

**An Invitation and Calling:
Learning to Live in the Grace of Christ
September 16 – November 11 2012
Study Helps: Focus of Series**

Many are confused about what it means to be a Christian. Even those who call themselves followers of Jesus can live a different gospel than one that flows out of the grace of Christ. In this nine-week series, we will consider Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia with the focus on "learning to live in the grace of Christ." Paul calls this focus the calling of the Christian; he writes about "the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ" (Galatians 1:6).

We will shape each week of this series as both an invitation and a calling. For the many at ICB that are new to the Christian faith, we will invite them to consider what Paul calls a life that "counts;" (5:6, 615) such a life is very different from the "confusion" (1:7) and "slavery" (4:8) many live, often without realizing it. For those actively following Jesus, this series will help them assess whether they are living in the grace of Christ or if they have, even without knowing it, deserted the gospel for "a different gospel - - which is really no gospel at all."

Each week of the series, we will have a "Take Away Question" for people to consider. This will hopefully help all to assess their own lives based on this invitation and calling.

The nine weeks of the series will flow as follows:

- Week One (Sept 16), Galatians 1:1-10 - An Invitation and Calling: Learning to Live in the Grace of Christ

Take Away Question: When I look at my present life, does it reflect that I have accepted the invitation and calling to "live it in the grace of Christ?"
- Week Two (Sept 23), Galatians 1:11-24 & Acts 26 – A Personal Testimony of Grace

Take Away Question: As I consider Paul's testimony of the grace of Christ, does my own life bear witness to this grace of Christ?
- Week Three (Sept 30), Galatians 2:1-21 – Evidence of Christ-filled Grace in the New Community (i.e. Church)

Take Away Question: When I look at my relationships, do they reflect the grace of Christ?
- Week Four (Oct 7), Galatians 3:1-29 – Understanding How Christ Unlocked Grace

Take Away Question: Do I understand why I could not unlock God's grace myself but needed Jesus to do so?
- Week Five (Oct 14), Galatians 4:1-31 – By the Grace of Christ, I Can Live as an Adopted Child of God

Take Away Question: Do I still live as a slave to "weak and miserable forces" or as an adopted, loved child of God through Christ?
- Week Six (Oct 21), Galatians 5:1-15 – Living in the Freedom of the Grace of Christ

Take Away Question: What are ways the Holy Spirit is making me attentive to the freedom possible when living in the grace of Christ?
- Week Seven (Oct 28), Galatians 5:16-26 – The Grace of Christ to Keep in Step with the Holy Spirit

Take Away Question: What are some of the evidences in me that the Holy Spirit is bearing the fruit of the grace of Christ in my life?

- Week Eight (Nov 4), Galatians 6:1-10 – Helping One Another Sow to Please the Holy Spirit
Take Away Question: Do the ways I help others reflect that I too live by the Spirit in the grace of Christ?
- Week Nine (Nov 11), Galatians 6:11 – 18 – Living What Counts: The New Creation through the Cross of Christ
Take Away Question: In light of the understanding God has brought me through this series and from Galatians 6:11-18, do I dare live what counts “in the grace of Christ?”

For Further Study

1. During this series, **read and reread Galatians**. Paul’s argument to these believers can seem complicated at first. However, as you read and reflect on the whole of the letter with the help of the Holy Spirit, the main points of Paul’s letter will become clear.
2. Possibly **print off the manuscript** (see attached) of Galatians so you can “mark up” the manuscript as you read it with your own observations, questions, and connections. Especially note repetition of words and phrases as well as the development of Paul’s argument from beginning to end.
3. You may find it helpful to **look at a map of the region** (<http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/corinthians/journeys.stm>) as well as **read a timetable of Paul’s life** (<http://gbcwoodstock.com/img/Life%20of%20Paul.jpg>). You will find it helpful to refer to these throughout your reading.
4. Please consider **reflecting on the “Take Away Question”** each week. This will help you apply what you are learning more effectively.

* Prepared by Tim Berends