

**Sermon, March 4, 2012**  
**“Christ in You” Galatians 2:15-21**  
**Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy**

**The 27 Books of the New Testament**

- Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
- Early Church: Book of Acts
- 13 Letters of Paul: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, **Galatians**, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
- 8 General Letters: Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude
- Prophecy: Revelations

**Overview of Galatians:**<sup>1</sup>

- The letter was addressed to the churches of Galatia in the region of Turkey.
- Written after the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), around 49AD.
- The only letter from Paul addressed to multiple churches (1:2).
- Paul founded churches in southern Galatian cities Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (Acts 13:14–14:23).

**General Outline of Galatians:**<sup>2</sup>

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| I.    | Greetings and Introduction (1:1–9)                             |
| II.   | Authentication of the Apostle of Liberty and Faith (1:10-2:21) |
| III.  | Justification of the Doctrine of Liberty and Faith (3:1-4:31)  |
| IV.   | Practice of the Life of Liberty and Faith (5:1-6:10)           |
| VIII. | Conclusion (6:11-18)   |

**Major Themes of Galatians:**<sup>3</sup>

- themes of Galatians are strikingly similar to those of Romans, e.g.,
  - the inability of the law to justify (2:16; cf. Rom. 3:20);
  - the believer’s deadness to the law (2:19; cf. Rom. 7:4);
  - the believer’s crucifixion with Christ (2:20; cf. Rom. 6:6);
  - Abraham’s justification by faith (3:6; cf. Rom. 4:3);
  - that believers are Abraham’s spiritual children (3:7; cf. Rom. 4:10, 11) and therefore blessed (3:9; cf. Rom. 4:23, 24);
  - that the law brings not salvation but God’s wrath (3:10; cf. Rom. 4:15);
  - that the just shall live by faith (3:11; cf. Rom. 1:17);
  - the universality of sin (3:22; cf. Rom. 11:32);
  - that believers are spiritually baptized into Christ (3:27; cf. Rom. 6:3);
  - believers’ adoption as God’s spiritual children (4:5–7; cf. Rom. 8:14–17);
  - that love fulfills the law (5:14; cf. Rom. 13:8–10);
  - the importance of walking in the Spirit (5:16; cf. Rom. 8:4);
  - the warfare of the flesh against the Spirit (5:17; cf. Rom. 7:23, 25);
  - and the importance of believers bearing one another’s burdens (6:2; cf. Rom. 15:1).
- Paul wrote Galatians to counter judaizing false teachers who were undermining the central NT doctrine of justification by faith. Ignoring the express decree of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:23–29), they spread their dangerous teaching that Gentiles must first become Jewish proselytes and submit to all the Mosaic law before they could become Christians (see 1:7; 4:17, 21; 5:2–12; 6:12, 13).
- Shocked by the Galatians’ openness to that damning heresy (cf. 1:6), Paul wrote this letter to defend justification by faith, and warn these churches of the dire consequences of abandoning that essential doctrine.

**The letter to the Galatian churches overall message is that religiosity or churchianity does not save; only faith in the risen Lord brings about our salvation and unites us with Jesus Christ.**

---

<sup>1</sup>MacArthur, John Jr: *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, S. Gal

<sup>2</sup>New American Standard Bible, Compact Reference Edition, 2000.

<sup>3</sup>MacArthur, John Jr: *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, S. 2 Co 1:1

**Sermon, March 4, 2012**  
**“Christ in You” Galatians 2:15-21**  
**Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy**

**1. Our reading starts out with two peoples united yet stumbling through what this unity means Gal 2:15-16**

- Distinction of the two peoples... Law Abiders and Pagans.
- Justified... **justified**. This basic forensic/legal Greek word describes a judge declaring an accused person not guilty and therefore innocent before the law.
- How is our natural state of sinfulness made right? By religiosity/churchianity or faith?
- Religiosity... praying certain rote prayers, paying your hourly dues at a Sunday worship service, parable of the righteous man... **Luke 18:11-14**
- Religiosity does the right things out of a wrong heart.
- Faith humbles the believer in God's grace, which is freely given and freely lived... doing the right things with a right heart.

**2. Since you believe in Jesus, the truth has set you free, you have liberty... to love God and others Gal 2:17-18**

- Because you believe in Jesus your sins have been forgiven and since you will sin again, you cannot say that Christ is a servant of sin, allows you to freely sin (sin is bondage), no... you have the freedom to confess that sin and continue in your relationship with Jesus.
- Obedience to the law is not forsaken, but encouraged as the rule for holiness, freedom and life.
- You are free to exercise your liberty in abiding love for God and love for others in loving obedience to Christ's example.
- So we don't go back to the bondage of the Law as though that is what will save us.
- Instead we move forward in a loving relationship with God.

**3. Christian life is a life of freedom from the Law to a relationship with God, unity with Christ Gal 2:19-20**

- A Christian has died in Christ (who paid the penalty for his sins in full by His sacrifice on the cross) and rises to “new life” in Him—justice has been satisfied and he is forever free from any further penalty.
- When a person trusts in Christ for salvation, he spiritually participates with the Lord in His crucifixion and His victory over sin and death.
- **no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me**. The believer's old self is dead, having been crucified with Christ.
- The believer's new man, new creation, has the privilege of the indwelling Spirit of Christ (Holy Spirit) empowering him and living through him.
- **gave Himself for me**. The manifestation of Christ's love for the believer through His sacrificial death on the cross (John 10:17, 18; Rom. 5:6–8; Eph. 5:25–30).
- **Jesus freely was obedient to the Father out of love, even unto death on the cross**. He is the example we are to follow in our freedom from the bondage of religiosity

**Conclusion:**

**Galatians 2:21** <sup>21</sup> *I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.*

- Do not nullify God's grace by putting your faith in the works you do, as if they have the power to save.
- Your authentic faith in Jesus Christ produces a new creation.
- You are free from the bondage of the law, from the bondage of religiosity, of churchianity.
- When you come to Christ in faith you are in union with Christ!
- You are saved... You are justified... You are empowered... You are free to live as a true human being made in the image of God, in loving obedience, trust and faith in Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- **John 8:31-36** <sup>31</sup> Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; <sup>32</sup> and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." ...<sup>36</sup> "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.