

A Galatians Retroview: 5 Walk-A-Ways

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[0:00] This afternoon, I have the privilege of giving the eulogy at a funeral. And this man that has died, he has lived a compelling, compelling life for Christ.

He's the father of a sister from our church. Many of us don't know who this man is. But I have found myself asking, what am I all about?

And I found myself wanting to ask us as a church, Christ the King Church, what are we all about? You may answer that question, well, I'm all about the Packers, or I'm about the Bears, or I'm about my family, my kids, my grandkids. I'm all about my health. I'm all about my city.

I'm all about my career. But Christ the King Church, really, what are we all about? Are we about this old historic building?

[1:02] Are we about helping people in need? Is that all we're about? Are we all about having close, meaningful relationships with one another? What are we all about?

We're all about the gospel. And that is the whole point of the entire book of Galatians. If I were to summarize the book of Galatians in a sentence, it would be this.

The gospel of Jesus Christ alone frees us from slavery to sin in order to live together for God. That's what Paul's getting at. That's what God is getting at. The gospel alone frees us from slavery to sin in order for us to live for God.

And so I know on the title of this sermon, I have Galatians, a retro view, five walkaways. It's just going to be four walkaways. So four walkaways from our four plus months of simmering in the book of Galatians.

[2:13] Let me name you these four walkaways. First, our first walkaway is our one true gospel.

We've got to be clear on the gospel. It is God's power unto salvation. Our second walkaway is being aware of our old gospel enemy, legalism.

Our third walkaway is our new gospel identity, believing what God says about you, not what the world says about you.

And our fourth walkaway from Galatians is our new gospel community. In Christ Jesus, we have a new social value system.

The summary of Galatians, again, is this. The gospel alone frees us from slavery to sin in order to live for God. And so here's the deal. We as a church moving forward, we must keep in step with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[3:23] In other words, we must be all about the gospel. So let's focus in on this first walkaway. We want to avoid the mistake of which James 1.22 warns us not to forget what we've seen in this book, but to apply it.

So our first walkaway moving forward is being clear on the one true gospel. If you looked at the beginning and the end of the book of Galatians, you're going to notice something.

In verse 4 of Galatians chapter 1, Paul is talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. And he says, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age.

That little phrase, who gave himself for our sins, that's a way of summarizing the gospel. The good news of what God has done through Jesus Christ.

And you notice what the gospel does. For those who believe, it delivers us from this present evil age, which is just another way of talking about the world.

[4:37] Now, if you flip to the back of Galatians, Galatians chapter 6, in verses 11 through 16, particular verses 14 through 15, we read Paul

saying this, But far be it for me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.

Now, I find it very interesting that Paul begins and ends this letter to the Galatians by talking about the gospel, Christ crucified, and that it delivers us from this present evil age, the world.

This book, from beginning to end, is all about Christ crucified, the power of God, and what that does for us, what God has done for us.

At the heart of the gospel is Christ's substitutionary death for sinners on the cross.

He gave himself up for our sins. Christ crucified on our behalf. And all the way through, from beginning to end, everything in the middle of this book of Galatians, is all about the gospel.

[5:59] Now, Billy started the service earlier on. He read a passage from 1 Corinthians 1, in which Paul talked about the gospel as God's power in wisdom.

Paul in Romans 1.16 describes the gospel as God's power unto salvation. And we start picking up on that all the way through Galatians.

So let me just give you a quick tour de force. In 1.6 and 7, there is only one true gospel that actually saves people from sin. 1.11, we learn that it's not man's gospel, but this good news of Christ crucified, this is God's good news to fallen humanity.

This is a message from God. And 2.5, the truth of this one true gospel, it must be protected and preserved. And 2.7, this gospel is entrusted to be proclaimed to the nations, uncircumcised and circumcised.

2.14, our conduct is either in step with this gospel, or it's out of step with this gospel. And 2.15 through 21, this gospel justifies all who would believe.

[7:16] This week, I was listening to WNBI, and I heard Colin Smith, he is a Scottish preacher serving at the Orchard Church in Arlington Heights. I can't give you a Scottish accent.

I wish I could, but here's what he said. We don't obey in order to come to Christ. We come to Christ in order to obey.

The gospel declares that a sinner is made right with God based on the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Not our works. And so when we read 2.20, that the gospel announces that sinners have been co-crucified with Christ and co-risen with Christ, we've been united with Christ.

At the heart of that is Christ's death and resurrection. It's all about the gospel. And 3.8, The gospel was preached beforehand to Abraham, quote, In you shall all the nations be blessed.

[8:25] This gospel is a big gospel. God's plan for the fullness of time realized in Jesus. And 3.15 through 18, we learn that God's blessing to all nations promised to Abraham would come through one of Abraham's offspring, quote, Who is Christ?

Gospel. Christ crucified is God's good news of blessing to all nations. 3.13, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law.

Redemption is another way of talking about what the cross does. In 3.26, we learn that in Christ Jesus, you are all sons of God by faith.

Adoption is another way of talking about what the cross of Christ has done. 4.4-7, again, talks about redemption and combines it with adoption.

We're justified. We're redeemed. We're adopted. All because of the cross of Jesus Christ. We can cry out, Abba, Father, by the Spirit in us because of the cross of Jesus Christ.

[9:41] 4.28, adoption. 5.1, for freedom Christ has set us free. That's redemption language. 5.13-24, because of the gospel, we no longer walk by the flesh, we walk by the Spirit so that we can fulfill the law of God.

Gospel. 6.2, we bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. The gospel sings to our hearts as we serve one another.

It's because of the gospel. It's the new creation rule by which we walk. Galatians, from beginning to end, is all about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It just doesn't start and end with the gospel. It is packed full of gospel. It's all about the one true gospel of Jesus Christ.

And let me just let you know, it's only that gospel that can save sinners. You can't add works to the gospel, nor can you remove the cross of Christ from the gospel.

[10:53] If you add to it or remove from it, you don't have a gospel anymore. There's only one true gospel, and you can sum it up with just two words, Christ crucified.

So our first walk away is this huge emphasis on the gospel of Jesus Christ, and it just doesn't get us into the kingdom.

It helps us live out being citizens of the kingdom. So now we turn to the second walk away. Wouldn't it be great if we as a church, back to the first walk away, wouldn't it be great if moving forward for weeks and months and years, Lord willing, ahead, we are gospel-centered like Galatians is?

Now to the second walk away, the old gospel enemy. Throughout this letter, Paul repeatedly warns of a false gospel, a distorted gospel.

And so let me just tell you up front, a distorted gospel is a dud of a gospel. It can't do anything. Here's a nice thought.

[12:11] Just imagine a hot August summer day in Kenosha. You're walking down 73rd Street. It's the street I live on.

You're sweating up a storm because it's like 90-something degrees out with Wisconsin humidity. I'm on my front porch. I see you walking by. You're a sweat hog. I've got compassion on you.

And I say to you, hey, would you like a cold glass of water? And you're like, absolutely. I'm so sweaty and hot.

I'm so weary. I say, well, come up onto my stoop. And I run into the house. 30 seconds later, I am back and I hand you a tall, cold glass of water packed full of ice brimming with water.

And it even has that kind of perspiration on the outside of the glass because it's so humid. You know what I'm talking about? Your mouth is so parched.

[13:15] And as you bring that glass up to your lips, I happen to mention to you, oh, by the way, I just put a drip of my dog's blood in that glass of water.

What would you do? Would you knock that baby back? You'd be like, you'd throw the glass against my house. You'd be like, what are you thinking?

I'm not drinking that polluted water. It's not good for me. Legalism pollutes the one true gospel into something else.

A corrupted gospel is a contrary gospel. A distorted gospel is a dud of a gospel. It's blood water. You don't want it.

There's no power in it. Legalism. Legalism corrupts the one true gospel of Jesus Christ into something else.

[14:22] A legalistic approach to religion has no power to justify you. It has no power to redeem you. There's nothing in it that brings you about the adoption, the spirit dwelling, a new creation, making you a citizen of the Jerusalem from above.

It's got no power to do that. In fact, it only just condemns you. The legalism of the first century in Galatia was this. Jews were insisting that Gentiles, in order to become Christians, had to first become Jews.

Jews. That means men had to be circumcised. That was what's going on with a little powwow we read about in chapter 2, 1 through 10. There was also this insistence that in order to be a true Christian, you needed to observe Jewish dietary restrictions.

You had to eat kosher. That's the big deal of what we see going on in 2.12. And then there was this kind of insistence that you need to observe Jewish holy days.

Make sure Yom Kippur is on your calendar and you observe it. We see that reference in 4.10 through 11. But what you need to understand, that's not the gospel.

[15:35] You're not justified by works. The good news of Jesus Christ is not what we must do. You're not justified by your works.

You're not redeemed through circumcision. You're not adopted by eating kosher. And you're not indwelt by the Spirit by observing Jewish holy days. When we try to sneak our own works into our standing with God, we are actually trying to broker our own salvation.

That's not good news, brothers and sisters. That's our old gospel enemy. That's legalism. If the pure, true gospel is a cup of cold glass water to the soul on a hot summer day in this present evil age, legalism is the drip of dog blood that changes its very essence.

The essence of legalism is a salvation dependent upon the obedience of man. It's a man-centered salvation and it doesn't save.

The essence of the gospel is that salvation depends solely on the finished substitutionary work of Jesus Christ, Christ crucified. It's a God-centered salvation.

[17:01] It's by grace alone. And today, there's all sorts of legalisms, both major scale and minor scale.

The health and wealth gospel, the prosperity gospel, is actually a kind of legalism. It's saying that if you want to experience the riches and the health today that Jesus died for, then you just need to believe more.

It puts salvation on you. It's no salvation. There's a kind of Pentecostalism that says in order for you to be saved, you must speak in tongues.

In order for you to be saved, you must speak in tongues? In order for you to be saved, you must believe in the finished work of Jesus Christ. There's no salvation in provings by speaking in tongues.

It's no salvation. There's some Christians out there that says in order to be saved, you must be baptized. Baptism doesn't save you.

[18:15] Being united to Christ in His death and resurrection saves you. That's what baptism symbolizes. There is a little phrase that you need to be aware of.

Maybe it's in your own thinking or when you hear a bubble up from somebody else, it goes something like this. Real Christians don't fill in the blank. Real Christians don't watch R-rated movies.

Real Christians don't let their kids play video games. Real Christians don't drink alcohol. Real Christians don't smoke or chew or go out with girls who do. watching an R-rated movie is not going to save you or unsave you.

Your kids playing video games is not going to save them or unsave them. Drinking alcohol is not going to save you or unsave you. Dating a girl who chews tobacco Now if you're united to Christ if you've been born of the Spirit it informs the movies you watch.

It informs how you the video games you play. It informs what foods you take in. Romans 14 out of love you don't want to cause anybody to stumble by drinking alcohol.

[19:50] It's not worth it. It doesn't save you. The finished work of Christ saves you. Real Christians homeschool their children.

Real Christians eat only what's in the Bible. Ezekiel bread. Jesus declared all foods clean. Eat whatever you want. That's the real biblical sense.

Amen. Real Christians give 10%. Real Christians invest in gold. Real Christians pay in cash only. Real Christians never go into debt. Your salvation isn't dependent on any of that.

Your salvation informs these things. How you educate your children. What kind of foods you eat. Your giving. Your investments.

How you manage your money. Whether you go into debt or not. But certainly only the cross of Christ saves you. Remember that Colin Smith quote?

[20:54] We do not obey in order to come to Christ. We come to Christ in order to obey. Legalism says we obey in order to come to Christ.

Here's how this shows up. one of you sins. And you're a total mess about it. How could I do that again? And instead of running to the finished work of Jesus Christ and finding a cup of cold water for your soul you start doing things like this.

I'm just going to read my Bible more. I'm going to pray more. I'm going to give more. I'm going to go to church more. I'm going to atone for my sin by these works.

And Jesus' blood has covered it all. Brothers and sisters your works cannot save you nor do they keep you saved. It's only the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Here's what you need to understand as we move forward together. We learn from Galatians chapter 5 that we have our bodies if you're a Christian our civil war. You have the flesh that internal power in you towards self-centeredness and then there's the spirit at work in you who wants you to

live for God and they're in conflict with one another.

[22:16] Here's what you need to know about your flesh. Your flesh loves legalism. Give me rules. Because your flesh loves to be self-righteous.

justified. A corrupt gospel is a contrary gospel. A distorted gospel is a dud of a gospel.

Man-centered legalism cannot save nor keep you safe. It just further condemns and confuses. Do you remember this? Run, John, run, the law demands, but gives us neither feet nor hands.

A far better news the gospel brings. It bids us fly and gives us Holy Spirit wings. As long as we're in this side of glory, we will need to be aware of in fighting by faith the corrupting influence of legalism, the flesh, and the world.

we have an old gospel enemy seeking to corrupt us. Let's move forward sobered by that.

[23:30] But here's where I want to bring you now. Here's how we fight that legalistic pull on our flesh. It's with the third walk away. And it's the one I've been looking forward to most to preaching this morning.

It's our new gospel identity. Let's just pretend we all go out to your car and we open up the hood. And as we're looking at the battery, we can help that on the battery terminals, you know those little metal stumps that are sticking out.

It looks like Frankenstein stumps but sticking out. Well, those battery terminals, they're just, we're looking in your battery together and they're just white with corrosion.

You're kind of just grossed out by it. Like, do I actually touch that? Well, here's what that corrosion does.

[24:34] That corrosion can actually build up and it can block that vital connection between the positive terminal and the wire that goes to starting your car.

And when that corrosion blocks that vital contact, you're not going to be able to start your car. Legalism is like the corrosion on the contact point between the gospel and a Christian's understanding of themselves.

it can short God's glorious work in which he's done in you and you begin to think of yourself in the old way.

Do you know how to clean a corroded battery terminal? You pour Coca-Cola on it, baby. Coca-Cola has this mild acidity to it and it cleans out that corrosion like zippity zap.

The book of Galatians teaches us that the gospel is the acidic solution to clean up legalistic corrosion in your heart.

[25:54] And we do that by looking at our new identity in Christ. The gospel, the gospel helps clean up any kind of corrosion so that gospel contact is true and vital in you.

So let me tell you three beautifully gospel truths about your new identity. Christian, you are justified. You are justified now and forever. In Galatians 2.16 Paul talks about being justified and here's what that is.

When you're justified, the moment you believe in Jesus, it's like all of a sudden you're in a court of law and God the Father passes a verdict over you and he says of you, this one is righteous in my sight based on the finished work of Christ.

here's what that means. At that moment you believe all of your sin, past, present, future, was put on Christ. This is how God thinks about it.

[27:10] It was put on Christ on the cross and all of God's wrath, rightly hovering over that sin, was poured out fully on that sin so that there's no more wrath of God for that sin.

it's all poured out on Christ which means this, the moment you believe you are fully forgiven of all your sin past, present, and future.

Isn't that good news? It's a legal declaration. It's done in God's court of law. But that's just half of it. What God does in that act, he also declares you righteous in his sight.

all of Christ's obedience in the 33 years he lived, all of his right feelings, right thinking, right believing and stepping out, all of his obedience which pleased his father, God, in the moment you believe, transfers all that righteousness into your account.

So in that one act by which God justifies you, you're fully forgiven and fully accepted based upon the finished work and Christ's righteousness imputed to you.

[28:25] Isn't that good news? That's who you are forever. That doesn't change because it's based on the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Justification is the gospel solution to the corrosion of legalism. when you want to kind of atone for your own sin by your works, you're justified.

It's done. That's the first beautiful truth of who you are. The second is this. Christian, you are redeemed now. Redemption, we see it in 3.13 and 4.4 and 5.5.1 for freedom, Christ has set you free.

This redemption language is actually pictured in the slave market of slaves being purchased and set free. And what Galatians is clear to say over and over again is that if you put your faith in Jesus, you who were once enslaved to sin have been set free.

You're no longer under slavery to sin, the flesh, the law, the world. Do you know how Christ redeemed you? Do you know how Christ sets you free?

[29:47] Christ sets us free by paying a ransom price. And that ransom price he paid for our freedom was the blood he shed on the cross.

It's been poured out on full. You've been fully purchased from slavery to sin. You are no longer a slave to sin anymore, Christian. In fact, it was for freedom that Christ has set you free.

5.1. You've been redeemed, freed from slavery to sin to live for God, now and forever.

So, when you like me are having thoughts, and you're being tempted in your flesh to do something, you know what you say? I've been set free.

The gospel has set me free from this. Christ died so this would not rule me anymore. I'm arguing from what Christ has done and what's true for me.

[30:52] It's time for you to start making the same argument. This redemption, this gospel redemption is God's gospel solution to the corrosion that comes in with our flesh.

church. The last beautiful gospel truth of your identity is this. Christian, you're adopted.

You're a part of God's new family now and forever. In Galatians 4, 4-7, there is this combination of talking about we have been redeemed from slavery, from the world, in order to be placed into the family of God.

You were a slave, now you are a son or daughter and it's all by the finished work of Jesus Christ. We are redeemed from and adopted to God's family.

And what that means is the moment you believe you are given all the rights and privileges of a legitimate son and daughter of the God of the universe.

[32:06] So when through Jesus Christ, God becomes your heavenly father, there's this all sorts of promises that you are brought into as a member of his family.

Promises like this. God says, I'm never going to leave you. Many of you in this room have had fathers who left you. God, your father will never leave you, never forsake you.

He's in it. promises like this. He's not going to ruthlessly punish you. He's not going to lose his temper on you and punish you out of anger.

God doesn't do that. Our heavenly father doesn't do that to us as children. He does discipline us in love for our good so that we can share in his holiness because he loves us.

He promises us to love us always. He promises us to work all things out for our good no matter what our circumstances are.

[33:08] God, our heavenly father, because he loves us and he's sovereign over all things and he's powerful. He's working it all out for our good and that good is becoming like his son, Jesus.

You belong to God, sons and daughters through Christ. And because your sonship rests in Christ's finished work, your sonship is forever settled. Can I just make this statement? You've got to hear it. Brothers and sisters, you will never, never be disowned by your heavenly father. Never. Because your sonship or your daughtership has been sealed by the blood of Jesus.

He's the guarantor of it. But, you know, pour that gospel solution on your heart when things get tough and you start to be afraid and you're like, is God for me?

Yes, he is. Do you remember Al Franken? He was a former Minnesota senator, fell from respect, but before that he was a cast member on Saturday Night Live.

[34:22] And when he was on Saturday Night Live, he did a skit in which he was the character Stuart Smalley. And Stuart Smalley was incredibly insecure.

And this skit about Stuart Smalley always had Stuart facing a mirror, talking to himself, and speaking daily affirmations to himself.

I am an attractive person. I refuse to beat myself up today. I'm entitled to my share of happiness. I am fun to be with. It was a tongue-in-cheek jab at the self-talk of the self-help movement of the day and put its finger on everybody who's struggling with their identity.

So let me ask you a question. What's the difference between you and Stuart Smalley? The difference is this.

[35:28] The difference is who is telling you who you are in the basis of that. In the Saturday Night Live skit, Stuart Smalley spoke on his own authority and based his identity on a distorted view of himself.

In the book of Galatians, God is speaking to you, brothers and sisters, in all of his authority. And if you are in Christ, he is saying on the basis of the finished work of my son Jesus, you are justified, you are redeemed, you are adopted.

It's all true. Proverbs 30 verse 5 says all of God's words prove true. And he is a refuge to all who trust in him.

When we remind ourselves that we're justified and redeemed and adopted, it is not some Stuart Smalley self-help talk. When we remind ourselves of being justified and redeemed and adopted in Christ, it is gospel talk.

It is renewing our minds on the truth of what Christ has done for us. So when your thoughts of past sins condemn you, you say to yourself, by God's grace, I've been justified by the blood of Jesus.

[37:01] When your flesh tempts you, you remind yourself, the cross has redeemed me from this. When your circumstances stand against you, when you start questioning God's intention for you, you remind yourself that he is now your heavenly father and you're adopted, you're his adopted son or daughter.

Do you know what God intends to happen when you renew your mind on this truth? When you remind yourself of these new categories of self-understanding and identity that I am justified and redeemed and adopted, here's what happens.

These truths are designed to become the primary defining reality of your life. Who you are in Christ becomes more important than your gender.

Who you are in Christ becomes more important than your age. Who you are in Christ becomes more important than your income, your social status.

It's more important than your ethnicity. Your new gospel identity is so important, it informs your gender, it informs your age, income, social standing, ethnicity.

[38:26] In August of 2017, I'm guessing you remembered the full solar eclipse of the sun, do you remember that? It's when the moon's orbit brought it between the earth and the sun and it blocked the brightness of the sun from sight.

It was a new governing reality for a little while. The solar eclipse is temporary, but the gospel eclipse is permanent.

When Christ comes into our life, our new position in him eclipses all that had been primarily defining us before.

Hey, it may be true that you're a male or female. It might be true that you're black or you're white, that you're rich or you're poor or somewhere in between, but those things don't shine nearly as brightly anymore because they've been eclipsed by the gospel.

And the gospel doesn't make things dark. The gospel outshines everything else. Our new gospel identity.

[39:42] Brothers and sisters, can we move forward together reminding ourselves of who we are in Christ? We love each other well when we say, remember who you are, brother.

Remember who you are, sister. I'm feeling the limits of time. I want to be attentive to your attention span, but I've got one more walk away I want to emphasize.

It's really important. We've been given a new gospel identity in Christ, Christ, and that translates into a new gospel community in Christ.

We learned from Galatians 1 and 6 that the cross delivers us from this present evil age. It delivers us, crucifies us to the world. Now the world is comprised of all the non-Christians who are living according to their flesh for things other than God, and the world creates its own atmosphere. It creates its own culture. It creates its own currents. If you are in Christ, you've been delivered from this present evil age.

[40:59] You've been delivered from the world. So what that means is, though we are in the world, we are no longer of the world. We are of Jesus in the world.

now, here's what you need to understand, brothers and sisters. The moment you personally believed in Christ, you were transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his beloved son.

You were transferred from one community who were living apart from God, running from him, and you were transferred into a new community who had been born again, who had new identities, seeking to live for God by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God is gathering for himself by the gospel of Jesus Christ, a people from all over the world, from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

In fact, we can say this, you, brother, sister, have more in common with a tribesman in Africa who is a believer in Jesus Christ than people from your own family who don't know Jesus yet.

[42:06] Because what unites you more is far more important than anything else that might differentiate us from each other. So throughout Galatians, we pick up on this theme that Christ's death has begun a whole new era in salvation history.

We pick it up in a passage like Galatians 1 through 5 that now has all this kind of spirit talk about it. Salvation history is a way of understanding how God relates to humankind in the big picture.

Creation, fall, redemption, consummation. And Christ's coming inaugurated a new way in which God related to mankind through Christ.

That new era was prophesied in passages like Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 36, Joel 2, when God would establish a new covenant with a new people in whom he would cause his spirit to dwell in in order that they would obey him.

That should ring a bell. Galatians 5, we live out our freedom as God's new people in the power of the Holy Spirit that we would obey him.

[43:16] Brothers and sisters, we are delivered from the world to be part of a new covenant community. A new gospel community. God didn't save you.

He didn't justify you and redeem you and adopt you and dwell you by his spirit, make you a citizen of the Jerusalem above. He didn't make you a new creation of a new creation so that you would be an island unto yourself.

He saved you to be part of a new people. The new gospel community Paul describes throughout Galatians is described as 329, Abraham's offspring.

426-31, citizens of the Jerusalem above. Not children of the slave but children of the free woman. 514, these are the people called to fulfill the law by walking according to the Spirit.

616, when he blesses all who walk according to the new creation rule, he says these people are the new Israel of God. God's new people.

[44:24] A new covenant community. A gospel community. The church. Those delivered from the world and placed into God's household.

God's new people. Got to hang in here with me. This new people is comprised of all and any who have believed in Christ alone for their salvation.

We are all one new people of God in Christ indwelt by his Spirit. And so let me now get to some implications of that. The gospel gives each of us a whole new identity.

Do I have an amen? The gospel gives us a whole new corporate identity. We are a new people. The gospel of Jesus Christ is what unites us.

And it's more important than gender, ethnicity, income, education, culture, employment, neighborhood, even your political party. All the things that once divided us when we are of the world, they no longer can divide us.

[45:38] They must no longer divide us. Because what unites us in Christ is far more important. It eclipses everything. In the first century, there are these dividing lines between Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female.

You read about this at the end of Galatians chapter three. If you are part of the majority culture, if you are living in a higher social status, here's what this means for you.

If you're white middle class, it means that your white middle classness is not to govern your interactions with other people anymore as the primary thing by which you understand yourself. The primary thing by which you understand yourself is the cross of Jesus Christ. If you are part of a minority culture, lower social status.

Your social status is not nearly as important as you being united in Christ. Christ. So here's what the gospel does. It humbles those in a high worldly position and elevates those in a low worldly position and puts us all on the same equal footing under the cross.

[47:08] So we don't ignore our culture, ethnic, gender differences. It's just the cross eclipses everything. We are all justified.

We are all redeemed. We are all adopted, spirit and dwelt, new creation, citizens of a new Jerusalem. And it's all because of what Christ has done for us.

We are a new gospel community. And we've been given a whole new social value system. Our identity now informs how we relate to one another in the gospel.

We live out the gospel by keeping in step with the truth of the gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit. We've been called out from the world.

We've called into the family of God. We are new creations who live by a new rule. Love your neighbor and it's completely countercultural. So we must be loving one another regardless of our similarities and differences socially.

[48:22] Our tendency as human beings is to, of the flesh, gravitate to those who are like us in the flesh. They're the people we're most familiar and comfortable with.

But the gospel changes all of that stuff. Instead of allowing our flesh to gravitationally pull us in the flesh to those like us socially, the Spirit compels us to move towards other people unlike us, but we are united with in Christ.

It's a gospel social system. Value system. What is striking to me about Galatians 5, 13 through 6, 10 is that the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit gets played out in the context of relationships. We must be constantly, as we move forward as a church, given the uniqueness of where we're at, we love where we're at. We love the people who our God is bringing.

We must be constantly working to maintain the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace because we are all one in Christ. We are a gospel community in motion, walking by the Spirit.

[49:43] Here's what's going to result from that we're trusting God for. We're going to experience deeper, richer gospel relationships with people who we're united to in Christ, but we are different from culturally.

That is richness. It's got to get played out in specifics. There's going to be greater peace.

We're not going to be biting and devouring one another because of our differences. We're going to be restoring one other, caught in trespasses, regardless of you, rich or poor. Bearing one another's burdens.

It's going to culminate in a corporate boasting in the cross because only God does things like that. When it unites a people who are different from each other culturally and unites them in such a way that the gospel eclipses everything.

It becomes our governing reality as a people. We are God's new people, brothers and sisters.

[50:47] A new gospel community that has been brokered by the blood of Jesus. Galatians is all about the gospel. The gospel of Jesus Christ alone frees us from slavery to sin so that we together can live by the spirit for God.

Paul begins this letter by issuing a curse on all those who distorted the gospel and made it a dud. And he closes with blessing all those in 616 who have embraced the new gospel rule and have been united in Christ Jesus.

Look at that. Look at that blessing. As for all who walk by this rule, all of what God has done for us in Christ Jesus, peace and mercy be upon them and upon the Israel of God.

So Christ the King Church, as we move forward from the book of Galatians, may we never forget our one true gospel. It alone saves our old gospel thread.

It will corrupt. We've got to fight with the gospel. Our new gospel identity, you've been justified, redeemed, adopted. That's who you are in our new gospel community.

[52:07] The gospel has given us a whole new social value system. If someone asked you, hey, what's Christ the King Church all about?

Two words. Christ crucified. It's changed everything. Will you pray with me? God in heaven, I know this is a lot of information to share.

God, would you cause the gospel truths to find their marks in the hearts of our brothers and sisters?

God, would you continue to do a work in us that causes us to boast in the cross alone?

God, would you add to our numbers of people from various backgrounds so that together with one voice we can cry out, God, would you?

God, would you? Oh, praise be the Lord. He has died on our behalf and our lives are His. In the name of Jesus we pray.

[53:13] Amen.