

# The Message of Galatians

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     and how we got to be who we are, right? And we've been looking at select passages in Acts, and now we're moving slightly beyond Acts. You see, we're basically looking at the book of Galatians today, a very important book in the history of the Church.

And so we're moving slightly out of Acts into the New Testament because that helps us understand... These are all foundational documents. I mean, I know you know that.

But just to highlight things about the Church that help us understand who we are and what we're supposed to believe and how we're supposed to act. Now, I'm not sure who has done or knows about the Three Peaks Challenge in Cape Town.

Rowan, of course, and a few others. Well done. Who's done the Three Peaks Challenge in Cape Town? No, no. Okay, I've tried it. So the Three Peaks Challenge is to go Devil's Peak, McLean's Beacon, and Lion's Head in one day.

So I've tried to do that, and I've got two peaks right, and we didn't quite get to Lion's Head on that specific day we went there. But the lovely thing about when you go climbing is when you reach the top, you can look down and you can see where the paths crisscrossed and how you got there and how everything fits together.

[ 1 : 1 3 ]     And so we're going to do a little bit of a flyover of the book of Galatians. We're going to hit three peaks that will help us understand what Galatians is all about and then lift out, or it should help us recce our way through Galatians.

There's a lot of detail which we won't get to, but we're going to go climbing three little peaks today in Galatians. Now, Paul's, so if you've got your book, your Bible's just open to Galatians, so long and keep it there.

Now, Galatians, Paul's letter to the Galatians, is the great manifesto of Christian freedom. It protected the early church from collapsing back into just another Jewish sect that focused on keeping the law.

And centuries later, it was used by Luther to protect the church again from the legalism of the church of his time, of the Catholic church. And it continues to thwart any attempt to undermine the freedom that we have in Christ.

And so the letter of Galatians is a key letter in the early church. Now, just to give you just a little, very little brief background to how, why and when Galatians was written.

[ 2 : 2 4 ]     Well, let me put it this way. The first peak that we're going to come across in the letter to the Galatians is the importance of the gospel. The first thing we're going to look at in the letter to the Galatians is the importance of the gospel.

We've seen how basic and foundation the gospel is in creating the early church. Very basic point. You simply cannot have genuine Christianity without a genuine gospel.

So Paul's point in the letter to the Galatians, one of the main points that Paul makes, you cannot have genuine Christianity if you don't have a genuine gospel. This is why Paul is so exasperated with the churches that he planted in Galatia.

So Galatians is interesting because it's written to the churches in Galatia. It's written to a whole bunch of churches that Paul planted. And what's significant about that is that Paul planted these churches on his first, very first missionary journey.

Remember how we saw in the book of Acts that Peter had to learn that the Gentiles have come in by faith, that they received the Spirit just by believing the gospel. You remember that, what we learned about that.

[ 3 : 28 ] And that was such a huge mind shift for the early church to get their heads around. Well, Paul's missionary journey takes place a little bit after that and before a very major council in Acts chapter 15 that had to sort out all the questions of how are the Gentiles coming in exactly?

How are they to relate to Christianity? Because at that stage it was seen to be a Jewish thing, in which it was, and still is actually. So Paul's missionary journey was a historic occasion recorded in Acts 13 and 14.

And it was a historic occasion recorded in Acts 13 and 14. We see how early in Acts, Peter was told by God that the gospel is equally for the Gentiles as it is for the Jews. We forget that it's a massive mind shift.

It's normal for us, but it was very new for the church back then. And so Paul starts his Gentile mission, planting churches all over Galatia. Galatia is, if you picture the Mediterranean, Galatia is in central and southern Turkey, what is now central and southern Turkey.

And Acts 13 and 14 tells you about a whole bunch of churches, or a whole bunch of places that Paul went to and planted some churches there. It was very likely that he was there in about 48 AD.

[ 4 : 42 ] You can place quite accurately the journeys of Paul, give or take a few years, or months even. But it's very likely that he went to those churches in about 48 AD.

And it's very likely that he wrote the letter about a year later. So it wasn't long after Paul established the churches that he heard about things that are going wrong.

So it's not a long time. It's a very short time when he pens the letter to the church in Galatia. That's why in his opening chapter in Galatians 1, a sort of famous section, Paul is so exasperated with the churches.

He says this in chapter 1 and verse 9, from verse 6. He says, listen, Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert or twist or change the shape of the gospel.

But he says, even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one that we preached, let him be eternally condemned. And he repeats that. It's such an important thing.

[ 5 : 56 ] Now that word, eternally condemned, is an interesting word. It's not just a throwaway curse word that Paul is throwing out there. The Greek word behind that is anathema. And it's almost a judicial statement of, if you're going down this path, the churches in Galatia, if you continue down this path, you're going to very quickly lose everything that I've told you about.

So be very careful about what you believe. Okay? So, you simply cannot have a genuine Christian church if you don't have a genuine Christian gospel. Now, Paul's gospel, just so you know, is exactly the same gospel that Peter's been preaching.

We've had one of Paul's gospel sermons. Am I right, Nick? Yes. Acts chapter 17. But we know by now what that gospel message entails. The gospel message is all about Jesus and all about his Messiahship, his Lordship, and how he died on the cross, but that God raised him from the dead.

So his resurrection is important. In fact, Paul opens up in verse 1 of chapter 1, Paul, an apostle sent not from man nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead.

So that's one of the key elements of Paul's gospel, as it was for Peter. And that Jesus is now sitting at God's right hand and reigning as his Lord. Paul's gospel is exactly the same as Peter's gospel.

[ 7 : 23 ] Paul, God raised him from the dead. He's sitting at God's right hand, ruling over his enemies, but at the same time, he's there to create a new people, the new people of God, by pouring out his Holy Spirit.

So God is doing something new. In the New Testament, that's why it's called new, because God is doing something new. However, he's doing something new, not totally out of the blue, he's doing something new based on the Old Testament.

And this is going to be a vital element of Paul's argument against what's happening in the churches in Galatia. He's very concerned that they're shifting away from the gospel, but he wants to let them know that the gospel doesn't spring out of nowhere.

The gospel comes from the Old Testament. I don't know if you picked that up in a very important verse in chapter 3. In fact, Paul uses that argument about Abraham.

To prove how the gospel works. But nevertheless, chapter 3, verse 8. The scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and announce the gospel in advance to Abraham.

[ 8 : 37 ] All nations will be blessed through you. Isn't that interesting? That Paul says that the gospel, the gospel, the same gospel that he's preaching, is found directly in Genesis.

It actually says it in so many words. God announced the gospel in advance to Abraham. The promise of blessing. This will form a crucial part of Paul's argument against the group of people called the Judaizers that have come in and started sowing confusion in the churches.

Notice how far back the gospel goes. The gospel about Jesus is based on the gospel that God promised to Abraham. Now remember those things we looked at in Genesis. Remember how important Genesis, Genesis chapter 12.

Do you remember that? God saying to Abraham, out of the blue, just choosing a guy out of all the nations of the world. Abraham, come. I'm going to make a promise to you.

I'm going to give you land. I'm going to bless you. And I'm going to protect you. And I'm going to be your God. Now, in that little caveat, but through you, all the nations are going to be blessed. That's one of the little things which turns out to be a big thing that the Jews had somehow conveniently forgotten.

[ 9 : 53 ] Paul's argument is that the gospel is crucial, but the gospel is there in the Old Testament. And the timing of that gospel is going to be important. We'll show that in just a few minutes.

What's important is the gospel here is in the form of a promise which predates the giving of the law. And therefore, it's more important and in fact, lays the basis for the whole Old Testament.

Okay, we're going to pick that up in just a second. In a few minutes. Let's expand on that. Now, in Galatians, what are some of the things that the gospel gives us? And we don't have time to go through all the verses, but I'm just going to mention them to you so that you know that there's these huge promises that the gospel offers, that the message of Jesus offers about Jesus, and includes things like justification, Christ Himself, blessing, which kind of is a catch-all for all of these things, redemption, the Spirit Himself, sonship, which we've read about now, and freedom.

Just a whole bunch of stuff that the gospel offers. And then Paul, the next point that Paul makes is, okay, how do you get those things?

So the gospel offers this sort of bouquet of beautiful things from God. How do you get them then? Well, the answer of the people that had come in and confused the churches was, well, you need to get it by being Jewish, and by doing the things that the law told you to do.

[ 11 : 30 ] And Paul's answer is exact opposite. No, no. You just get it by faith. So this is the big question in the early church that played out in the Galatian churches.

How exactly do you receive the blessings of the gospel? Now that the Gentiles are included into the promises of God, and they're included into the promises of God by becoming part of the people of God, remember what Peter said in Acts chapter 10, how can we not give them fellowship?

They've been included with us. They've also got the Spirit like we have. God is doing miracles in them just like He's been doing with us. In fact, that's part of Paul's argument against the people trying to take them away from the promises of God.

What is the road? What is the way? What is the path that they must follow to deliver them to the promises of God? So when you're climbing a mountain, you need a path to follow. You can't just swim and go anywhere you want up the mountain.

If you do, you're going to run into trouble very quickly. So what is the path to get from the peak of, hey, here's the gospel. How do we get there? So the next peak is actually kind of like a path, if I should actually think of it more as a path and a peak.

[ 12 : 41 ] But it's a major part of Paul's point in Galatians is faith. What must they do to get these promises? Well, you just have to believe.

But this is where the Judaizers came in, the people undermining Paul and the gospel. The Judaizers say that the way that you get these promises is to do the works of the law, specifically the Torah.

Now you need to know that in the gospels, yeah, in most of the gospels, in Romans, you've got to be a little bit careful. But definitely in Galatians, the law is the Torah.

Paul means the law of not Genesis, but Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The first five books of the Bible actually, including Genesis in a way. Genesis is included in the Torah. And it seems, based on clues from Acts and Galatians, that it revolved around specific Jewish ethnic identity markers.

The things that kept Jews as Jews. They wanted to keep their sort of national identity. Circumcision, food laws, fellowship restrictions, and Sabbath keepings. Now you can see from our Old Testament reading, you can see why the Jews had a very hard time realizing, we can give up circumcision, you don't need it anymore.

[ 13 : 56 ] You saw how important it was to God and to Abraham. This is an everlasting covenant, and if you don't get circumcised, you can't be in. And so it's, you almost feel sorry for the guys.

You know, it's an important part of their identity. So their argument, if you want to enjoy the promises of God, you, and if you want to be part of His people, you need to live like His, live like His people.

And God has told us how to do that in the Torah. So if you want to do it, if you want to join us, you need to do these things. Otherwise, you can't be considered one of us, which means you don't have access to the blessings, which means you can't be saved.

So that's how their logic works. You understand that? You with me on that? Being saved is a kind of shorthand way of saying you'll receive the blessings of the covenant, and that you belong to God's covenant people.

It's strange for us to think like that because in our modern world, we think of just coming to God directly, but in the Bible, you've got to become a part of God's covenant people if you want to have access to God.

[ 15 : 01 ] Remember we talked about in Genesis 12, you kind of almost have to join Abraham and his people. You've got to have the same faith that Abraham had. In fact, Paul is going to make that same point here.

Paul's answer to the Galatians is emphatic. You cannot get the promises of God, you cannot get the gospel by keeping the Jewish law.

And then he goes on in chapter 3 specifically to compare and contrast what faith gives you and what the law gives you. You with me? So let's break that down quickly. So his very first point in Galatians chapter 3, you receive the spirit by faith, not by law.

So what's the point of keeping the law? The spirit is obviously superior to the Jewish law. So have a look at chapter 3, verse 2 to 5. He says this, Oh yes, you foolish Galatians.

How's that pastor speaking to his flock? I would like to learn verse 2, just one thing from you. Did you receive the spirit by observing the law or by believing what you heard?

[ 16 : 05 ] In other words, having faith. Are you so foolish? After beginning with the spirit, are you not trying to attain your goal by human effort? Now think about this. Which is stronger?

Which has more power to get you to do stuff? You or the Holy Spirit of the living God? No, no, no. We don't want the spirit of the living God. Let's go back to doing stuff in our own capacity.

And Paul says, no, you must be crazy. That's why he says, who bewitched you? Are you mad? That's just not going to work for you. It's like someone learning to cycle.

You become a professional cyclist. Now you remember when you learned how to training wheels? Did you all start or were you like, no, you don't need training wheels, you're just straight on. No, no, we need training.

Most of us need training wheels, right? Now imagine you saw these top level professional cyclists doing the Tour de France. And they come with their training wheels. Like this. And the professionals are like, without it.

[ 17 : 02 ] No, no, no. What Paul will tell us just now is that the law is a little bit like those training wheels. What do you need that for if you've got the reality? Second point.

So you receive the Spirit by faith, not by law. So what are you trying to do now? Secondly, you receive the blessings promised to Abraham in the same way that Abraham got them.

By faith, not by law. So how can the law add anything to that? It's got nothing to add. Because you've basically got everything once you've got faith. Verse 6 to 9.

Consider Abraham. He believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. Understand then that those who believe are children of Abraham. And that verse 8 that we saw.

Verse 9. So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. Now that's a devastating argument against the Judaizers because it just totally undermines their position.

[ 18 : 08 ] They all look to Abraham as their ur-father. Well, he got it by faith, not by law. So what are you trying to do it by law for? Now that's an important passage.

That comes out of Genesis chapter 15 where God is making yet another promise. So God makes promises in Genesis chapter 12, Genesis chapter 15.

Now, I'm going to make a very profound point. Well, let me make the point about what happens in Genesis 15 first. So God makes another promise to Abraham. Listen, you're going to have lots of children. Abraham says, how can I know this is true?

Do you remember we did this in our series? What does God do with him? Listen, just come with me outside and look at the stars. You're going to have as many people as the stars. Abraham believed the Lord and he credited it to him as righteousness.

Okay, so faith, that tells you what faith is by the way. It's just, if God tells you something that he's going to do something, he's going to do something. You either believe it or you don't.

[ 19 : 10 ] Now, I don't know about you, but if the God of the universe is speaking to me like that, I'm pretty sure I'm going to believe him. 100% sure I'm going to believe him, I should say.

I mean, yet people don't. But now, here's the profound point. Genesis 15 is before Genesis 17. Isn't that profound?

No, but it's an important point because even the covenant of circumcision comes after Abraham having faith. Are you with me? Paul is going to make a little, probably, we're going to get there now in a second, that the law itself comes through another 430 years later.

comes a whole other book of the Bible later, let alone a few chapters. So, you receive the blessings promised to Abraham in the same way that Abraham got them.

Abraham got the blessings before he was circumcised. Isn't that now very important for us to know? Yes, it's very important. And so, faith first, then circumcision, then the law.

[ 20 : 13 ] So, faith precedes everything and gives you everything that those things actually can't give you. and they're not intended to give you those righteousness or justification. The next point, the law doesn't bring blessing but only curse.

So, why would you want that? Verse 10 to 14, all who rely on observing the law are under a curse. So, you've received blessing, what do you want to go back to the thing that's going to give you a curse for?

For it's written, cursed is everyone who doesn't continue to do everything written in the book of the law. Now, that's a quote from Deuteronomy. That's a quote from the book of the law itself. The law actually tells the Jews, unless you do every single thing written in these books, all of the time, you're going to fall under a curse.

And to be honest, they had already fallen under the curse. Remember the story of Genesis. When did humanity fall under the curse of God? Well, it wasn't long after He made us. Right? Genesis chapter 3.

So, law keeping is not going to undo curse. Blessing can only undo curse. And because it's God's judgment on their sin, it takes God's proclamation, judgment, not a bad judgment, a good judgment, a proclamation, saying, no, you're not under curse.

[ 21 : 34 ] You're going to be blessed now. Fourth point, the promise came before the law and rules over it. So, that's from verse 15 in chapter 3 now.

Brothers, Paul says, let me make an example from everyday life so that you know what I'm talking about. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed.

Okay, and it goes on. Now, the promise came before the law and therefore, in a sense, rules over it. It works in the same way that the constitution of the land rules over the laws of the land.

So, you don't make laws of the land that clash with the constitution and say, oh, oops, the constitution was wrong. The constitution is the founding document. So, if you've got problems, it goes all the way to the supreme court and the supreme court shouldn't and it doesn't in South Africa, tends to do this in other places, but they go back to the constitution.

They say, okay, well, what does this say? How do our laws line up with the constitution? Are you with me? So, the constitution comes first and then the laws and it's the same like this with God and his people.

[ 22 : 46 ] Whatever came before rules over whatever came afterwards and it's faith that came first. You can actually read it. It's Genesis chapter 15, not Genesis 17 or Deuteronomy or Exodus.

Are you with me? That's the point that he makes in verse 17. What I mean is this.

The law introduced 430 years later after giving the promises to Abraham does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise.

For if the inheritance depends on the law then it no longer depends on a promise. But God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. Do you remember how God said to you? I mean, that's what a promise is. Hey Abraham, I am going to do this for you.

That is a promise. That's how it gets given. Not, hey Abraham, do these things and then I will give you the things that I promised. Are you with me? And then the last point that Paul makes in chapter 3, an important point, in any case, the law was only temporary for the Jews until the Messiah came.

[ 23 : 51 ] From chapter, from verse 19. In fact, it runs all the way to the end of our chapter and then into chapter 4 as well. But, what then was the purpose of the law?

It was added because of transgressions until the seed to whom the promise referred to had come. So, in other words, when the seed, the promise has come and the law falls away. Verse 23, but before this faith came, we were held in, we were held prisoners by the law.

Now, Paul is talking about the Jews here, not the Gentiles. Locked up until faith should be revealed so that the law was put into charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.

So, the end result, the end goal for God and his people is to have justification by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law. And so, the law is just a temporary measure anyway.

It's like those little training wheels. A guardian. Remember what Nick said, was it last week or was it a few weeks ago, about how the law operates? We often make the mistake to think that the Jews thought about this is that the law gets you in to be the people of God.

[ 25 : 00 ] It's not true. They should have known this. That's how this is actually interesting about Galatians. The Jews had forgotten that. They had suddenly made the law, the entrance criteria for being part of God's people. Now, the entrance criteria is just believing in the promise.

So, the law was there to actually, if you think of it as a train, it's a good analogy, the law is there to, is the doors. You're in, the doors are there to keep you from falling out. So that when the Messiah was due to arrive, which is 2,000 years after Abraham, 1,500 years after Moses, there was going to be a people to which the Messiah could come and who would start believing and then take that message out.

It's a, it's a, it's a preservation thing, the law. Because think, think how the, think of the story of the Old Testament. How did they do in keeping the law? Rubbish.

Rubbish. Like, not that we can stand in our heads up any higher, not as Christians, but as Gentiles at that time. We just went, didn't even have a look in. We were idolaters from the start, but the Jews kind of mix it with idolaters. But the story of the Old Testament is you guys can't do this.

You can't do the law thing, so just forget about it. And so that when Jesus finally arrived, they should have said, yes, thank Peter. Yes, we don't have to not eat pork anymore, do the Sabbath, or be circumcised.

- [ 26 : 22 ] They should have been jumping for joy. And for some reason, no, they prefer their law keeping. I guess in one sense it keeps their ethnic identity. They keep themselves Jews. They want to mix with the outside world. And so notice what the law cannot do. The law cannot stop sin. It can't stop what Paul calls a transgression. It can only kind of restrain it. It sort of holds it back like a policeman stopping a fight. But if he lets go, the person is so still full of anger he's going to start fighting again. You know, that's kind of, you know, hold me back, hold me back, hold me, I'm going to, and you hold him back and he's not going to calm down and the moment you let him go, like a dog, you're going to fight the guy again.
- That's what the, that's all that the law can do. He just holds you back by the scruff of your neck so you don't go completely crazy and that God has to completely judge you. Except that God, just so that you know, he very nearly completely judged Israel a number of times.
- He did actually completely judge the northern tribes of Israel, the ten northern tribes. So they went out first. They were forced off into exile. They never came back. No one knows where they are. He had two little tribes, Judah and Benjamin in the south and even then he kicked them out.
- [ 27 : 36 ] And then he said, okay, you can come back but just watch it. And they're like, okay, right? No, listen, don't mess around with God. Judgment begins with the household of God.
- I think that's from Hebrews. So the thing is about the law is it doesn't change anything on the inside. It's an external restraint. The person's heart, his intentions, his emotions are left unchanged.
- They're acting like a child, Paul says. When the Messiah comes, he'll give the spirit and that will change everything. Okay.
- Are you happy about that? Does that make sense about what's happening there? How are we doing for time? I can't actually see at the back. We've got to keep going. Well, let's then turn to the next thing that the gospel delivers for us or rather actually faith delivers for us and that is the spirit.
- The final stopping point for Paul in the letter is to explain how the spirit does what the law could not do and that is to create a people that can deal effectively with sin in their own lives and be the people that both that loves others effectively.
- [ 28 : 59 ] So the spirit does two very important things. It deals with sin in the individual Christian's life and it helps us do the brotherly love thing that the Jews never quite got right.
- They were fighting each other a lot even by the New Testament. There's the Pharisees, there's the Sadducees, there's the Essenes, there's the Zealots, there's the Jews that don't even believe, there's the Roman Jews, there's the bad Jews and they're all fighting each other.
- The spirit deals directly with sin in our lives and creates in us the impetus to be holy that the Lord could not do. The spirit makes us one happy loving family.
- I'm going to talk about family but by that I mean the church and the people of God. One way to think of it is as a family because it talks about sonship in Galatians, very important concept.
- The spirit does a hidden internal work in us to make us into the people that God has always wanted. So, God declares us to be free in the gospel.
- [ 30 : 05 ] You're justified by faith. Faith is the thing that unlocks all of that. And then the spirit begins the work of actually freeing us from sin. So, let's look at chapter 5.

So, we're moving out of chapter 4 now. Chapter 3. We just have to skip over chapter 4 but Paul is making some similar arguments in chapter 4 that he's made in chapter 3. Chapter 5, verse 1, it is for freedom that Christ has set us free.

Stand firm and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. And verse 5, by faith we eagerly await through the spirit the righteousness for which we hope.

And there's the clue to what the spirit does in our lives. And then Paul at the, I've got to turn over my page but in a famous passage in chapter 5 from verse 16.

So, I say, live by the spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. The spirit helps kill off bad things in our life and helps bring out good things.

[ 31 : 17 ] The fruit of the spirit. So, he gives a list of things that are bad. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious to everyone. Sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, etc. All those bad things.

Those horrible yucky, yucky, yucky, yucky things. And then Paul says, no, but the spirit can give you these good things. Love, joy, peace, patience, etc.

The spirit is like a weed killer and a composter in one. To use a gardening illustration. I think that's unique to me.

I've never heard of that before. So, he kills off the bad things in you and then he makes the good things in you grow. So, he's a weed killer, all the yucky stuff and he's a composter and he makes all the lacquer stuff grow.

So, that's what he does in our own inside lives and then he helps us with our outside lives, with each other. Then the spirit also helps us love each other.

[ 32 : 19 ] look at chapter 6 verse 1 and 2. Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourselves or you also may be tempted.

Carry each other's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. And again in verse 9, let us not become weary in doing good for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of God. Just a quote from Luther on the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit makes these things happen through faith and because of it, because of the Spirit, you are freely, willingly, and joyfully do good to everyone, serve everyone, suffer all kinds of things, love and praise the God who has shown you such grace.

Thus it is just as impossible to separate faith and works as it is to separate heat and light from fire. Because the question of course is if you don't have the law to tell you what to do, how are you going to do it?

[ 33 : 24 ] The answer is the Spirit will help you. Okay then, just to make some points and applications. If one of the things that Paul is wanting the Galatian church to get is the correct gospel, we've got to make sure that we've got the correct gospel in our heads as well.

I'm just going to be as straightforward as I can now for a little while. That means you mustn't just believe anything that comes into your head. Now the early church had Paul, an apostle, had Peter.

We don't have them anymore but thankfully we've got the Bible but you've got other guides in your life that help you understand the Bible and that's basically Nick and myself or anyone who's trained in these things. Now I'm not saying you must take our word as gospel but our job is to do our best to teach you the right thing and to give you the right shape of the gospel.

To be as straight as I can, your job is to basically believe what we say but at the same time to check that what we're saying is true. Remember the Berean church, okay? So I'm kind of skirting not disaster but controversy there but I'm doing it on purpose and there's an element to the truth of what I'm saying.

If what you hear from me and Nick clashes with what you believe, come and speak to us. Likely you need to change what you believe. Don't continue with your own personal beliefs if you can see from the Bible that what we're telling you is different from what you believe.

[ 34 : 55 ] Change them if we can show that what the Bible is saying is true. Stick to the true gospel, the gospel of the Bible, the gospel that we've been telling you about, about the Messiahship of Jesus. Secondly, faith is enough.

You get everything you need in the gospel through faith. You're part of a new family. You can't earn your father's love. Children, you know that your father loves you.

You don't have to work for that love. You're part of his family. Don't be anxious about your standing with God. If you have faith, that's enough. But make sure you base your faith on what God has promised in his word.

Just to give you a quote on Luther and what he says about faith. He's the one that really rediscovered these truths for the church to take hold of again. Faith is a living, bold trust in God's grace, so certain of God's favor that it would risk death a thousand times, trusting in it.

Such confidence and knowledge of God's grace makes you happy, joyful, and bold in your relationship to God and all creatures. It's a lovely little last sentence. confidence and knowledge of God's grace makes you happy, joyful, and bold in your relationship to God and to all creatures.

[ 36 : 11 ] And then lastly, the Spirit brings us into God's family. And so, one of the things we must remember is that our Christianity is not about me first, but about us. God saves us not just for ourselves, but so that we can serve and love other people.

We really should be focusing on loving others, which basically means helping them. What that means, we read it in Galatians 6 there, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual, that doesn't mean just the leaders, it means other Christians should restore him gently.

So don't be offended when people try and help you in your Christian faith. That's what we're here to do. Not me and Nick, we the church are here to ensure that we the church are doing well in the gospel. So if someone notices something about you and says, hey listen, I just want to chat with you, but notice how you're supposed to do that, gently, in a way that helps, not in a way that lets them know that you're irritated and you think they're doing something wrong.

Now yes, they may be doing something wrong, but it's how you say it that makes a difference. Be careful how you help, but make sure that you are helping. We're supposed to be working together to make sure that we as a church are established in the gospel, that we understand and hold on to our faith, and that we are active members, we've got to be active members of God's body, but actually helping and talking and doing things for each other.

Just leave the last word to Luther again. Faith is God's work in us that changes us and gives us new birth from God. It kills the old Adam and makes us completely different people.

[ 37 : 49 ] It changes our hearts, our spirits, our thoughts and all our powers. faith. It brings the Holy Spirit with it. Yes, it is a living, creative, active and powerful thing, this faith.

Faith cannot help doing good works constantly. It doesn't stop to ask if good works ought to be done. But before anyone asks, it already has done them and continues to do them without ceasing.

Now may that be true of us as we live our Christian lives together and help each other to hold on to and do these things. Shall we pray together? Heavenly Father, we've taken a very short highlight tour through Galatians.

We've discovered all about your gospel, how important it is to believe it, how important faith is that unlocks all these things, and how your spirit is promised in it as well.

Lord, we long to be filled with all the good things that the spirit can offer. We long to love each other better. We long to love you more, and to be established in our faith, and to be established in the gospel, and not to be confused and turned around and not know how to live life.

[ 39 : 10 ] Send us your spirit, Lord, and help us to be close to you and to the gospel throughout all our lives. For Jesus' sake, amen. For Jesus' ai, as God has saved us, by Son, I Mo never had aagon ■■■