billboard, saw him on the cross. The torture, pain, abuse, weight of sin - embraced. Why???? – for us**

**You can’t help God in your salvation – Like the guy who saw a man flapping his arms on a plane. What are you doing? I’m Helping!!**

**Thinking you can add to your salvation is like flapping your arms on a flight thinking you’re helping the plane. You’re not helping and your killing yourself trying. Stop, relax / enjoy the flight - grace of God.**

**It is through grace alone – by faith alone – in Christ alone**

**\*\* True salvation leads to works - Paul talks about this later…**

**4. You can know you are right with God, right now - Don’t be led astray**

**You do not have to go your whole life wondering (like cults & religions)**

**1 John 5:13 - I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.**

**I had to unlock the door this morning – if I showed up without the key, I am locked out. But I had the key. Faith is the key to the salvation in Christ. Without it – you’re locked out.**

**By faith, right now int eh gospel of Jesus – you can be right with God**

**Over and over (10X - 14 vs) thru Christ in faith, by faith you are made right!**

**It is finished and credited by to you by faith. (cash that check!)**

**A Check has been written in blood - here take it – it is good!**

**Next week the purpose of the OT law. What is it for if it cannot save us – why would God give it?**