

25 July

Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: Book of Galatians



Let's hear your story

1. Have you ever had to explain to a friend, family member or work colleague the difference between grace and mercy?
2. What are the evidence of Paul writing the book of Galatians according to v.11? (**See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.**)
3. What is Paul's reason for why the religious leaders force the believers to be circumcised? (**v.12b; ...to not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.**)
4. According to v.14; what does Paul encourage believers to boast about? (**Boast about the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.**)



Let's go deeper

5. According to v.15; what is really important? (**Neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.**)
6. What is Paul's encouragement in v.16? (**We are a new creation, that walks with God in peace and mercy.**)
7. What does Paul bear on his body according to v.17? (**For I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.**)
8. Where does grace come from according to v.18? (**Grace comes from Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers.**)



Let's apply this

9. Grace never ends:

Paul ends his letter in **v.18** with, the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Grace comes from Jesus. If you want grace, you go to Jesus, He gives grace.

God wants you to have a relationship with Him, where His grace changes your spirit, makes you into a new person, to walk with Jesus in relationship to receive mercy and grace so that you can give others, mercy and grace.

- Where do you need grace? (Friendships, words, workplace).
- Where can you give grace?

SUMMARY:

- Grace never ends

Read: Galatians 6:11 – 18 and Isaiah 29:13

v.11; Paul is concerned, there's a sense of urgency that he's writing with his own hand. He needs to get this message to the church. So, it's important, it's significant and it's ultimately from God through Paul to the churches.

v.12; Christianity is not a faith of force. It's a faith of invitation. And what Paul is saying here, is that part of the problem with a religious spirit, is that it is demanding and domineering. He says, they are forcing you. What's the issue? The cross. The religious leaders developed a religious system that does not require the cross of Jesus so that they will not be persecuted and punished as Jesus was.

v.13 – 14; All religion is about what we do for God. The cross is about what God did for us. This is the difference. Religion is God, I'm going to do some things for you. The cross is God saying, no, I'm going to do some things for you. You're the one being rescued and ultimately the cross focuses on what Jesus has done.

Religion looks at the outward and God through the cross of Jesus Christ deals with the inward. In the context of Galatians, what's the big issue they're fighting over? Circumcision, which is outward not inward. God cares about the heart, not just the body. And what happens is religion wants to highlight performance and holiness based upon externals, not internals.

v.15 – 16; Religion wants to make a better you, Jesus wants to make a new you. All religion can do is try to make a better you. A new creation means that if you belong to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit does a supernatural work in your life, starting in your inner being that affects all of your outer decisions and behaviours. And that you are not who you were. This is your identity. If you belong to Jesus, you are a new you. You're not a perfect you, but you're a new you in the process of being perfected. The Bible uses the language of new heart, new nature, born again, new creation, new man, it's new and it's becoming more like Jesus. Now, once you become a new creation, Paul says in v.16; the next thing is to walk it out. And this language of walking, it literally is friendship, and relationship. v.16 continues; we are a new creation that then walks with God in peace and mercy. The key to peace, is mercy. Our relationship with God has peace because of mercy.

v.17 – 18; Grace is where you get something you didn't deserve. Like Jesus died and gave you, His life. Jesus took your sin and gave you, His righteousness. Grace is the giving of blessing. Mercy is the withholding of punishment. Mercy is when I don't say, do or give what I was going to, because it would hurt you. Mercy is you did something, I'm frustrated and I'm not going to respond to you, but to God. Mercy is you did something that I don't like and I want to punish you, but I'm not going to.