

LIVING FREE FROM LEGALISM

SZN 1 2019



WWW.WEAREMAKERS.CHURCH

If this is your first “action journal”, the idea is to go through a passage of scripture and not only study it, but apply it to your life. For season 1 of 2019, we are going through the book of Galatians. Galatians is a New Testament letter to the church in Galatia. This letter focuses on the difference between legalism and a true relationship with God. Over the next few weeks we’ll study this book and take a look at how we are in relationship with Jesus.

How to use this book:

1. Each section is meant to be read during the week (that way it is easy to catch up if you missed a couple of weeks).
2. The referenced bible passages can be read in any version of the Bible, but this was written with the Message translation in mind.
3. Each week there are "homework" assignments: a prayer to pray as often as you can remember, a challenge, and a question to ask a friend/family member.
4. Ideally read each week on Sunday night or Monday morning. Find a friend or group of people to go through this "action journal" with. Compare notes.

WEEK 1

Read Galatians 1

Galatians was written by the apostle Paul. He starts this letter by stating where his authority comes from and why he is writing. Paul emphatically warns against the division caused by a few people who were preaching that non-Jews were to be circumcised and follow the dietary practices of Jews in order to be saved. He contrasts his “earlier life” when he lived out the Jewish practices but persecuted Christians. Paul wraps up this chapter by expressing the grace God has shown him by not only calling and empowering him from the womb, but also using his misaligned past to glorify God.

Q.

What in your past has God used, or might He use to help you serve/minister?

Homework

Prayer

God, use my past to power my present and future. Help me use what you've brought me out of to love people like You do.

Challenge

Write down a short (a few paragraphs) version of your story, and think about how you can use your story to minister to others.

WEEK 2

Read Galatians 2:1-16

It's completely normal to us today, but at the time of this writing, non-Jewish Christians were somewhat of a new idea. Many Jews were outraged that non-Jews were not following the commands of the Torah. Their focus was on the law (circumcision, dietary laws, etc.). The message of Jesus was not "get circumcised to become a follower", but that we are saved only through faith in Jesus, by His grace.

This passage of scripture criticizes Peter for acting one way around his Jewish friends, trying to impress them with how "good" he was, and another way around his non-Jewish friends. Paul calls him on the carpet for preaching that non-Jews should conform to "Jewish rule following" to be saved, to *"make a favorable impression on his old Jerusalem cronies"*.

Q.

What are the most important things that need to happen in a person's life when they become a Christian?

Homework

Prayer

God, help my focus be on the change you want to happen in my life, and not how “good” I am compared to someone else.

Challenge

Fast social media this week! During this time be aware of how social media affects your life. Social media has a tendency to point us to comparison.

Question

Ask a friend or family member “how good do you have to be to get into heaven?” Read Ephesians 2:8-9 for the answer (read the whole chapter, key in on these verses).

WEEK 3

Read Galatians 2:17-21

In the last line of this passage Paul writes, "If a living relationship with God could come by rule-keeping, then Christ died unnecessarily."

For whatever reason people look at "Religion" as self-willed rule following. Follow the rules, you get to go to heaven, if you don't...

Unfortunately, the Church hasn't done a good job of redirecting people to what real "Religion" is: understanding that my own efforts will never save me, a relationship with Jesus, where I believe and act on His grace and love, will. By the way, it's never been about staying out of hell.

Q.

How can we paint the right picture about a relationship with Jesus to people who are not yet in relationship with Jesus?

Homework

Prayer

God, help me be "crucified with Christ". Let my old man and self-reliance die and give way to relying on Your grace.

Challenge

List a few things in your life that you might be trying to overcome in your own strength, and ask God to help you not rely on your own efforts.

WEEK 4

Read Galatians 3:1-14

"How did your new life begin?" We respond to God's love for us, not by straightening up our lives to answer an ultimatum, but by believing He loves us and embracing all the things He wants to do in us.

Q.

What areas in your life do you have a tendency to do in your own strength?

Homework

Prayer

God, I believe you have the best for me, I don't have to earn it, I'm going to rest in your love.

Challenge

Think of someone who needs to know this truth, pray for them to see Jesus in this light.

WEEK 5

Read Galatians 3:15-29

Before “the Descendant” that Paul writes about showed up, we had the law. When Jesus was crucified, he became more than the law. He is our way to the Father.

“The purpose of the law was to keep a sinful people in the way of salvation until Christ (the descendant) came, inheriting the promises and distributing them to us.”

Homework

Prayer

God, thank you for the freedom you have given us. Thank you for making a way for us to be in relationship with our creator.

Challenge

In this passage, Mosaic law is compared to something children needed to get where they we're supposed to be going.

"The law was like those Greek tutors, with which you are familiar, who escort children to school and protect them from danger or distraction, making sure the children will really get to the place they set out for."

Live up to the freedom we've been given through Jesus. Instead of a "how much can I get away with and still go to Heaven" attitude,. we should be challenged to see how much we can live like Jesus.

WEEK 6

Read Galatians 4

In this passage, the author makes a connection between the two sons of Abraham, and two different ways people approached God. Ishmael, who's mother was a slave, came out of Abraham's impatient act, and Isaac, was God's promise and born of Abraham's wife.

Q.

What are some ways we are like Ishmael?

WEEK 7

Read Galatians 5:1-15

You are free! But don't use your freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want. Paul writes: *"use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows"*

Q.

What are some ways you have used your freedom in Christ in the wrong way?

Homework

Prayer

*God, help me to use the freedom you've given
me to serve others in love*

WEEK 8

Read Galatians 5:16-21

In your freedom, live by the spirit. In this passage Paul explains that the *“free spirit is incompatible with selfishness”*.

In verses 19-21, he lists what happens when we live out of selfishness. It’s scary how this long list of negative attributes points toward normal current culture.

Homework

Prayer

God, change my selfish nature, replace it with your spirit.

Challenge

For a day, write down every time you are aware of your own selfish thoughts or behavior.

Question

Ask your family, what your lives would be like if none of you acted in selfishness?

WEEK 9

Read Galatians 5:22-26

What happens when we live Gods way? In short, we aren't miserable, directionless people. Our focus shifts from our own needs to others, and actually gives us what we are looking for.

"That means we will not compare ourselves with each other as if one of us were better and another worse. We have far more interesting things to do with our lives. Each of us is an original."

Galatians 5:26 MSG

Q.

What are some things in your life that trigger comparison? Social media? Certain people?

Homework

Prayer

Help me connect my own peace and joy to living Your way. Help me to be content with what I have and who I am.

Challenge

This week, make a list of 2 things every day that are a blessing in your life.

Question

Strike up a conversation with a friend around the question: "what triggers comparison in your life?"

WEEK 10

Read Galatians 6:1-6

Forgive lovingly, you'll need the same from others at some point in the future.

If this is the only thing you get out of Galatians, it would be worth the time. The grace that Jesus modelled, is the grace that connects us all.

Homework

Prayer

Help me to forgive quickly, and not to forget about my own need for forgiveness.

Challenge

Think of someone who you might look down on because of a bad decision they've made in the past. Pray for them this week.

WEEK 11

Read Galatians 6:7-10

What you plant, grows. Paul warns us that selfishness is a dead end.

"So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good."

Sometimes its hard to keep "doing good" when the response to our efforts is not what we thought it would or should be.

"At the right time we will harvest..."

God's timing is always right, it's our job to trust Him.

Homework

Prayer

God, help me keep doing good regardless of what may come from it. Keep me centered on you and away from selfishness.

Challenge

Be strategic about "doing good". Make a short list of needs you could meet this week, starting with people closest to you. This doesn't have to be profound, no one expects to you give someone a job or a car (unless you are able to), but there are so many needs all around us that we CAN meet!

Question

Ask someone close to you about how it makes them feel when they do good deeds.

WEEK 12

Read Galatians 6:11-18

"It is not what you and I do—submit to circumcision, reject circumcision. It is what God is doing, and he is creating something totally new, a free life!"

As we wrap up this study of Galatians, know that the big idea of this book is just that. Paul is emphatic that it's not rule following that saves us, but our faith in Jesus. Granted, that doesn't give us a pass to sin at will, but it does give us something much better, relationship.

Homework

Prayer

*God help me to focus on my relationship with
You. Change my heart, make me more like
You every day.*

NOTES

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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

