



A FAITH THAT SETS YOU FREE

The Liberating Message of the Book of Galatians

Sermon Formation Guide

Zechariah 12:8-10; 13:1
Psalm 63:1-8
Galatians 3:1-14, 23-29
Luke 9:18-24

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Week 3 of 5

“2 Ways People Seek the Blessings of God”
Too bad only one works out

Church of the Resurrection, Wheaton

Use these questions in your small group, prayer cell, or personal devotion time to go deeper into the Word and a life of Worship and Mission.



Main Bible Passage

Read Galatians 3:1-14, 23-29

Main Idea

The Christians in Galatia wanted the blessings of God, as we all do, and they sought those in two ways: first, The Believe Method, then they switched to the Achieve Method.

God doesn't do what we expect, the Achieve Method. Instead, he follows the Believe method: he gives his Spirit not because "you observe the law" but simply because you "believe what you heard" (Gal. 3:5), that "the Lord Jesus Christ ... gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age" (Gal. 1:3-4).

Not only do we start out in the Christian life by simple, raw belief, but we continue in the Christian life by simple, raw belief. That's how we receive the Spirit. That's how we are blessed.

If you follow the Achieve Method, "trying to attain your goal by human effort" (Gal. 1:3), you don't end up with a blessing, you end up with a curse (Gal. 3:10). You are not justified before God (Gal. 3:11), and all your sufferings are for nothing (Gal. 3:4).

The Achieve Method always destroys relationships. The Believe Method always creates relationships.

To receive, just believe.

Engage

On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 10 (completely), how much do I believe that God pours out his blessings, his promises, and his Spirit just because I believe in Christ, and even though I don't deserve Him? (Has your answer moved over time? If so, what moved it?)

In my Christian life, where do I spend more of my focus: on what I do or on what God has already done? How come?

For Your Family

If we are made right with God only by faith, what place do good or moral actions have in our lives? Why bother with them at all? (For help, you might see Gal. 5:22—6:10.)

A Life of Worship and Mission

Worship: What could I offer to God this week as a way of thanking Him for his kindness to me? A prayer? A contribution to someone in need? An act of service?

Mission: Think about a person you know who isn't a believer in Christ. Pray for that person, by name, that he or she will come to believe.

Verse to Remember

“... by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.” (Galatians 3:14)

Resources

In *A Cup of Coffee at the Soul Café*, Leonard Sweet tells the story of the making of a film by two Londoners. In 1971 they began to film street people. The film captured the daily rituals of the homeless—their trials and joys. Some were drunk, others mentally disturbed. Some were articulate and others unintelligible. One of England's leading composers, Gavin Bryars, agreed to help with the audio aspects of the film. During his work, he became aware of a constant undercurrent of sound that appeared whenever one certain homeless man was filmed. At first, the sound seemed like muttered gibberish. But after removing the background noise, Bryars discovered the old man was singing.

Bryars learned that this beggar did not drink or socialize with others. The old man was alone, filthy, homeless, but he also had a sunny demeanor. What distinguished him from the others was his quiet singing. He would for hours sing the same thing over and over. The man's weak voice was untrained, but it never wavered from pitch. He repeated the simple phrases of the song over and over.

One day at the office the composer looped together the first 13 bars of the homeless man's song, preparing to add orchestration to the piece. He left the loop running while he went downstairs for a cup of coffee. When he returned, he found his fellow workers listening in subdued silence, and a few were even weeping. The old man's quiet, trembling voice had leaked from the recording room and transformed the office floor. Here is what he sang:

Jesus' blood never failed me yet
Never failed me yet
Jesus' blood never failed me yet
There's one thing I know
For he loves me so.

Though not a Christian, Bryars created and produced an accompaniment to this homeless person's song of trust in Jesus. The result was a CD entitled *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet*. The old man died before he heard it.

Leonard Sweet, A Cup of Coffee at the Soul Café (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), pp. 161-163; reprinted from www.PreachingToday.com



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