

# BOOK OF GALATIANS

## *“Not Justified by Works”*

Scripture Reading: GALATIANS 2:15-21

- ) **SLIDES 1-6.** Bible Jeopardy!
- ) **SLIDES 7-9.** Read today’s Scripture text. Today I want you to keep your Bibles open to this text. I want to point out something rather interesting and worthy of consideration.
- ) **SLIDE 10.** We continue in our expository study of the Book of GALATIANS. This is message #14. I have titled today’s message *“Not Justified by Works.”* (v15)
- ) **SLIDE 11.** I said I wanted to point out something interesting about today’s text. Look at verse 15. In your Bible, does verse 15 begin with a quote mark? I’ll tell you why this is important in a minute.
- ) The original Greek text used in the writing of the NT very rarely if at all used punctuation marks. Things like commas, periods, exclamation points, and quote marks, etc. were not used in the original text. They were added by the interpreters. Explain **11.**
- ) The question is: was this a continuation of Paul’s rebuke of Peter, or was it a different thought process? (v17 or v21)
- ) Does this make a difference? I don’t believe it does. But I do, however, have a preference. I believe verses 15 through 21 are a continuation of Paul’s rebuke of Peter. Why? Because starting with GALATIANS 3:1, Paul turns his attention and directs his words to his Galatian audience.
- ) But in the end, whether Paul is explaining these truths to Peter or just to the Galatians, he is ultimately explaining these truths to us. Amen? Yes, it makes for interesting conversation, but it is not a hill to die on.

- ) **SLIDE 12.** But what is a hill to die on is what Paul is explaining in this text. And today and over the next few weeks I want to explain what Paul is saying here in relation to 1) how critical it was at that time, 2) how critical it was in 1517 the start of the Protestant Reformation, 3) how critical it is today. And what he is explaining here is the gospel. Get it wrong, and you don't get saved. Spend time in the Protestant Reformation.
- ) **SLIDE 13.** Before I get into speaking about "*works*" this morning, I want to cover a term Paul uses 4x in our text. And that is the word "*justified.*" What does this mean and why is it so important?
- ) **SLIDE 14.** Webster definition.
- ) In the Spiritual sense, our relationship with God is broken because of our sin. To be declared justified by God means we are now judged as righteous and put back in a right relationship with God. How? That justification is accomplished through faith in Jesus Christ. More on that in the coming weeks.
- ) So, that's the goal. To restore our broken relationship with the Father. That is salvation—to be forgiven and saved from our sins. We need to be justified before God. We need to be made right before God. How does that happen? This morning I will be focusing on the negative and how that doesn't happen.
- ) The way mankind thinks today is not a whole lot different than how mankind has always thought. If we want this (hand), we must do some kind of work to earn that this. To have this (hand) requires me to do something to get this—to earn this.
- ) Story time. Tell story of stereo in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and my paper route. I wanted to have a nice stereo. But to get it, I had to work for it. There was something I had to do. A stereo would not just show up at my house. I understood a works mentality. To get this (hand) I had to do this (work). Remember this story.

- ) When you get to the time of Jesus, salvation (eternal life) was no different. If you wanted it, there was something you needed to do to get it. It was a works mentality.
- ) **SLIDE 15.** A perfect example of that is that of the rich young ruler from MARK 10. Read. This man, who we know as the rich young ruler, understood eternal life as something that needed to be earned—something he needed to do.
- ) **SLIDE 16.** Jesus asks him how well he has kept the commandments. Read. This is where Jesus probably should have said, “*Liar, liar, pants on fire*” but He didn’t. He knew this young man’s heart was all about working toward eternal life—doing something to earn it.
- ) **SLIDE 17.** So, Jesus gives him the ultimate “*work*” to do. Read. If you want to work for your salvation, then do this work.
- ) **SLIDE 18.** And we conclude that this young man went away sad. Why? Because there was a “*work*” he was not about to do. No way would he be selling his possessions. I guess eternal life was not that important to this man.
- ) But I know and you know, and Jesus knew that selling our possessions and giving the proceeds to the poor is not a requirement for eternal life. The young man needed to realize that salvation was not something to be achieved by works.
- ) **SLIDE 19.** And that is exactly what Paul is telling Peter. In other words, he is telling Peter: “*Yes, Peter, we are Jews and not Gentiles (v15). But even though we Jews have the Law, we were never saved by the works of the Law. And these Gentiles will never be saved by the works of the Law either.*”
- ) **SLIDE 20.** The foundational truth of plan of salvation for OT Jews was no different than the plan of salvation we have today. HABAKKUK 2:4 spells it out very simply. Do you want to be justified in the eyes of the Lord? Do you want to be righteous in the eyes of the Lord? Those who desire this live by faith.

- ) **SLIDE 21.** This truth concerning faith is so monumental that it is repeated and quoted 3x in the NT. Read.
- ) But when you get to the time of Jesus in what we would call 1<sup>st</sup> century Palestine, salvation as taught by the Jewish leaders was one of works. The Mosaic Law contained about 613 rules and regulations (including the TC) which had to be followed for one to attain salvation.
- ) And now this Jewish circumcision group from Jerusalem, along with Peter, wanted to hang on to that works mentality of salvation by demanding all new converts to be circumcised. And circumcision is a work of the flesh.
- ) **SLIDE 22.** Let's get back to HABAKKUK. Why can't works save a person? Because works will bring PRIDE into a person because they can say, "*Look what I accomplished.*" They can boast. The convert could say, "*Look, I'm saved because I am circumcised.*" They could boast.
- ) And getting back to my story I could say (and I did), "*Look at this nice stereo I have. I worked hard for it. It's what I have accomplished. I earned this.*" I could boast.
- ) BGCC, it's extremely difficult to shake the works mentality mindset because it is so familiar to us because it is what we base our society on. If I want this (hand), I must do this. And we can boast about that. But that's not the gospel and that is why the gospel can be so foreign to most people. Because most people will believe they must earn it or work towards it in some way.
- ) **SLIDE 23.** Paul tells us this in EPH 2:8-9.
- ) There is no boasting in the gospel. It is a gift and it's all of God. And Peter, you cannot add circumcision to what Christ has already accomplished. That's a work. And we can boast in our work. And when we add works to what Christ has already accomplished, then we have a false gospel.

- ) Next week we will be looking at a very pivotal moment in church history—Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation in 1517.
- ) This topic of faith and works was at the heart of that controversy. I will explain what was learned, what was said, and what was put into church doctrine.
- ) The truth isn't always easy, but it does matter. And it will set you free!
- ) **SLIDE 24.** REAL FAITH – 9/22/2013 – 5 weeks; THE GOSPEL – 10/30/2016 – 9 weeks; CATHOLICISM – 2/8/2015 – 7 weeks.

11/8/2020 at Beech Grove Ch ristian Church