

Walking in God's Grace

A Study in the Book of Galatians

Hopefully, you were with us at our first WOW Bible study as we opened the letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to his friends and fellow Christian believers in the churches that he had established in Asia. This study guide begins with Week Two, since we tackled Week One together. So, no, you are not missing anything—Week Two IS the beginning. So let's get started.

It takes about 15 minutes to read the whole book of Galatians. You are probably excited to dig right in to a verse-by-verse study; but I think that today we should take a step back and just read the whole book. It will be good for us and although it may raise more questions, getting a feel for the entire letter is important before we look at smaller portions.

So, open your Bible, grab a pen and please look for two important "G" words: GRACE and GOSPEL. Circle or underline them in your Bible when you run into them (or circle one, underline one, or star, or put a "G", or whatever you want to do to make it personal).

If you have time when you are finished, jot down your impressions from reading the entire letter to the Galatian churches.



☞ Walking in God's Grace—Week Two, Day Two ☞

Read Galatians 1:13 – 16

¹³ For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴ I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵ But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles...

1. Verses 13-14 describes Paul's "previous way of life in Judaism". List his characteristics:
2. Write the first three words of v. 15: _____ These words signal a huge change in Paul's life and ours too. *But when God* grips our heart and reveals himself to us, we are never the same!
3. In verses 15-16 Paul launches his story with four phrases that now characterize what he knows to be true about himself and God's relationship to him. List them:
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - D.
4. Which one of these phrases is specific or unique to Paul?
5. Read each of the other three phrases aloud. Can you personally relate to and agree with each of those statements in your life? Ask these questions to yourself:
 - A. Do I believe that God **set me apart** from birth?
Write out Eph. 1:4
 - B. Do I believe that God **called me** by his grace?
Write out 2 Tim 1:9
 - C. Do I believe that it pleases God to **reveal his Son in me**?
Write out 2 Cor. 4:10-11

Paul's life was changed significantly after experiencing the power of God's grace. While you may not have seen as radical a change as Paul, if you are born of the Spirit of God then God's grace has significantly changed your life as well. Think about it, write a few thoughts about how you HAVE been changed and be prepared to share one aspect with your group.



Walking in God's Grace—Week Two, Day Three

Read Galatians 1:15 - 2:1

¹⁶... I did not consult any man, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus. ¹⁸ Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Peter and stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ I saw none of the other apostles--only James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰ I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie. ²¹ Later I went to Syria and Cilicia. ²² I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³ They only heard the report: "The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy." ²⁴ And they praised God because of me. ¹ Fourteen years later I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also.

Paul is now giving a personal account of his own experience and timeline to lay a foundation of why these churches should listen to him and receive instruction or correction from him.

1. Let's just 'get our bearings' on Paul's history by listing what he did after Christ was revealed to him.

v. 15 "But when God...called me by his grace...

v. 16 "I did not consult _____

v. 17 "Nor did I go up to _____ to see _____

v. 17 "But I went immediately _____ and later returned to _____

v. 18 "Then after _____ years, I went up to _____

v. 21 "Later, I went to _____ and _____.

(now skip down to ch. 2 and include the last entry in his travelogue

v. 1 "Fourteen years later I went up again to _____ with _____ and _____

It may seem boring to list his activities, but Paul found it necessary to remind these believers of his own personal ministry journey with the Lord.

2. If he 'didn't consult any man' or receive his theology from the church (which he had been murdering), then how did he receive his information, his message, his world view? (open your Bible and look back to 1:12)
3. Think about this. Why do you think God kept Paul separated from the church in Jerusalem for a time after his conversion? And, how do you think it served him well in his ministry to the Gentiles?
4. How did other believers respond who heard about Paul's conversion and ministry? (1:22-24)



Walking in God's Grace—Week Two, Day Four

Read Galatians 2:1-5

¹ Fourteen years later I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also. ² I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain. ³ Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek. ⁴ [This matter arose] because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. ⁵ We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.

Chapter two is going to get pretty confrontational—it was a war for Christian liberty. The first battle was at the Jerusalem council and the second was a private meeting with Peter (which we will study next week). Praise God that Paul was willing to do battle, willing to confront, willing to uphold the pure gospel or Christianity may have ended up becoming a Jewish sect, teaching a mixture of law and grace.

Let's organize in our mind the players listed in these five verses:

- A. Three men going to Jerusalem: _____
- B. Leaders of the church in Jerusalem _____
- C. False brothers – what were they doing? _____

1. According to v. 2 Paul set out to Jerusalem in response to _____, as opposed to an invitation from the leaders, or as part of a missionary trip, or other reasons. We might say today “*the Lord was leading him*”.
2. What was Paul's purpose in Jerusalem? (v.2) _____
_____. What do you think that means?

- So it seems that
- A. God led Paul to go to _____,
 - B. While there he expressed the _____ he had been preaching to the gentiles
 - C. The reason he did this was opposition from _____

4. Paul's response to these false brothers is super important. v. 5 tells Paul's reaction, what was it:

5. What was Paul's motivation to not give in:

- Do you find it difficult to stand firm on issues you know are true?
- Have you gotten tangled in a situations where another claims to be a believer, but holds to unbiblical ideas?
- Have you ever given in to compromise to ‘keep everything peaceful’?
- What are some of the pillars of our Christian faith that, like Paul, you would go to war over?

Martin Luther says, "*The truth of the Gospel is the principle article of all Christian doctrine....Most necessary is it that we know this article well, teach it to others, and beat it into their heads continually.*"

