

## “Your Greatest Need”

Use this guide as a tool to help you prepare to experience spiritual transformation in a practical way. It is a **flexible guide** that will help you discover, own, and apply the truths of God’s Word.

### Message Summary

Shortly after Paul planted the churches in the southern region of Galatia false teachers came in and taught that a person must not only believe in Jesus but also convert to Judaism in order to have eternal life. In other words, these false teachers taught people their righteousness was based on their works rather than the righteousness of Jesus Christ alone. Paul wrote in order to correct this false teaching and help the churches live in the freedom they found in Jesus.

While Peter was in Antioch, Paul confronted him and publically rebuked him for acting hypocritically and leading other believers to do the same. Peter had been spending time eating with the Gentiles, something that he wasn’t free to do prior to the advent of Jesus (Acts 10). However, when men from Jerusalem came to Antioch, out of fear, Peter drew back from the Gentiles and stopped eating with them. As a result, the other Jewish Christians and even Barnabas drew back from the Gentiles and refused to eat with them. Paul saw this as sin and a misrepresentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Last week we examined the first part of Paul’s rebuke of Peter. This week we examined the second part; Paul’s explanation of justification by faith. While Peter believed that his righteousness was in Christ, his actions communicated something different. Peter was living as though his greatest need was the approval of the men from Jerusalem. However, his greatest need was the approval of Jesus; which he already had!

Many times as humans we try to find our worth in what we do or our family; however, our worth comes from having a right relationship with God through faith in Jesus. As Thomas Schreiner said, “Nothing we do renders us righteous before God. There is nothing we can contribute – nothing at all. We must acknowledge that we are naked, miserable, poor, and weak. We live by faith alone, casting ourselves entirely on the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Christ is our righteousness; His cross is our only hope in the day of judgment. We look away from ourselves and what we have accomplished and cling to Christ alone for salvation.”

This is what it means to be justified by faith alone in Christ alone. We cannot be justified by keeping rules, practicing religion, or doing good works. When we trust in Jesus Christ by faith, we live in the freedom of Christ’s righteousness by identifying with Christ in His death by dying to the law and we identify with Christ in His resurrection by living a new life. All of this is done trusting in the daily grace we receive from Jesus Christ.

As you prepare to meet with your Missional Community examine what you think are your greatest needs. Do they match with what Paul teaches us in Galatians 2:15-21? How will you redirect your life this week to trust only in Christ’s righteousness? It’s your greatest need!

### Message Outline

Justification by faith alone:

1. Is in Christ alone: (15-16)
  - Not by Heritage.
  - Not by religious practices.
  - Not by keeping rules.
2. Does not promote sinful living. (17-18)
  - Christ is not responsible for sin.
  - Seeking justification by faith reveals our unrighteousness and need for grace.
  - Rebuilding laws denies that righteousness is in Christ.
3. Means we identify with: (19-20)
  - The death of Christ – because we died.
  - The resurrection of Christ – because we are made new.
4. Means we live in God’s grace daily. (21)
  - To return to the law is to reject grace.

Therefore, let’s live:

1. In the hope of Christ’s righteousness.
2. In the freedom of Christ’s righteousness.
3. In the identity of Christ’s righteousness.
4. In the grace of Christ’s righteousness.

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### **Group Discussion**

Use the following questions to help make application of God’s Word to your Head (What God wants me to know), to your Heart (What God wants me to desire/value), and to your Hands (What God wants me to do).

In regard to Galatians 2:15-21:

1. What does this passage teach about God? (God’s Identity; Theology)
2. What does this passage teach about what God has done? (God’s Action; Christology)
3. What does this passage teach about man/me? (Old & New Creation Identity; Ecclesiology)
4. What does this passage teach about what I should do? (Reveals what I really believe about Questions 1-3; Missional Ecclesiology)
5. What does this passage teach about how I do it uniquely in my context? (personal action steps of obedience)

### **Weekly Prayer Focus**

- **Church:**

- Pray for families who will attend the First Steps Child Dedication class in September as well as the Child Dedication Service in October.
- Pray that all who have believed the Gospel will obey Jesus in believer’s baptism.
- Pray for new relationships that will lead to Gospel conversations.
- Pray for the elders as they lead us to accomplish the mission.
- Pray for the Missional Communities to impact their communities with the Gospel.
- Pray for Missional Communities to multiply into new neighborhoods.
- Pray for new DNA groups to start.

- **Local:**

- Pray that God would burden us with the lostness in our cities, neighborhoods, and at work.
- Pray that God will identify 5 people you can begin to invest in and engage with the Gospel.

- **Global:**

- Pray that God would give you a heart for the nations.
- Pray for the team working in SEA, the new believers, for those who have heard the Gospel, and the church planting movement among the unreached.
- Pray for Good Shepherd Ministries and Bill & Sandy Younger.
- Pray for Servants Hearts Ministries and Bob & Georgette Kornegay.
- Pray for Pastor Abraham and his church in Guatemala.
- Pray for the work of Paul & Sarah Young and Dakota Baptist Church in North Dakota.