

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

**“An Introduction and Calling”
Study Helps: Week One of Nine
Galatians 1:1-10, Sept 16 2012**

Focus for Week One

In Galatians 1:1-10, Paul introduces with concern his desire that those who call themselves Christians would “live in the grace of Christ.” From his words, it is clear that Christians can become “confused” about this; they can even find themselves “quickly deserting” this gospel for something very different. If Christians can lose their way, how much more those who do not know Christ? As we began this nine week series, all who gather at ICB, whether followers of Jesus or new to the Christian faith, are invited and called to “learn to live in the grace of Christ.”

Summary of “Time of Reflection” and Message

1. **Time of Reflection:** Paul makes it clear in Galatians what “living in the grace of Christ” looks like.
 - Priority Calling: “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting **the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ** and are turning to a different gospel — which is really no gospel at all” (Galatians 1:6-7)
 - Serious Renovation: “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.**” (Galatians 2:20)
 - Complete Transformation: “So **in Christ Jesus you are all children of God** through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:26-28)
 - Certain Belonging: “But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might **receive adoption to sonship**. Because you are his sons, **God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts**, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba*, Father.” So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, **God has made you also an heir.**” (Galatians 4:4-7)
 - Selfless Freedom: “You, my brothers and sisters, **were called to be free**. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.” (Galatians 5:13)
 - Spirit-led Living: “Those who **belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh** with its passions and desires. **Since we live by the Spirit**, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.” (Galatians 5:24-26)

2. **Summary of Message:** Four observations about this invitation and calling to “live in the grace of Christ” from Galatians 1:1-10
- **Observation One:** The invitation and calling required “costly preparation” by God
 - a. Grace and peace offered by God (1:3)
 - b. God planned this “according to his will” (1:4)
 - c. Jesus gave his life for our sins (1:4)
 - d. God the Father raised Jesus from the dead (1:1)
 - **Observation Two:** Sin is widespread, including in us, and requires rescue by Jesus
 - a. Evil widespread: “present evil age” (1:4)
 - b. Evil a war within us (see 5:16-21)
 - c. Jesus died for our sin to rescue us from this evil age (1:4)
 - **Observation Three:** God uses his servants to share this grace of Christ
 - a. Paul (1:1, 1:10) and others (1:2, 9)
 - b. Look at how servants speak: “astonished” (1:6), warnings (1:8-9), encouragements (1:3-5)
 - **Observation Four:** There are ALWAYS many dangers to desert this grace
 - a. Danger to desert God who called you into grace (1:6)
 - b. Danger of people “throwing you into confusion” (1:7)
 - c. Danger of some people “perverting” (i.e. distorting, changing, misrepresenting) the gospel of Christ (1:7)
 - d. Danger of changing gospel to please people (1:10)
 - e. Note effect: under God’s curse (repeated 2x – 1:8-9)

For Further Study

1. Read Galatians and circle all the times the word “grace” is mentioned and the phrases in which the word is found. From this initial reading, what do you learn about grace?
2. Read Acts 12:25 – 14 to learn about the communities of believers (i.e. churches) to whom Paul is writing.
3. As you look at the summary above, reread Galatians 1:1-10. Note on your manuscript the observations shared and note additional observations about this invitation and calling to live in the grace of Christ you see.
4. **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?”