

v. 7-9

You were running well

- It is evident that the Galatians were following the true Gospel at one point but now had deviated from it.
- They had been deceived into going back to the old law in order to be saved.
- The Judaizers came in and were sowing seeds of doubt regarding faith in Christ alone as the sole prerequisite for salvation.
- Paul makes it clear that this new “gospel” was not from the Lord.

Leaven

- Leaven, also known as yeast, is used to make bread.
- Its purpose is to make it rise.
- Sin and leaven are compared to each other throughout the Bible.
- Leaven permeates the entire loaf of bread in order to make it rise. Sin permeates the entire being and corrupts it totally.
- Even a little bit of leaven infects the entire loaf.
- Paul is saying that even the slightest amount of sin or false teaching will undo the whole thing if not dealt with.

v. 8-12

No other view

- Galatians 1:6-9
- As we have already seen in the first chapter, there is no other Gospel.
- Anyone that preached a different gospel was to be accursed.
- Paul tells them that whoever is troubling them will bear the penalty. What penalty? This would be judgment from God.

The offense of the cross

- The cross would have been a very offensive image.
- Crucifixion on a cross was a form of capital punishment that was invented by the Persians but perfected by the Romans.
- It would be akin to the more modern day electric chair or the lethal injection.
- The cross of Jesus is what purchased the salvation for all of His people and that message in and of itself was offensive to the people of that day. We look to it as a symbol of our eternal hope but they looked at it with much horror and contempt especially to Jews who could not stomach the idea that the Messiah was hanged on a tree and cursed by God.
- It's unclear why Paul brought this to the forefront of his argument against circumcision.

Emasculation

- These are very strong words from Paul.
- Jesus used similarly intense vocabulary when dealing with the religious crowds.
- The Greek word used here is *Apokopto*. This literally means to cut off.
- I think we can all imagine what Paul is referring to in this situation.

v. 13-18

Called to freedom

- The people of God have been called to freedom through Christ.
- Freedom from what? Freedom from sin. Freedom from the law. Freedom from a heavy, impossible yoke.
- We are told here that we are not to use our freedom in order to sin. That is the same as throwing something back into God's face. He has given us this tremendous gift and we sully it by using it for our own sinful desires.

Love your neighbor as yourself

- Paul tells us that the whole law is summarized in one phrase: you shall love your neighbor as yourself.
- What is love? We often think of emotion when we think of love. We think of romantic movies in which the brave, handsome young man comes in and sweeps the beautiful young lady off her feet and they live happily ever after. That's not love.
- Love is putting someone else's needs above your own.
- This does not mean that we affirm everyone.
- In order to be loving, sometimes, we must do the uncomfortable thing and step in to warn someone of their misgivings. We affirm them where they are right and correct them where they are wrong.
- We are not to mistreat others, especially those within the household of faith in Christ.

Walk by the Spirit

- Paul instructs the Galatian church to walk in the Spirit.
- This means NOT walking in the flesh.
- Romans 8:13
- We are called to mortify, or put to death, the flesh. This is not our physical bodies but those desires that most correspond with sinful humanity.
- As we grow closer to the Holy Spirit we ourselves will be changed. We will no longer desire the things of the flesh but instead will desire the things that God desires.
- We look to those who have been walking with God longer than we have and there should be a noticeable difference between our sanctification and their sanctification.
- Sanctification: the action or process of being freed from sin or purified.

Small Group Questions

- 1) It is evident that the Galatians used to “get it”. What group of people came in and deceived them and to what doctrine did they deceive them over?
 - The group was the Judaizers and the doctrine was circumcision. Judaizers were a group of Jews who believed that salvation came through Christ as well as obedience to the old law.

- 2) What did Paul use as an example of something that corrupts? It’s used to make bread.
 - Leaven or yeast. He said that even a little bit of it corrupts the entire loaf. This is representative of sin and false doctrine that was permeating the Galatians churches.

- 3) What does Paul say about a different gospel?
 - He says that there is no other gospel. The one that they preached to them was the true Gospel and anyone else that came up with something different was to be accursed.

- 4) What phrase does Paul say sums up the whole law?
 - “Love your neighbor as yourself”. What does this look like? (Third page, First section)

- 5) Paul tells us to walk in the Spirit and not the flesh. What does that mean?
 - It means that we are called to mortify, or put to death, the flesh. This is not our physical bodies but those desires that most correspond with sinful humanity. As we grow closer to the Holy Spirit we ourselves will be changed. We will no longer desire the things of the flesh but instead will desire the things that God desires