



Galatians 2:21b: "...for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

Just A Minute with Scripture

It is ALL Christ!

Once saints are established in *Romans* doctrine, they are to go on to progress in Paul's epistles. In order to apply and live this doctrine, instructions are provided by God in the next three epistles. The key topics are carnality in I & II *Corinthians* and then, legalism in *Galatians*, common challenges we deal with today.

I & II *Corinthians* were designed to correct a fleshly, high-minded attitude to **enable** spiritual growth: "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." (I Cor. 3:18-20) The Corinthians were babes and needed foundational teaching (milk) as they were **not able** to digest advanced (meat) teachings: "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were **not able** to bear it, neither yet now **are ye able**. For ye are yet carnal..." (I Cor. 3:2-3) Only **God is able** to renew our mind and then empower us to walk in His ways!

The book of *Galatians* teaches us to live godly, but not by our works: "...all our righteousness are as filthy rags..." (Is. 64:6) Rather, it is to be Christ living within us. The Galatians were exhibiting outer behavior that sometimes looked pretty good, but was simply an unacceptable, fair show in the flesh, exalting human effort. The Pharisees were good examples of putting on 'a religious face' to be seen of men: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." (Matt. 23:27-28)

Satan used a false gospel to entice the Galatians to return to live after the flesh, rather than yield unto Christ. "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." (Gal. 1:6) The carnal mind naturally exalts human wisdom and power above God: "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Gal. 3:3)

To Do: Study I & II *Corinthians* and *Galatians* to adjust your attitude. Pray to think about what God is instructing to exalt His Word and work within you. **It is ALL Christ!!!**



Join Us: Read Through the Bible in 2024

Some Bible Apps provide a daily schedule to read through all the Bible, but you can also go at your own pace. If you want to stay in Paul's letters, read three chapters daily and in a month you will have read all 13 epistles. Another option is to read the Old Testament and books written to Israel in the morning and Paul's epistles before bed. Each option will reap eternally.

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The Love of God

Christ died, was buried, and rose to pay for all our sin. He "...made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil 2:7-8) **Believe!**

Study Tools With Practical Study Ideas: Ephesians 1



Let us study *Ephesians 1* to apply two specific study tools from our book “Exploring the Bible Using Study Tools.”

1. Notice Key Words: Repeating words or phrases function as a flag, teaching the student about a particular subject.

To Do: a) Choose two key words in *Ephesians 1* and define them. Examine Scripture first, looking at the immediate context, then use a dictionary. A concordance can help you search where the same term or phrase is used in Scripture. **b)** Count how many times the following similar phrases appear in *Ephesians 1*: “in Christ,” “in the beloved,” “in whom,” “of whom,” “in Him.” To whom

are they referring and what is the significance of their use? Can you find any similar phrases, not yet listed?

2. Notice Verb Tenses: The tense of words indicate when an action takes place. For example: ‘To have’ or ‘having’ refers to the present. ‘Had’ shows a past condition. ‘Will have’ suggests a future condition. Think on this when reading.

To Do: a) Look at v. 3 to find verbs which indicate ‘when’ believers were blessed with “*spiritual blessings*.” **b)** Examine v. 13 to locate verbs and tenses indicating whether actions are happening now, the past, or the future. Tenses provide clarity for clear understanding.

“Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Gal. 1:3)

Questions & Answers With Deborah

Should I go to a counsellor or take meds for mental issues?

This is a packed question and personal decision. You have liberty: “...for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” (Rom. 6:14) Consider your responsibility to determine if it is expedient, that is, wise. “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” (I Cor.6:12)

God gives us volition, which is freedom to choose and make wise decisions based on the doctrine deposited in our inner man by the Word, rightly divided. Your responsibility is to “work out” the doctrine in details of life to the glory of God. (Philippians 2:12)

The following is my viewpoint:

Counseling: Most Christian counselors use psychology. These professionals i.e. counsellors and (Continued on p.3)

What Are We to do?

Apprehension about the course of this world and how to actually live Christ may be uppermost on your mind these days, even having “*fear and trembling*” at what is happening all around us. (Philippians 2:12)

Paul instructs us in *Galatians 2:20*: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” We are also reminded that we are here for a reason: *Philippians 1:23-24*: “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless **to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.**” In love on Christ’s behalf, we are left here fully empowered to live as who God made us in Christ.

So stay focused above (Col. 3:1-4), know and trust His grace doctrine found in *Romans-Philemon*. It is abundant help: “...My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me...when I am weak, then am I strong.” (II Cor 12:9-10)

Think on this: God’s grace enables us to be the ambassadors (II Cor. 5:20) He desires, even in perilous times. While we are here in this foreign land, let us prefer others above our fleshly emotions and desires. Help one another to focus above and walk by faith as a good soldier, until that glorious day when we are caught up! Let us be ‘helpers of one another’s joy’ (II Cor. 1:24), speaking the Truth in love: unto the lost so they are saved from wrath and unto other dear believers to encourage and edify. We CAN do this... trust God!



The Importance of Prayer by Erin Young

As believers, praying is something we are meant to do always, according to Paul. *1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing."* Praying is our way of communicating with God. He gives us His Word so that He may talk to us. We pray so that we may talk to Him. The Holy Spirit even helps us in our prayers. *Romans 8:26: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."*

Prayer is also something that helps us with fear and doubt. Christ reminded His followers to always pray. *Luke 18:1: "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."* And Christ Himself even prayed. *John 17:1: "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."*

This helps us in our walk as members of the Body of Christ. As Paul is our apostle, he encourages many times in Scripture about the importance of prayer. *Philippians 4:6: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."* *1 Timothy 2:8: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."*

When we pray to God, we are making our connection to Him stronger. This can help us have a clearer mind, so that we may better study His Word, just as He commands.

Questions & Answers With Deborah

social workers are placed in an influential position over their patients. Caution is needed. With that said, I believe there is a time for using counsel, such as when someone has a crisis and does not have a wise, willing spiritual friend, pastor, or coach available. One of many dangers when stepping into a mental health system is that man's wisdom is exalted, while the Word of God is no longer seen as the true answer to all our challenges. It fully is! However, it is acknowledged that counselling can be helpful for those who are isolated and don't know how to apply sound doctrine of the Word to obtain practical help.

Medication: Generally, it is not ideal to take medicine, so first consider viable supplement options. Medicine can have impacting or long-lasting side effects, so make decisions prayerfully. Yet be aware that social pressures, prejudices, or stigmas can negatively influence decisions and whether to follow a doctor's advice. Some conditions like hormonal-chemical imbalances can cause physically-based mental health issues (i.e. bi-polar, schizophrenia, or long-lasting, deep depression), requiring medication. Some disorders greatly impact quality of life and decision making.

If you decide to use medication, make sure a physician monitors you closely and pair it with Biblical counsel. Prayerfully and regularly review your decisions and if you make a mistake or need to readjust your approach, use grace with yourself and the Word in you.

This grace gives us freedom without condemnation. Personal experience teaches that these kind of decisions are between you and God. Stay open to wise spiritual counsel and be "fully persuaded" (*Romans 14:5*) to walk by faith through the challenges, trusting.

To Do: *Philippians 3:12-16* is instruction to us on how to live by faith in the wisdom we have been given. Listen to continued teaching through the Word to reveal new insights for application.

Is There Any Real Help?



Service With a Smile!

Galatians 1:10 holds forth two questions as our help: “For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.” If we believe and are determined to be God’s servant, trusting Him, there is help. What does service look like when we are in affliction? We would continue to minister to others with charity, but only God can do it in us as He leads! “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” (*Romans 8:14*)

Many think God will not really help them, at least not the kind of help ‘they’ want. Actually, they desire that their problems would be taken away, but God works differently today, within ‘His parameters and purpose.’ God teaches this in Paul’s epistles. God is manifesting His power and wisdom in the inner man, NOT miraculously in outer circumstances. When difficulties aren’t taken away, often saints inwardly think God is not trustworthy, then blame Him and become angry, crying out: “Why are you doing this? What do you want? What have I done?” Yet remember that Satan is the deceiver, desiring for us to be under the law, while God deals with us in grace.

Be renewed: God has, is, and continues to prove to us every moment, in all things, regarding His exceeding love, kindness, and mercy toward us, even when we wrongly accuse Him. Satan is to blame for sin and this fallen world as he temporarily usurped this world. We have the great privilege to live through challenges for God: “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.” (*Phil.1:29*) God’s way isn’t to take sufferings away, but use them to bring glory: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (*Romans 8:28*)

We have God’s grace; believe that it’s sufficient, even for our service! “And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee...**” (*II Cor.12:9a*) Our help is effectual when we believe, trusting Christ’s work in us. This is only part of our hope, knowing He will be there to help us and bring glory. “...the sufferings of this present time are not

worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” (*Rom. 8:18*) So we are to trust Him to serve others, focusing above, not exalting the problems. *Romans 8* provides targeted instruction as to how God works today.

To Do: Read all of *Rom. 8*, focusing on *verses 14-30*, making a list of the resources He has given us. For a start, He gives us such hope. What else do you see in this section? Now go on and read *Rom. 8:31-39*. We can learn to have absolute confidence in God and His love as we walk though this difficult life. “...If God be for us, who can be against us?” (*Rom. 8:31*) **Do you have this hope?**

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