

Introduction to Galatians

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[0 : 00] This morning I want to begin by doing two things. First I want to ask you a question.! And maybe I should ask it a bit more personally.

If you are a believer, you have trusted in Christ. If you commit a sin and you die before you've asked for forgiveness, and you can choose the sin, it matters not what the sin is.

If you've not asked for forgiveness, where do you go? Do you go to heaven or do you go to hell?

Obviously, it's just to think about. And the second thing I want to do this morning is I want to place before you two important theological words.

And the words are justification and sanctification. I know that there are those of you who are familiar with these words, you understand them, but I am pretty sure this morning that there would be some of you.

[1 : 45] And even though we are smaller numbers this morning, I would venture to say a significant number of you who may have heard these words before, but you're not exactly sure what they mean.

And you're not exactly sure how they apply to you or really to the Christian life. And the reality is that many Christians do not understand these two important theological words.

These two words that are critical to the Christian life. So I want to take a couple of moments and define and explain these two important theological words for us.

The first one is justification. Justification is the immediate act by which God declares sinners righteous because of Christ's death in their place.

It's justification. It is an immediate act by which God declares sinners righteous because of Christ's death in their place.

[2 : 57] It's not based on anything that they have done in the past or will do in the future. There are no degrees in justification. The person who came to Christ one second ago is as justified as the person who has served Christ the longest on the earth.

No degrees in justification. It's a one-size-fits-all justification. All believers are equally justified. Also, we play no part in our justification.

Our justification is an exclusive work of God. Theologians call it a monergistic work.

Mono meaning one. It is a singular work by God himself. He does it all by himself without any help or involvement from us. And the reason is that it is purely based on God's grace and mercy.

We sang about it this morning. When God saves a person, he justifies that person. And justification is the basis upon which sinners are made right with God.

[4 : 20] They are put in right standing with God. And justification is once and for all. There are no time-sensitive aspects to justification.

We who are justified cannot be unjustified. We are justified once and for all. So if you are justified, you will never be unjustified.

Now on the other hand, unlike justification, which is an immediate act by God, sanctification is a progressive work in the life of believers that is shared by God and believers.

And it is the process by which believers become less sinful and more Christ-like. So theologians would say that sanctification is a synergistic work.

It is a work of synergy between God through the Holy Spirit and believers. And the process of sanctification takes place over time. And it takes place when we do things like what we are doing this morning.

[5 : 47] Gathering and singing and sitting under the instruction of God's word. And when we pray. And when we fellowship with other believers and we are corrected. And we are encouraged.

And we are prayed for and we confess sin. This is how we grow in sanctification. But what we do this morning doesn't affect our justification. This does not in any way help us to be more justified.

But it does help us to be more sanctified. Only those who have been justified can be and will be sanctified.

And though we talk about sanctification being synergistic and being a work between God and us.

It is still a grace-enabled work. It is not a work where God says, Well, you do your part and I'm going to do my part. No. God gives us the grace to do our part.

[6 : 48] He enables us to work out our salvation as it were. But he is working even as we are working in our sanctification.

Sanctification has degrees. We are not all equally sanctified even though those of us who know Christ are all equally justified.

And sanctification, sometimes we can progress and we can regress in sanctification. If we neglect prayer, if we neglect the instruction of God's word, sitting under it, reading it for ourselves, meditating.

If we neglect Christian fellowship. If we neglect the means of grace that God gives to us, like coming to the Lord's table. Then we can find ourselves regressing in sanctification.

Though we are perfectly justified and there's no way to improve on our justification. Our sanctification is different because we will never be perfectly sanctified in this life.

[8 : 04] Sanctification does not determine the basis upon which God accepts us. Sanctification does. Now the reason I've taken the time to explain these two theological words.

Is that your answer to the first question. Is largely hinged on your understanding of these two words. If you believe that a believer who commits a sin and dies before he or she asks for forgiveness will go to hell, as the pastor told me this week when I was interacting with him, then you believe that sanctification makes you right with God.

Not justification. And sadly, you would not be alone. I've asked two pastors that question in the last month or so and both of them have told me, you will go to hell.

I turned it around and even personalized it to them, knowing that they would know themselves and they would know that they are believers. And I asked, where would you go if you were to commit a sin and die before you ask for forgiveness?

And they both said they would go to hell. And this is because they don't understand, one, the nature of sin, and two, the nature of grace.

[9 : 48] Because the reality is that even though we may not commit a sin, if we are all honest, our thoughts are not pure. Our thoughts are not perfect.

Away from Christ, none of us is sufficiently, perfectly holy for God to accept us and to receive us into his presence.

And so the issue is not whether you commit a sin or not. The fact is we are sinners. And the only way that sinners can be accepted by a holy God is through his justification where he declares them righteous on the basis of what Christ has done.

And they put their faith in Christ. But if it depended on sanctification, brothers and sisters, none of us would make it. And I raised these issues this morning because the Galatian church was also confused about the gospel.

The Galatian church had begun, they received the true gospel, but they inverted the issues of justification and sanctification.

[11 : 08] And they began to think that how they were accepted before God was based on their sanctification. And the Apostle Paul wrote this letter of Galatians to the Galatian churches, pointing out to them the error of their thinking and their living and explaining to them the gospel and what it means to be justified by the grace of God separate and apart from works.

And so this morning we begin this extended series in the letter of Galatians. And the goal is to help us to understand, in some cases, and better understand, in other cases, the gospel of grace.

And this is critical this morning because if we get the gospel wrong, we get the Christian life wrong. I think it's also timely because on the 31st of October this year, we will be in the Christian community celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

But sadly, some who would be celebrating are not living in the good and the truths that were rediscovered in the Protestant Reformation.

The book of Galatians featured prominently in the Protestant Reformation because in the Protestant Reformation, the primary issue was the issue of justification.

[12 : 45] The Roman Catholic Church said to be saved or justified, you had to, it wasn't just what God did, you had to do some works as well. And they said, anyone who believes that you are saved by grace alone, you are cursed.

They gave the strongest curse to those who believe in grace alone. But the Reformers trumpeted the message that we are saved by grace alone, separate and apart from works.

And what we see is that the issue with the Galatians was not unique to the Galatians. This is an error that comes up again and again and it comes even to the best of us.

It can even come to some of us who can be settled this morning that we are saved by grace and in a moment of spiritual disorientation, in a moment of being bombarded by the lies of the enemy, we can find ourselves relating to God on the basis of our sanctification and trying to earn our way to be accepted by God when He has already accepted us in Jesus Christ because of His sacrifice on the cross.

I can imagine, though I'm not able to read minds this morning, but I can imagine that some of what I have said doesn't rest well with some.

[14 : 20] Your heart's unfully settled on this particular point that I'm raising as we begin this morning. And so what I want to encourage you to do is I want to encourage you to do your best to be a part of all the sermons and if you miss one to listen online, but bring your Bible.

I'm going to be staying within the four corners of the book of Galatians and we will open God's word and pray that God will give us eyes and ears only for the truth.

So this morning, as we begin this introductory message in Galatians, we will consider the first five verses.

So if you've not yet done so, please turn to Galatians chapter 1 and we begin reading in verse 1 through verse 5.

Galatians chapter 1, beginning in verse 1. I'm reading from the English Standard Version. Paul, an apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead and all the brothers who are with me to the churches of Galatia, grace to you and peace from God, our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

[16 : 22] Amen. Let's pray. Father, we give you thanks this morning for the gospel of grace.

We thank you, Lord, that it is the only way that we can be made right with you. And I pray that as we open this letter of Galatians this morning, Lord, we pray for this foundational message, but we also pray for this series and we pray for ourselves that you would cause us to hear and receive the truth of the grace of God as displayed in the gospel.

Lord, I do pray for us knowing that our human nature and knowing that for many of us our experiences have led to a distortion of the gospel and its function in our lives.

We ask, Lord, that you would give us ears and eyes for the truth. And I pray that you would help us to apply your word to our lives even as you speak to us this morning and in the weeks to come.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. For this morning, as we introduce the letter of Galatians, I will seek to answer this question.

[18 : 10] What is Galatians about? It's a question that I want to seek to answer for us and in so doing lay a foundation for this sermon series.

What is Galatians about? And I'll be answering this question under three headings for those of you who are taking notes. The headings are number one, the author of Galatians, number two, the recipients of Galatians, and number three, the message of Galatians.

Galatians. So first, let's consider the author of Galatians. We see from the very first word of the letter that Paul is the author.

But Paul identifies himself a little differently than he normally would. Actually, more than identifying himself and the office that he holds, what we see Paul doing is we see him defending himself.

and his office. And he makes the point that he is not a man-made apostle. He underscores this point by saying that his apostleship was not from men nor through man.

[19 : 33] He stresses that his apostleship was through Jesus Christ and God the Father. And what he hints at here is made clearer later on in the letter.

Paul's apostleship had come into question by false teachers who had infiltrated the Galatian churches. Paul, through his preaching, had planted these churches in Galatia.

And the false teachers had come in after him and their first step in undermining what Paul had done was to undermine his authority as an apostle.

because if they could undermine his authority as an apostle, then you can dismiss his message. If he's not a true apostle, then you can discard his message.

And that's essentially what they had done in the Galatian churches. But Paul is making an even more fundamental point that I think is sometimes easy to miss.

[20 : 39] You see, an apostle is a messenger. He is one who is commissioned and sent on behalf of another person. He is sent with a special message, with a special authority from someone who is higher in office and stature than the one who is sent.

This person is more powerful than the one whom he sends. And so Paul is stressing to the Galatians that his gospel has the authority of those who commissioned him.

And he says, I'm an apostle of Jesus Christ and God the Father. Therefore, he is saying, I'm speaking God's message with God's authority. Now, sometimes Paul would say, my gospel.

He would use that terminology at times. But ultimately, this is God's gospel. And Paul is an apostle. He is a messenger who was sent by God with this message to God's people.

And I think this is important to note because we may read this and think that, well, this is just an issue Paul is settling for the Galatians. But no, he is settling this for us as well. This is important because today there are people who make a distinction between the words of Paul and the words of Jesus.

[22 : 13] And again, one of the pastors that I was speaking to recently, I referred to him, he was talking about something in the gospels and I referred to him a passage in one of the letters of Paul.

He said, that's Paul. That's what he said, that's Paul. I said, no, that's God's word. And Paul is making this point that he is a messenger on behalf of the one who sent him, the ones who sent him, the Father and the Son.

And oftentimes when we make this distinction with God's word, we can actually truncate scripture and we walk away with less of God's word than all of God's word.

There are people who pay special attention to the words of Jesus and this is where we get these red letter Bibles from where they highlight all the words of Jesus in red as if to say it is of more prominence than the rest of God's word.

But the words of Jesus are no more authoritative in scripture than the words of those whom God through his spirit inspired to write scripture.

[23 : 29] the words of Paul an apostle are no less authoritative than the rest of scripture and this is important for us this morning to grasp.

We need to settle this issue from the outset that Paul is writing as an apostle. He is writing as one who is commissioned by God with God's word with the authority to bring God's word to us and we need to receive what is written as being from God.

And I say this because sometimes when we don't settle this up front we can get to certain parts of scripture where we can begin to wiggle and tussle and try to say well that was that was Paul or that was for that time and not applicable for our time.

Paul is making the point to them and to us that since I am commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father to hear me is to hear them and to not hear me is to not hear them.

And remember in the case of the Galatians Paul is getting ready to address them. He is getting ready to correct them. So he is laying this foundation to say don't dismiss me.

[24 : 58] Don't count me lightly. I am not just here on my own authority. I am not just giving you my opinion. I am bringing to you as a messenger God's word.

Brothers and sisters this must be our view this morning. This must be our view of the letter of Galatians. Indeed this must be our view of all of scripture.

And so I want to ask you this morning is this indeed your view? Is it your view that this is the very word of God?

And that this is not just a collection of quaint sayings and ideas and thoughts that we interact with and that we accept and reject what we like and what we don't like.

Our view of God's word will determine the degree to which we obey it. And if we don't accept that behind the human author of this letter and indeed all of scripture is the divine author, that we will be subject and at risk to spiritual deception and indeed spiritual shipwreck.

[26 : 25] This is God's holy word and he is the ultimate author of it. And see, this is one of the reasons why even though we have many authors of scripture, many authors of the books of scripture, there's one unifying, non-contradicting message because there's one divine author.

That's why over thousands of years, that's why over many different personalities, we have this one singular unifying message of scripture and that is because it has one divine author.

Many human authors, but one divine author. Well, that's the author of Galatians. Let's consider now the recipients of Galatians.

We're told who the recipients of Galatians are at the end of verse 2. In the verse 2, it simply says, to the churches of Galatia, so Paul writes, Paul, and those who are with me, to the churches at Galatia.

The part that's in between is really just his defense of his office and ministry. Paul wrote this letter to the churches of Galatia, and it's widely accepted that this was the first letter that he wrote.

[28 : 01] These churches in Galatia, they were in four cities. The cities of Pisidian, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.

These were cities that Paul evangelized on his first missionary journey and we find it recorded in the book of Acts in chapters 13 and 14. You may want to read that account of Paul's founding of these churches.

So these churches were not strangers to Paul. Paul knew these churches. He had invested time and risked his life to bring the gospel to these churches and so naturally, when he got word about the way these churches were drifting away from what he had taught them, he was naturally concerned for their spiritual condition.

As I mentioned earlier, Paul's teachers had infiltrated the church and they were undermining the work that Paul had done and the message that he brought to the church and the way Paul describes it is they were being troubled by him, by these false teachers.

They had upset the faith of these believers in the churches of Galatia. So Paul writes to them. them. But here again, we will miss a critical and important part of God's word if we confine the recipients of Galatians to the Galatian churches.

[29 : 46] Indeed, this letter was written to Christians across the ages and therefore is written to you and me. because the issues that the Galatian church faced are not issues that are unique to them.

Again, it was the whole basis for the Protestant Reformation, largely the issue of justification. And that continues to be an issue for us as well.

All of us are subject to the same pitfalls that the Galatians faced and they fell into. See, none of us can ever so get the gospel right that there is no risk of us at some point getting it wrong.

Where instead of resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ, we find ourselves striving to try to get acceptance before God.

And therefore we should see that this letter to Galatians was also a letter to us. And God in his wise providence has preserved this letter in the pages of Holy Scripture for the benefit of our souls.

[31 : 10] And so this morning if you are here and you're clear on the issue of justification and you're clear on the issue of sanctification and you know that you cannot earn your way before God, I would encourage you to still hear this because none of us, as long as we are on this earth, is exempt from falling prey to this legalism that we see in the Galatian churches.

and therefore we are in good stead when we renew in our hearts the truths that are contained in this letter.

This brings me to my third and final point which is the message of Galatians. What is the message of Galatians?

I think it's fair to say that the message of Galatians really is wrapped up in this critical question. This is the overarching question that Galatians answers.

And it is how are sinners made right with God? This overarching question that the Apostle Paul answers in the letter to the Galatians.

[32 : 39] How are sinners made right with God? Now clearly Paul had initially taught the Galatians that sinners are made right with God by God.

But as I said, false teachers came in, they undermined the message. These false teachers are often referred to as Judaizers. believers, and they were telling the churches, no, you need more than just to believe in Jesus.

You need to keep the law of Moses as well. And you men, if you're uncircumcised, well, you need to be circumcised in order to be saved.

the false teachers taught the Galatians that they would be justified before God based on what they did.

And based on what they did not do. And as a result, the Galatians confused justification and sanctification.

[33 : 48] And throughout this letter, the Apostle Paul stresses that the only way for sinners to be made right with God is through justification by God on the basis of Christ's death on the cross.

And so Paul's whole purpose in this letter was to help the Galatians to understand and to once again embrace the true gospel. And so what we see him doing is from the very outset, in these opening verses, he begins to recount the gospel for them.

In verses 3 and 4 in particular, we see Paul recounting the gospel. Look again at what he wrote in verse 3.

grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace and peace are two words that we hear and we often use.

And these are critical and essential words of the gospel. These are gospel words.

[35 : 14] But these words have become foreign to the Galatians. Instead of living under grace, which is God's undeserved, unearned favor, the Galatians were laboring under works and striving to keep the law to be made right with God.

Instead of enjoying the peace that comes from being reconciled to God, the Galatians were troubled. That's what Paul says about them as he moves into the letter.

He says, you've been troubled by these who have come in. in this letter, Paul reminds the Galatians, he addresses them and helps them to see the gospel of grace and the peace of the gospel.

Something that they were not enjoying because they were not resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ. They were still striving. They were still trying to earn salvation and acceptance before God.

and the result was the grace and peace were not theirs. And here we see the apostle Paul, even though they are unsettled and even though they are troubled in many ways, Paul addresses them as brothers.

[36 : 42] He addresses them as misguided brothers. And he commends to them at the very outset the fruit of having received and taken our stand on the gospel, that we have grace.

We receive God's grace and we have God's peace. We enjoy peace with God. Our hearts are at rest. And scripture says that the peace of God is beyond comprehension.

I'm going to ask you this morning, those of you who have trusted in Jesus Christ, do you know and enjoy this grace and peace that the apostle Paul commands to these misguided believers in the churches at Galatia?

Do you know this grace and peace? Or are you trying to earn your acceptance before God by the things you do and the things you don't?

do you so many Christians believe that salvation is stop doing that, don't go there, start doing this and start going there.

[38 : 22] And so when they do those things that they've been told they should do, they have peace. And when they don't do those things that they are told they, and they do those things they're told that they should not do, they lack peace.

And they believe that God accepts them based on those things that they do or do not do. Do you know God's grace and peace this morning if you have trusted in Jesus Christ.

In verse four, Paul goes on to state the heart of the gospel. And notice what he says. He says, Christ gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age according to the will of God, our God and Father.

Christ gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father. I want to just walk through that statement and break it down in three parts so we may digest it and understand it.

The first thing he says is Christ died for our sins. sins. This, brothers and sisters, is the heart of the gospel. Christ died for our sins.

[39 : 55] We are sinners and Christ died for the sins of sinners. And often time, the death of Christ is framed in a different way.

It's framed other than what we are reading here this morning. Sometimes it's framed as showing how important and how valuable we were.

And how much God loves us. And it's not to deny those things, but what we see is Paul is putting before us the heart of the gospel and the work of Jesus Christ.

He's putting before us the apex of the reason that Jesus Christ came. Jesus didn't come to primarily be a good teacher.

Jesus did not come to primarily perform miracles. Jesus did not come to be an example for us to show us how we ought to live. Although those things receive a lot of prominence and people would hold up, this is why Jesus came.

[41 : 10] And it's one of the reasons that so many people spend a lot of time in the gospels looking at the words of Jesus because they think that's why Jesus came to just show us this new way of living.

But primarily that's not why Jesus came and primarily those things are not what Jesus did. In our world that makes so much about ourselves, I think the late pastor and theologian John Stott put it very well when he wrote, the death of Jesus was primarily neither a display of love nor an example of heroism but a sacrifice for sin.

The New Testament teaches that Christ's death was a sin offering, the unique sacrifice by which our sins may be forgiven and put away.

This is what both the life and death of Christ was primarily about. This is why he came. He came to give his life as a ransom for many.

The death of Christ when we consider these words that the apostle Paul puts primarily before the Galatians they help us to not only see the heart of the gospel but they help us to see ourselves as well.

[42 : 54] They help us to see ourselves in a context and in a light that sometimes we are uncomfortable talking about. These words help us to see that we are sinners.

They help us to see that we are sinners and not just that we are sinners but we are sinners who cannot save ourselves and therefore Christ came into the world indeed Christ had to come into the world if sinners were to be saved to die for sinners who would have no hope of salvation separate and apart from him.

Yet we're not comfortable seeing ourselves in that particular light as the gospel shows it that Christ gave himself for our sins.

I want to ask you do you view yourself that way do you see yourself as portrayed in the gospel as a sinner or do you see yourself as a good person or as a basically good person and as I've said I'll say it again there are only two kinds of people in the world there are saved sinners and there are unsaved sinners and Christ died gave himself for sinners Paul recounts this critical aspect of the gospel the death of Christ was necessary to save sinners and as

Paul would begin to elaborate on later in the letter you would think from the way the Galatians were living that Christ really didn't have to come because they could save themselves by the good works and keeping the law that they were doing but he lays it out from the very outset that he gave himself for our sins but that's not all Paul recounts another aspect of the gospel not only did Christ die for our sins but Christ also died to deliver us from this present evil age here again Paul helps us to see the world in a light that we often don't see it or we don't like to think about it and we think the world is neutral and we think the world is okay no

[45 : 57] Paul says this age in which we live is an evil age and it's a present evil age and Christ died to deliver us from it exactly what does this mean the new international version puts it even more vividly it says Christ died to rescue us from this present evil age again I draw from John Stott who describes this well he says the Bible divides history in two ages this age and the age to come it tells us moreover that the age to come has come already because Christ inaugurated it although the present age has not yet finally passed away so the two ages are running their course in parallel they overlap one another

Christian conversion means being rescued from the old age and being transferred into the new age the age to come and the Christian life is living in this age the life of the age to come that's what the death of Christ does for believers not only did Christ give himself for our sins but he gave himself to deliver us from this present evil age Jesus prayed in John 17 that the father would not take us out of the world but he prayed that we would be protected while in the world and there is an age Paul talks about it this way he talks about how we all had our manner of life in this world doing the things that those who are of the world do but what

Christ does when he saves is he delivers us from the present evil age and he enables us to live out in this present evil age the power and the values of the age to come the kingdom of God that has broken into the world in part we are able to live out as citizens of that kingdom in this present evil age no longer a part of this present evil age but now a part of the age to come living in this age that is what the death of Christ enables us to do again it helps us to see this world for what it truly is and it helps us to see why we need to be rescued from it we can't rescue ourselves from it we must be rescued from it and see it doesn't matter how nice a person might be it does not matter how kind that person is if that person has not received the saving work of

Christ in his or her life that person is still a part of this present evil age living according to its values and living according to its ways living as both a citizen and a resident of this present evil age see we are residents in this present evil age because God has not yet taken us in death or returned to take us to be with himself but we are not citizens of it our citizenship is from another place and we live by the values of that other place by the power of God and the grace of God that is at work in our lives for those who do not know Christ beyond the facade of niceness and civility and all the other things they are full blown residents and citizens and participants in this present evil age and why did all this happen why did

Christ give himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age what he tells us in verse four is another aspect of the gospel that Paul underscores he tells us that Christ died according to the will of God our father the death of Christ was not a tragic accident the death of Christ was not something haphazard that happened that caught God by surprise no Paul says it was according to the will of our God and father and what we find is that the new testament the witness of the new testament is that before the foundation of the world God foreordained that Christ would die for sinners this was God's predetermined predestined plan that Christ would die on behalf of sinners yes the Romans crucified him yes the jealous high priests crucified him and condemned him but it was all according to the will of

[52 : 24] God it was in accordance with his eternal plan and purposes because God in mercy had determined that he would save particular rebellious sinners through the life and death of Jesus Christ and his resurrection from the dead and that that would be the exclusive way that he would make sinners right with himself that was his plan to begin our salvation that was his plan to complete our salvation and yet we see the Galatians were distorting their understanding of that and so the apostle

Paul graciously puts forth the gospel in summary form in these opening verses as he prepares to address them concerning the errors that they found themselves in that's how sinners are put right with God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who gave himself but who gave himself according to God's will to rescue us from this present evil age and brothers and sisters when we see the necessity of the salvation of God through Jesus Christ we can't help but join the apostle Paul in verse 5 in this doxology to God to whom be the glory forever and ever amen the glory for salvation belongs to

God alone when you or I have some part in it whatever part we play whatever degree whatever small that degree of glory belongs to us but scripture is very clear on this particular point that salvation belongs to God and therefore all the glory belongs to God and when we see that again we praise God for his marvelous grace grace displayed on the cross of Jesus Christ as the foundation for this sermon series I want to encourage us this morning let us settle our hearts that we are interacting with the very word of God this is the word of God and as we explore this letter over the coming weeks may our hearts be settled that this message in this book is the only way that sinners are put right with

God no other way I know in our world of political correctness and inclusiveness it's not acceptable to say there's no other way it's not acceptable to say that Jesus Christ is the only way the exclusive way through which men and women boys and girls may be made right with God but that is the message of relation and indeed that is the message of scripture so may God help us all to hear and heed these words and may God help us all to see that in different ways and to different degrees we are all prone to the Galatian era and may we be helped through this sermon series let's pray