

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 02 Sept	Galatians 1:1-24	True Gospel
2) 09 Sept	Galatians 2:1-21	True Grace
3) 16 Sept	Galatians 3:1-22	True Life
4) 23 Sept	Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-7	True Heirs
5) 30 Sept	Galatians 4:8-31	True Freedom
6) 07 Oct	Galatians 5:1-26	True Fruit
7) 14 Oct	Galatians 6:1-18	True Compassion
8) 21 Oct	James 1:1-18	With Perseverance
9) 28 Oct	James 1:19-27	With Obedience
10) 04 Nov	James 2:1-26	With Works
11) 11 Nov	James 3:1-18	With Control
12) 18 Nov	James 4:1-17	With Submission
13) 25 Nov	James 5:1-20	With Anticipation

INTRODUCTION

- Life gets complicated when we are prejudiced
- Prejudice or favoritism means we use superficial standards to judge another's worth and we often react accordingly
- Favoritism also means being kind and forgiving to some, but not to all
- God's directive → Treat everyone (including in-laws) with respect regardless of sex, race, religion or creed.
- Only sinful or prodigal behavior should cause us to put up barriers

Passage	Comments
James 2:1-4	<p>Favoritism is judgment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most feel favoritism/prejudice is just a very small sin • James stresses that favoritism/prejudice/respect of persons destroys our core mission – to win the weak, the distressed, the poor • A rich man comes to church and we think "TITHER" • A poor man comes to church and we think "BURDEN" • Note: Statistically, poorer Christians give more to the Lord's work than rich Christians • Test: A millionaire gives 10%, and a minimum wage earner gives 15% of earnings. From God's perspective, who gave more?
2:5-7	<p>Favoritism is Unreasonable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v5 – "Listen" carefully to this argument <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Why does God prefer the poor to be rich in faith? • Can you imagine coming to a church where races are segregated, and the wealthy have cushioned pews while the poor sit on plastic chairs or on the floor • Realize this. The poor & other distressed people (the sick, handicapped, harassed) have special standing with God Is 56:4-5; Mic 4:6-7; Zeph 3:19
2:8-13	<p>Favoritism is Sinful</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v9- Favoritism or Prejudice is sinful..... Lev 19:15 • v10. We cannot pick & choose which laws to keep. It is all or nothing. • vv11-13. The individual laws make up a SYSTEM which is "indivisible" – cannot be divided. The Law has a diagnostic purpose and serves as an ethical guide
2:14-17	<p>Faith without works is dead (3x – 2:17, 20, 26)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christianity does not have a works-based salvation/justification (Gal 2:16) process, but it does have a works-based sanctification process • vv15-16. Is helping others unconditional? See Detour. • v19. Why compare what devils believe to what we believe? "...the devils also believe (in one God) and tremble"? Answer: To show that saving faith is not head knowledge but Head and Heart knowledge (we believe, and we act on that belief)

Passage	Comments
Quick Detour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv15-16. James makes an appeal we should help a "brother or sister" in need. Not to do so screams that our faith is totally useless. But is this unconditional? • Just because a passage doesn't state any conditions doesn't mean it is unconditional. We must always consider the whole counsel of God <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Consider this. Prodigal Son came to his senses when he realized no one gave him anything.....Lk 15 ♦ Another Consideration. Even Paul said, "If one doesn't work, he doesn't eat" 2Thes 3:10 • Therefore, our help is conditional based on one's behavior, else we are enabling them to continue in sin
2:18-26	<p>Faith Without Works is USELESS!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v18. How should we reconcile "a man is justified by works and not faith alone" with Gal 2:16 – "a man is NOT justified by works of the law..." and Eph 2:8, 9 we are saved by grace not by works? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Answer: Gal 2 & Eph 2 deal with pre-salvation qualification (unearned) and James 2 deals with post-salvation by-products (works) • v22. Faith is perfected with works. HOW? <p>Example: James 1:27 says to visit the orphans and widows (help them). Yet, Isaiah 9:17 says God does not show pity or help orphans and widows who are wicked. So, we follow several biblical principles to obey this command: We 1st need to "prove all things" (1Thes 5:21) by validating there is no prodigal behavior and they are widows or orphans "indeed" (1Tim 5:3). Then we sacrifice time, money, and/or effort to provide relief by paying some bills, making repairs or errands, cutting grass, etc. We then live "expectantly" (Rom 8:25) for God to bless in several possible ways either in this life or in the next:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All things work together for our good ...Rom 8:28 2. We reap what we sow Gal 6:7 3. Our rewards come with the Lord Rev 22:12

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- In brief, our faith is exercised when we obey God's clear directives in Scripture. When we obey by giving, sharing, helping, etc, those are works that "perfect" or complete our faith. It's that simple.

NEXT WEEK: James 3. James 3 deals with the following issues:

1. Don't be too quick to jump into teaching/leadership roles
2. Controlling our tongue around our friends and family
3. Seeking godly wisdom to successfully sail through life



A sad reality in a sin-soaked society...