

Detour through Galatians Part 4
Galatians 1-6

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Last week, I mistakenly said that Esau was the son of Abraham. I meant to say Ishmael.

As we make our way toward Romans chapter 7, we will continue to stress the importance of topics relating to spirituality in the Christian life. At the end of this lesson, I will take a peek at similarities between the text of Romans and the text of Galatians. It is important to keep in mind, and I will repeat this, that each of the books has a different audience and a different perspective. Romans was written to a church or churches in Roman to which Paul has never seen face-to-face. He only knows from second hand reports what they may know. As a result, Paul has to provide an extended argument for justification (salvation 1) and then sanctification (salvation 2) However, Paul has been to Galatia and taught the gospel there (Galatians 4:13). Per Thomas Constable, “Paul traveled through this region during his second journey (Acts 16:6-8).¹” He is addressing them now in the book of Galatians to address the problem of being saved by faith but then trying to live the Christian life by the Mosaic Law. Two different audiences. Two different knowledge levels. Yet, much of these two epistles say the same thing. Sometimes in the same words. Sometimes using different words.

¹ Thomas L. Constable, Notes on Galatians 2025 Edition" <https://soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/galatians.pdf>
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Galatians 6:1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

We are told to encourage one another (of the same kind, i.e. fellow believers)

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

Galatians 6:2 Bear one another's (one another of the same kind) burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

Interesting that Paul subtly contrasts the (Mosaic) Law to the law of Christ. The Law of Christ is love from the filling of the Holy Spirit.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

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Galatians 6:4 But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.

Galatians 6:5 For each one will bear his own load.

Galatians 6:6 The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him.

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

Galatians 6:8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

This is a powerful statement from Paul. It deserves an hour by itself. However, Herman has already covered this previously.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Warning. In studying Covenant theology, I ran across its emphasis on doing good works. So far in my studies of Covenant Theology, I have not found an emphasis on “doing” by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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What we believe is called “Free Grace.” We summarize our stance as “Faith alone in Christ alone.” The “Reformed/Covenant” stance is “We are justified by faith alone, but the faith that justifies is *never alone*.²” Some like Wayne Grudem would say that you never have true assurance of your salvation. You must do works in order to know that you are saved. Even then some might say they are only 98% sure of their salvation if asked.

“In response to the question, “How many good works does one have to do in order to be assured of salvation?” the proper answer is “Some.” To be more specific, *some* change of life gives a basis for some measure of assurance, and a greater change of life gives a basis for a stronger assurance. Scripture does not encourage us to demand more specificity than that.³” Very different perspective on Scripture than the “Free Grace” perspective.

Galatians 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Doing good to one another of the same kind (believers) does not prohibit us from doing good for all unbelievers.

Galatians 6:11 See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

Galatians 6:12 Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to

² Grudem, W. (2016). *‘Free Grace’ Theology*. Crossway. 27

³ Grudem, W.A. (2020). *SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, SECOND EDITION : an introduction to biblical doctrine*. 2nd ed. S.L.: Zondervan. Page 990

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be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

Galatians 6:13 For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh.

Galatians 6:14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Cross. Believers today do not appreciate the disgrace associated with crucifixion in Jesus' day. It is like the "electric chair" in previous days in the U.S. It is like saying I would boast in the electric chair. Or hanging. Or the needle.

Galatians 6:15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Gentiles are not under the Abrahamic covenant. We, as are all Christians, a new creation. Baptism of the Spirit places us into the "body" of Christ.

Galatians 6:16 And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

Galatians 6:17 From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.

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Since I had a question about these “brand-marks” or “scars” I refer to Thomas Constable for an explanation.

“In closing Paul appealed to his readers to end the controversy in Galatia. It had caused him much grief as Christ's bond-servant. He cited the scars ("marks") that he had received as a target of persecution as his final proof of his devotion to Christ (cf. Deut. 15:17). He may have received some of these scars when the people of Lystra stoned him during his preaching tour of Galatia (Acts 14:19-20; cf. 2 Cor. 11:25).⁴”

Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

⁴ Thomas L. Constable, Notes on Galatians 2025 Edition" <https://soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/galatians.pdf> page 140

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Let us look at some of the similarities between Romans and Galatians. What follows are just some observations. There is not enough time to deal with this topic in detail. But it will provide some topics to study on your own.

Start by looking at abbreviated outlines of both.

Romans:

Chapters 1-4 Justification (Salvation 1)

Chapters 5-8 Sanctification (Salvation 2)

Galatians:

Chapters 3-4 Justification (Salvation 1) via Abraham/ “in Christ”

Chapters 5-6 Sanctification (Salvation 2)

Obviously I am focusing on salvation. Other outlines would have more detail and uses different words. I am trying to emphasize a perspective that shows the similarities between the two books.

Something to keep in mind when trying to compare these two Pauline letters. Paul had already taught the basics in the Galatian churches prior to penning his letter to them. Paul has never met the Romans. So his coverage of the gospel is lengthy and detailed. However, their faith has been talked about throughout “the world.” (Romans 1:8). The Galatians have delved into legalism. Specifically, they believed in Jesus for salvation but now are living their lives according to the Mosaic Law.

Note in Galatians chapter three the number of times the word “faith” is used. The point of Paul’s letter is to emphasize that justification/salvation¹ is by faith. So is sanctification/salvation². Faith.

Another topic that Paul emphasizes in Galatians is that the Mosaic Law was not a system of spirituality. We are about to see Paul’s attempts to

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perform spiritually by keeping the Law in his account in Romans chapter 7. It was a disaster for Paul. Then he discovered spirituality by faith. He writes about spirituality in Romans chapter 8 and Galatians chapter 5 among other places. Galatians in particular emphasizes the importance of faith in the Christian life.

[In order for my formatting to work, it was essential that the following table start on a new page.]

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Galatians		Romans	
2:16	nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by <u>faith in Christ</u> and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.	because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through <u>faith in Jesus Christ</u> for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;	3:20-22
2:20	I have been <u>crucified</u> with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.	knowing this, that our old self was <u>crucified</u> with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;	6:6

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	Galatians	Romans	
3:6	Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. <u>(Genesis 15:6)</u>	Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "Faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness." <u>(Genesis 15:6)</u>	4:9
3:7	Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are <u>sons of Abraham.</u>	For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of <u>Abraham, who is the father of us all,</u>	4:16

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	Galatians	Romans	
3:11	Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, “The righteous man shall live by faith.” <u>(Habakkuk 2:4)</u>	16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “But the righteous man shall live by faith.” <u>(Habakkuk 2:4)</u>	1:16-17
3:12	However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, “He who practices them shall live by them.” <u>(Leviticus 18:5)</u>	For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. <u>(Leviticus 18:5)</u>	10:15

It should become clear from just a few of the parallels between Galatians and Romans that they both emphasize faith. We are free from the Law. It is also clear in reading the entirety of both epistles that justification is the foundation for our Christian lives.

A reiterated note about the Law. The Mosaic Law was perfect. But it's purpose was not to save. It provided a way of life as a constitution for the nation of Israel. But particulars of the Mosaic Law could not be complied with from the sin nature. The Old Testament believers did not have the filling of the Holy Spirit. We in the Church Age do. But we are called to

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a higher standard of love. We can accomplish the commands given to us, but only through the power of the Holy Spirit by walking by faith dependence on the Holy Spirit.