

Galatians Class 2 Transcript

Welcome back to FI Online. This is class number two in our series on Paul's epistle to the congregations in Galatia. Last class we looked at some background material. We'll complete that background material in class number two. We had no questions from class number one. Remind you that you can turn in any questions that you like for one hour after the class is played each Wednesday evening. So, since we as always want to have God's blessing on the classes, I ask that you bow your head and join me.

[Prayer]

[1:45]

As we finished the last class, we were asking a question about the book of Galatians, as we look at the background: What is the value of this book for us?

Martin Luther loved the book of Galatians. He described himself as being married to it. Luther was of course very upset with the ritualism and the practices of Roman Catholicism of the day. And, of course, his hope was to reform it, which he was not able to do. But he also was enamored with the idea of "salvation by faith alone." And that, he thought, the book of Galatians taught. So, he felt it was his very favorite book.

This is the book, as we said, that is most used by those who want to find an excuse for doing away with God's law. Now, of course, I think most of us know that, to be honest, they're not really trying to do away with the law against killing or stealing or even adultery. What they want to get rid of is the Sabbath. So that's going to be core to what we will look at as we go further.

Virtually every commentary that you see will refer to the book of Galatians—will try to explain things from the book of Galatians, in the sense of saying: This is where Paul does away with the need to obey God in these laws—to keep these commandments. These commentaries, of course, are written by people who've spent their lives studying. They are incredibly intelligent scholars. How do we respond? I mean, we're not—I'm not saying we're not intelligent. But at the same time, when you look at what these people have done, what their background is, what their education is, what their degrees are, how in the world can we stand up and say: "You're wrong. We're right." How do we do that?

Well, basically, I think sometimes what we tend to do where the book of Galatians is concerned—let me back up on that a little bit. Those individuals who want to do away with some aspect of God's law—Sabbath, Holy Days, whatever it may be, clean and unclean foods—rather than beginning where God begins, they want to go out on the fringes, on little twigs, and say: "This shows this is wrong," or look at some aspect of it that's out there on the fringes—instead of starting right in the middle, where it should be. If you want to know about the Sabbath, you don't start with **Galatians 4 verse 10**—we will, of course, look at **Galatians 4:10** as we go further—but you don't begin there. You begin in **Genesis 2**, where the Sabbath is created, and what God says it's for.

You begin to look at those areas, but ultimately what we end up doing—when people challenge us through verses in the book of Galatians—is we end up running from one verse to another explaining the difficult scriptures, as we call them. And okay, we can answer those, but to be quite honest, if we really want to understand the book of Galatians and what those scriptures are, we need to wade right into the middle of it. We can't just run around. We can't be almost frightened by the statements that people make about the book of Galatians and what it supposedly says. I suppose, in a sense, I would put it in the way of saying: If you want to be a lion hunter, you better wade into some place where the lions are! And that's what we need to do with the book of Galatians. We need to just wade into it and confront it head on to figure out what it really says.

[5:45]

In the long run, what are we going to find? Well, I will tell you two things, that I hope as a goal for these classes on Galatians:

Number 1. I want you to be able to say that you have read every word of this book and there is not one place in the book that, in any way, does away with the law of God. We will look at every word, as we go forward, and you will emerge with that.

Now, the second thing is: you will also emerge with a few questions. It would be lovely if we could say we can answer every question. We really can't. We can give some possibilities. We can look at things, but we don't necessarily come up with every answer we might like to have.

I'm reminded of the student who came to ABC a number of years ago, who said that when he came, he had a list of questions that he wanted answers for. And at the end of the program, he had answers to almost all of them, but he had a whole new set of questions. Well, that's not bad. That's a process of learning.

What we're going to find, as we go through the book of Galatians is: we can have answers, we can understand—especially when we put the so-called difficult scriptures into the context of the whole book, instead of just pulling them out and examining them on their own. We can see the answers that are there; we can recognize what's there.

I'm reminded of—after I had covered the book of Galatians for the first time when I taught at ABC—I received a note from one of the students. It was an anonymous note. I never did know exactly who sent it, though I kind of suspected. But it told me that it was—actually very shortly after we had finished covering Galatians—that a group of the girls—four of them who lived in the same apartment—received a call from a friend of one of the girls who was not a part of the Church—the girl was but the fellow was not. And he called, and he wanted to—he was concerned about her being involved in this weird little church—and he wanted to show her from the book of Galatians that she really shouldn't be living that way, that the law was done away.

So, the four young ladies put him on speakerphone, and they let them talk about whatever he wanted to talk about or bring up whatever points he wanted. And, as she wrote the story to me, every time he brought up some point from Galatians—obviously he had been primed and prepared to do this—every time he brought up a point from Galatians, one of them had the answer. Not necessarily did all of them remember it at the same time, but one of them at least had the answer. And they were able to answer everything that he brought forward.

And then she said: "The conversation ended like most such conversations do, with everybody where they were when they started." In other words, you're not able to convince somebody who doesn't want to be convinced. But she went on to say: "How comforting it was to know that no matter what he brought up, we had answers, we could do that." I want you to be at that point by the time we finish.

[9:06]

So, when we talk about all of this—we talk about this book, we talk about the intellectuals who take it in a certain way, the theologians. And again, I don't mean to present that negatively. These are brilliant people. They just simply have not been called to understand the truth in the same way yet. How do we possibly answer them?

I'm going to use an approach which I borrowed from Dr. Tom Kirkpatrick, so give him credit for that. But I want to develop that particular approach to help us be able to understand and, quite honestly, to respond in a way that makes sense. We'll begin in **2 Peter**. Now, why do we begin to study **Galatians** in **2 Peter**?

Well, you'll see in a moment, as we look at **2 Peter 3 verses 15 and 16**.

Peter wrote toward the end of **2 Peter [3:15]** *And consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—*
He's talking about how God is patient. And then he goes on to say:

—as also our beloved brother Paul, —

Keep that in mind, because in Galatians we're going to see about a conflict that took place earlier between Paul and Peter. But he now calls him "*our beloved brother Paul*":

—according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, (verse 16) as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

Now I want to read that again from the *New Living Translation*. I like the way it puts it there. It says:

[Verse 16] *speaking of these things in all of his letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters to mean something quite different, just as they do with other parts of Scripture. And this will result in their destruction.*

So, the apostle Peter, toward the end of his life, says: "I really appreciate the wisdom that God has given Paul, and what he's written. Some of the things he wrote are kind of hard to understand."

[11:21]

Now when we go through **1 and 2 Peter** you will find that this is the pot calling the kettle black, because Peter also wrote some things, at times, that were a little challenging to understand. But I think it's fair, if an apostle says: "There are *things* here that can be *hard to understand*"—okay, it's going to be hard for us at times. But we need to work through them to grasp what's there. That's going to be a very important part of what we need to do.

So, the theme of this epistle is actually going to center around a verse we will find near the end of **[Galatians] chapter 3**. I'm not going to read it right now. But it has to do with *the promise* to Abraham and his seed. *The promise* in that Abrahamic covenant, was a promise of eternal life. Abraham was promised that he and his seed would receive blessings and promises forever. But that leaves us with a number of questions.

There are, clearly the vast majority of mankind, especially in the Gentile world, are not the descendants of Abraham. Does God include them too? How can Gentiles become the seed of Abraham? And are Jews the seed of Abraham by their physical lineage? Since "circumcision" was the "sign" of God's covenant with Abraham, then isn't circumcision required of all who want to receive the promises in that covenant? Since *the wages of sin is death* and *all have sinned*, —that "wage" is for both Jews and Gentiles—how can a person get out from under the penalty of death? That's a very important question!

In fact, as we look at this book, we're going to find there are a lot of questions that pop up for us, one after another. That automatically—looking at how do you become the seed of Abraham, and what hope is there for Gentiles—leads to a related theme called "justification." Justification is a word that, again, I think many people don't understand. In essence, it means "the rendering of a person as innocent of sin and its penalty." Doesn't mean "they didn't commit the sin," but it means "the penalty is paid." And as Dr. Kirkpatrick put it very simply—great phrase: "What can I do on Tuesday to make up for the sin I committed on Monday? How can I be made right with God after I have sinned?"

[14:13]

One of our students in, I think it was—it wasn't that first year—but it was very early on when I was teaching, came up with an interesting phrase. Her phrase was: "How do you unsin?" In other words: "I've sinned; is there a way to unsin? Is there a way to take that away? What can I do? What power do I have to take away the death penalty? Is there is something we can do to make ourselves right with God?" Because if there is something we can do that takes away the penalty of sin, then we really don't need the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

But if forgiveness and justification is a *free gift* from God, and we cannot do anything to earn forgiveness, well then, are we really required to live by God's law? I mean, after all, what difference does it make? If we can't make ourselves right, and God is the only one who can, then okay, God is gracious, do I really need to obey at all? Isn't accepting God's offer of forgiveness enough? Because that is what's taught in much of Protestantism—that all you have to do is accept Jesus. Come down the aisle, confess, accept Jesus, and you are saved.

Well, is that really what it says? If we require, on the other hand, obedience to laws, any laws, including the 10 Commandments, then aren't we trying to earn our own salvation, and ignoring the saving power of Christ's sacrifice? In principle, doesn't "doing away with the law of circumcision" do away with all law? After all, if we're saved by *grace*, are works even necessary? Are "grace" and "works" contradictory? Lot of questions!

Now, one of the things that's really interesting is that for all of those questions, there are people with answers. Problem is, not all the answers are right. So, what do we do? There are a lot of divergent explanations on passages in Galatians, and for that matter, other passages in Paul's writings. I will show you one, as we go further in the year, where there have been over two hundred different explanations for one verse. So how can you tell what's right?

Those who put forward the explanations for Galatians are, in many cases, very highly educated scholars. And we're not. But even the scholars can't agree with each other. So how can you and I hope to sort all of this out? Well, it's actually not as difficult as you might think.

[17:18]

In **Matthew 11 verse 25** Jesus said: *At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.*

The way for you and me to understand is not because we are so intellectually wise, and we can go head-to-head with the scholars. But we do recognize that God has revealed things. Okay. So what—we sit at home in our private prayer closet and we pray: "God help me understand Galatians." And whatever comes out, that's the revelation of God? Well, no. That's not really going to work very well. But God has *revealed to babes*.

If we can use the Scripture—God's revealed Word—to establish boundaries on what explanations can be considered and what explanations contradict Scripture, then we can basically construct a frame that allows us to consider the questions and the answers.

So how do we start?

Well, **Ephesians chapter 2** is a great place to start, **verses 19 and 20**—verses that we gave you when you first came here.

He says: **19** *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (and then this:)* **20** *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,*

So, we want to consider the questions and the answers. But in a broad sense, let's see how we're going to do that. The very first thing we need to do is establish a foundation. A foundation that begins our frame; that starts with the teachings of Jesus Christ. In other words, anything that contradicts what Jesus Christ Himself said, cannot be true. It doesn't matter how educated the person may be—who puts forward the explanation—if it's outside of that, it's not true.



So, let's consider a few of the things that Jesus said. We're going to look at a lot of Scriptures in the remainder of the class here, as we do this.

First of all, **Matthew 5 verses 17** through **20**. He says: *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.*

Okay. Now, we could stop there. But I don't want to stop there. I want to keep going a little bit further. But, Mr. Myers has explained to you the concept of what Jesus Christ is saying: “Not even the smallest part of the law's going to pass away.” And the fact that it says *till all is fulfilled* is not a statement that there is coming a point that it **will** pass away. It's simply a statement that means: In our human experience, this isn't going to happen.

[20:35]

Let's go on: **verse 19** *Whoever therefore (as a result of what He's just said) breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; [but] whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

Now, lest anyone think: “Well okay. You can disobey, and you can teach the wrong thing. It's just, you will be in the kingdom, but you won't have any great power,” He clarifies it in the next verse:

Verse 20 *For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*

You're not going to *be* there, if you do these things.

Okay. Let's go little bit further, toward—it's still the same sermon on the Mount:

Matthew 7 verse 21 through **23**: *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ 23 And [then] I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’*

Remember our term? *Anomia*: “living as if there is no law.” Those who *practice* this. Now, we're not talking about a person who stumbles and repents. We're talking about a person who lives in a certain way of life—those who *practice* living life as if there is no law—those individuals will not be there.

Further, in **Matthew 19 verse 16**: *Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” 17 [So] He said [to him], “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”* (Not a hard statement to

understand!)

Now, He's not saying: "You will earn life," at this point. But He's simply saying: "Here's a prerequisite. You want the gift—you have to do certain things."

18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" (Okay.)

Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' **19** 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

[23:04]

Okay. Now again, believe it or not, there are people who say: "Okay. These are the only commandments you need to obey. He didn't say anything about the Sabbath." Well, yeah. He didn't say anything about honoring your parents. He didn't say anything about idols. He didn't say anything about stealing—well, yes, He did say something about stealing. Sorry. That one's there.

No, He's simply pointing out: "Okay. When you say *which* commandments. Okay. Here are the commandments. You should pretty well recognize that,"—you know what He's talking about.

So, Jesus makes it very clear that *if you want to enter into life*, this is something you must do. Now, we will talk, as we go further here—because it's very important in the book of Galatians to understand—Paul is making the point that you cannot, in any way, earn salvation. It is a gift from God. You cannot earn it. What you do will never produce salvation.

So then, again, people will say: "Well if I can earn it by keeping the law, then why do I bother keeping the law?" Okay, we'll see, as we go further, that isn't what the law was for. That isn't what it was meant to be used for. But it doesn't mean you can throw it all away.

Let's look again, another passage, you all know it very well—a memory verse: **Mark chapter 2 verse 27** and **28**:

*And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. **28** Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."*

And again, wouldn't that be—let's put that into different terms. Let's say someone says: "I'm the ruler of the state of Texas." Okay. Now. We do away with the state of Texas. We absorb it back into Mexico. Then being the ruler of the state of Texas wouldn't mean much of anything, would it? I mean, it would be kind of a strange thing to say—it doesn't exist anymore. So, who cares who's the ruler? Jesus Christ said: "I am the *Lord of the Sabbath!*" If it's done away, that's a stupid statement, and Jesus Christ did not make stupid statements.

One more passage of Jesus' own words: **Matthew 24 verses 4 and 5**. [And] *Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.*

Remember He's talking to His disciples here. He's not talking to the world.

*... "Take heed that no one deceives you. **5** For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and (they) will deceive many.*

So Jesus Christ warns us about the danger of being deceived.

So, we begin with the foundation of Jesus Christ's words. If someone disagrees with those words—I'm sorry, it doesn't matter how interesting their explanation is—[it] doesn't square.

[25:47]

Where do we go from there? We've laid a good foundation. Now what?

Well, there were a group of individuals who spent three and a half years with Jesus Christ directly—the apostles. And they know what He taught. They are well-aware of his teachings. So, what they had to say can form the second side of our frame. What did the other apostles teach?

We won't look at quite as many passages, but let's consider a few from the apostle John.

The very first one **1 John 2 verses 3 and 4**: *Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

Okay, that's a pretty clear statement. That's not hard to understand at all. And remember, it's written toward, probably 70 to 80 A.D.—late in the first century. John is the last of the apostles left alive and he writes his epistles later on. So, we're looking 50 years after the death of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Church. This is what John the apostle was still teaching.

Let's go to **chapter 3**, same epistle. **1 John 3 verse 4**—memory verse: *Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.*

Sin is living as if there is no law. Again, the *old King James*: ... *sin is the transgression of the law.* Perfectly legitimate way to see this.

Couple of chapters further on. **1 John 5 verses 2 and 3** (John says) *By this we know that we love the children of God, —*

Oh! Didn't "love" take the place of obedience? Well:

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

I really don't like the punctuation on this, in any of the translations that I've found because I think that, instead of it being a period after *we keep His commandments*, I think there should be a comma because it's saying not only that we keep them, but the *attitude* with which we keep them. We don't find them burdensome. We find them a joy. And again, I think many people—you have probably experienced yourself—many people think the Sabbath is a terrible burden and that it needed to be lifted off of people. You're Sabbath keepers. You don't dread the coming of the Sabbath, you rejoice in it. You look forward to it. It is not a burden to you.

[28:38]

One more passage, this one from **2 John**, and let's look at **verses 5 and 6**. He says: *And now I plead with you, lady, (this is—we'll see later—is a reference to the Church) not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another.*

Oh yes, that's good! Now what?

Verse 6 *This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.*

Okay. Now we've already seen that Peter talked about people twisting Paul's words to their own destruction. So, we at least see the example of some of the other apostles. And we could go to James, we could go to different places there. But for the sake of time, we illustrate that: Okay. We now have two sides to our frame:



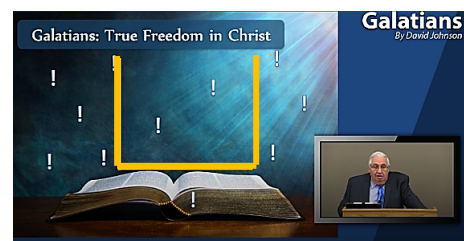
The foundation is what Jesus Christ said.

The first post on one side—the border on the side—is what the other apostles say.

Okay. What else can we do to build our frame? Well, we are told: [**John 10:34**] *Scripture cannot be broken*. In other words, you can't say one thing in one place and something else somewhere else. So, what did Paul say in other places? Outside of the book of Galatians, what did Paul say? He must be consistent. So let's add that part of our frame.

Romans chapter 3 verse 31 Paul says: *Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.*

The phrase *certainly not* is in the Greek, *mē genoito*. It is used basically by Paul. I'm not sure anybody else even uses it. But it is a very strong phrase. It is the strongest way you can say: "That's a really dumb idea." I mean, that's, paraphrasing, obviously. But that's what Paul is saying: "How can you even think such a thing. What a ridiculous way of thinking!"



And that's what he says here: *Do we make void the law* because we have *faith*? What a ridiculous idea! *On the contrary, we establish the law.*

Now when we go through Romans, we'll look at that little bit more.

[31:02]

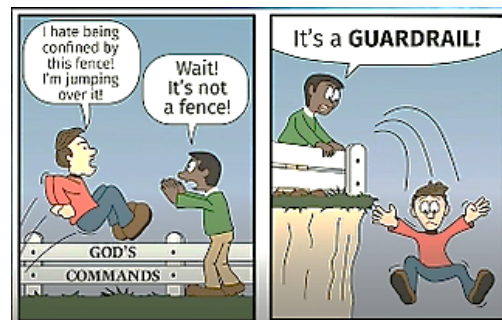
Romans 7 verse 7—we're going to look at about four verses here from **Romans 7**. He says: *What shall we say then?* (I'm sorry, skipped over the slide. There we go—the next one) —

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? (Ah!) Certainly not! (mē genoito!) On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."

Paul says: "What's the value of the law? The law doesn't save me. Obedience to it doesn't save me. But the law helps me understand what's right and wrong. What's good and bad."

The law says: "Don't covet." How many people in this world would ever understand that coveting was sinful unless the law told us it was? Paul said: "I didn't realize that." He coveted, he desired, he wanted things that were not his, like every human being does. I mean, think of a child. A child doesn't want to share certain toys with others because: "It's mine! I don't want to share that."

It's a basic human thing that we do. But God says: "No, that's not the way you need to think." We wouldn't know that if the law didn't define it for us.



I like this illustration very much because this one says—a person says: “I don’t want to be confined by God’s commandments. I’m jumping over it. I’m jumping over the fence.” And the other person says: “Nah, it’s not a fence. It’s a guardrail.” It keeps you from going over the edge.

We’ve used the illustration before, of crossing a very high bridge. If there were no guard rails, you would be right in the center of that bridge, going carefully. But because there are guard rails, you can go straight across it. You’re not going to run into them. They protect you. They tell you that: “Between the rails, I’m safe.” And that’s what the law of God does for us. That’s what Paul says.

[33:07]

Romans 7 verse 12. Here’s what he says about the law: *[Therefore] the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.*

Does this sound like somebody who wants to do away with the law? The commandment is “*holy and just and good.*”

A little further in that chapter—just a couple of verses further down: **verse 14** *[For] we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

We will find that many of the commentaries try to throw away the law of God by saying: “It was just a physical law for a physical people.” No. *The law is spiritual.*

Now there are certain commands that God gave to ancient Israel as a physical nation that don’t apply in the same way today. Although, even there, we recognize the principle that’s involved. Say, for example, part of the law that God gave to Israel was: You must put a wall—a protective wall—around the edge of your roof so that no one falls off. Okay. As Christians today, we don’t put protective barriers on our roofs. Our homes are different. They’re not built the same way. But is there a principle there, for a Christian, that says: If you’ve got a dangerous situation, you have a duty to your neighbor to protect him—to do something to make sure that there is no damage. So, we see the principle is still there. Yes, there’s a physical part of it, but there is a principle as well.

Again, **Romans 7 verse 22** (Paul says) *For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.*

“This is something I find delightful.” Do you want to do away with something that’s delightful? If someone came to you and said: “You know, from now on, and the rest of your life, you may never again eat chocolate.” Now most of you would rebel. I would too—but I mean not particularly the “rebel” part—but chocolate is something that’s pleasant for most people. Not everybody, but most people enjoy it. Okay. If somebody came along and said: “No—well no, you can’t have chocolate anymore.” That would be a great disappointment because it’s something you “delight in.”

Paul says: “*I delight in the law of God.* That’s not something I want to be away from. It’s not something I want to get away from. It’s something that brings me *delight*. It’s not a burden. It’s a pleasure.”

[35:41]

One more passage from Paul. **1 Corinthians 7 verse 19.** Paul says, in the context there:

Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing (they’re meaningless), but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.

Now, that’s a legitimate translation. The original Greek doesn’t put it exactly that way. But as we covered—when we went through 1 Corinthians—it is a logical construct to come to that, to realize that’s what he’s saying: “*Circumcision* doesn’t mean anything to God. *Uncircumcision* doesn’t mean anything in that

physical sense. But the *keeping of the commandments*.” Now that’s where the Greek stops. But if it says: “This is nothing. This is nothing. But *this ...*” it’s pretty logical to say: “Okay, that’s important. That’s something that God sees a need for.”

So, we have three sides to our frame. What is it that will top it off?

Well, we’ve looked at what Jesus said. We looked at what the other apostles said. We looked at what Paul said. That still leaves an awful lot of a book called “the Bible” that we haven’t looked at. What does the rest of Scripture say?

Well, look at **Genesis 26 verse 5**. This will be important because we’re talking about the covenant with Abraham:

5 because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

Okay. That’s important for a variety of reasons. But one of the things we want to keep in mind is: people go to **Exodus chapter 20**, when Israel is coming out of Egypt, 400 and some years later at Mount Sinai—the 10 Commandments are codified there. Now we recognize they’ve always existed. But this scripture makes the point that long before, over four centuries before the Old Covenant was made with Israel, Abraham was obeying God’s *commandments, statutes, laws*. He makes it clear: this is what Abraham was doing. So, this is not something that’s confined to the Old Covenant.

Exodus 16 verse 28. Again, we have to kind of plug in the context of what we’re dealing with here. **Exodus 16 verse 28**. This is where God had given Israel manna for the first time and he told them: “Okay. Collect a certain amount each day. Don’t go beyond that. Don’t try to keep it for days on end, but instead just collect what you need for that day. And on the sixth day of the week you can collect twice as much because there won’t be any on the seventh.” This is what [the] practice was to be. But as we see there in **Exodus 16** some of the people went out on the Sabbath to try to collect and there was nothing there.

[38:33]

So that leads to **verse 28** where God said to Moses, “...*How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws?*”

The Sabbath was a command in **Exodus 16**. It didn’t come into existence in **Exodus 20**. It was already there, and they were breaking God’s commands and laws.

A longer passage—take a couple of slides to look at this one.

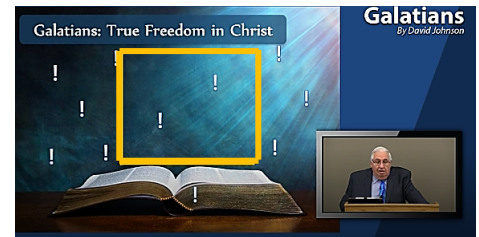
Jeremiah chapter 31 starting in **verse 31**. Jeremiah was inspired to write: “*Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—*

Again, this emphasizes the point that this covenant is being made, not just with the Jews, but with the Jews and Israel. He goes on to say:

Verse 32 *not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord.*

Again, there’s a great deal there. **Jeremiah** is a very emotional book and it’s one that I think it’s a very moving thing to read.

We go on to **verse 33**: *But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,*



says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; [and] I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Very moving passage. It will be quoted, to a great degree, in the book of **Hebrews** as well, when we get to **Hebrews 8**. But He very clearly talks about the covenant He's going to make. Now, again, this is written in the days of Jeremiah. So, this is before—Israel's already gone into captivity. Judah is about to go into captivity before long, and this New Covenant is to be made. Has this ever been done? Is there a time when, for Israel— (I'm not talking about converted people, that's a different matter)—but for Israel, the laws of God have been written in their minds and hearts? No. Has not happened at all.

[41:05]

I really again would encourage you to note that aspect: that the law is to be written in the *mind*—which is where thinking and decisions take place—and it is written in the *heart*, which has to do with attitude and values. When you study Education, you find that there are three areas of learning. There is—well, to make it simple—what we call head, heart and hands.

First of all, you've got to get they head knowledge.

Then you have to assign value to that.

And third, you have to figure out how to use it.

This addresses two of those. Maybe the third one, in a sense, as well, because it talks about what each one will do.

Let's look at another passage in the New Testament. **James chapter 2** (he says) *If you really fulfill the royal law—this is starting in **verse 8**: If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;*

This is the foundational principle behind God's law.

*But (**verse 9**) if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*

Now again, James is writing toward the end of the first century. He says: "The law convicts you of being a transgressor"—one who goes against the law.

10 *For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*

The law goes together; you're not allowed to dissect it. It's not a cafeteria issue where you can go along and choose: "This law I'll obey, and that one I won't." It's a package. You take the whole thing. You break one—you're guilty of all.

11 *For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law (you've disobeyed God). 12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.*

One more passage. **James 2 verse 24** and **verse 26** he says: *You see then that a man is justified—*

Remember, "justify": rendered innocent of past guilt.

—a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

Now we'll see again, works alone won't justify you.

But: **verse 26** *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

[43:35]

Also, those who would advocate that all you need is faith, trust God, accept the sacrifice of Christ—that's it. **James** says: "No. That kind of faith is dead. It accomplishes nothing."

So we come back to our illustration. We have established a frame. We started with a group of questions and a *lot* of answers. But most of those answers are excluded. They're outside. But we also notice something else.

We don't have to spend our time really even looking at those that are outside the frame. You don't have to argue about those. They're gone. We don't have to work with those.

But you may also notice that inside the frame, we have more than one answer. We have more than one thing that fits *inside* the frame for our question. So, what does it tell us?

Well, sometimes as we look at certain aspects of this book, we're going to find that there may be more than one answer that can be correct. And I know that we'll show you a couple of those as we go through this book. A couple of things you can look at and say: "Well, this looks like a good answer. That one is also a legitimate answer. It fits inside of this. It doesn't contradict those things that we've looked at."

Some people are very uncomfortable with that. Some people want there to be one, and only one, answer to every question. Wouldn't life be easier if it were that way? But it isn't. And likewise, as we go through this, we're going to find that sometimes there may be more than one answer.

Now, as you look at it—and it's one that we'll spend a little bit of time on little bit later—you may have a preference for one of those explanations. You may look at it and say: "I think this is the stronger one, the better one, but I have to acknowledge the other one is a possibility. Because, after all, it doesn't conflict with what Christ said, what the other apostles said, what Paul said, or what I find in the rest of Scripture. So, I need to look at both of them.

As I said, I may have a preference. I may choose one as my go-to answer. But Scripture allows me to have more than one answer to it. But we will also find that *none* of the acceptable answers does away with God's law. That is not going to happen!

So, with that in mind were ready to look at what Paul actually says. But, we are just about done with class, and there's no sense in starting into **chapter 1** with just a few minutes left. So, we'll go ahead and stop there, and we'll pick up in the next class, **Galatians 1 verse 1**.

[46:36]