

Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. 6 I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault. 7 I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done.

2.

Galatians 2:20 NLT - 20 My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Romans 7:19-20, 24-25 NLT - 19 I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. 20 But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. ... 24 Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? 25 Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.

3.

Romans 12:1-2 NLT - 1 And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice--the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. 2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Ephesians 5:3-8 NLT - 3 Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. 4 Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes--these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. 5 You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. 6 Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. 7 Don't participate in the things these people do. 8 For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light!

“Jesus Changed My Life”

Galatians- week #2

INTRODUCTION

When Paul wrote to the church in Galatia he pointed to his own life as evidence of the Good News. His message that we are “set free to live free” came directly from Jesus himself, and its impact on Paul’s life was obvious. To encounter Jesus is to be transformed. But dying to self and letting Christ live in you is not an easy thing. In fact, it is an ongoing battle. So, what does living a changed life involve and how do we pull it off? Let’s look at what Paul has to say about that.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

Are there pictures in your high school yearbook that people today couldn’t identify as you? What’s the biggest change in your appearance?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

What I Used to Be

1. Read Galatians 1:10-24; Philippians 3:4-7

A life transformed is the evidence of an encounter with Jesus. But not all of us were outwardly vile or criminals before we met Christ. Paul had one of the most radical transformations recorded after encountering Jesus, however, from a Jewish perspective, he started out with exceptional credentials. What were some of the things Saul (before he was renamed) could boast about according to Galatians 10:14 and Philippians 3:4-7?

It is possible to appear to be “good” in the view of others, but still be spiritually void. What are the things a person who doesn’t know Jesus might boast about today to convince you they are a “good person”? According to Paul, what value did his greatest accomplishments have compared to Christ? What are some things you used to value highly, but after encountering Jesus, you don’t?

The true Christian life is Christ in you

2. Read Galatians 2:20; Romans 7:19-20, 24-25

There’s nothing in you that can enable you to live successfully for Christ—that is, in your own strength, Christian living is impossible.

The only source of power to live that way is the exchanged life—Christ living through you. How did Paul say he accomplished this in Galatians 2:20?

Once you die to yourself, “the life of Jesus” can be revealed in you. Sometimes we fall back into old habits of trying to do things in our own power. Don’t get trapped on the treadmill of trying harder to be good, failing, and trying harder again. Paul described this in Romans chapter 7 and it made him miserable. What answer did he find to this problem? (Romans 7:25) What do you think he meant?

Surrender to God’s will

3. Read Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 5:3-8

God has given us all free will, and ultimately, we get to choose whether we surrender ourselves to him or not. Paul told the Romans that surrendering ourselves to God was like presenting a sacrifice. Can you name some of the little choices we make every day either mold us to the world or allow God to transform us?

Consider the Ephesians 5 list of sinful practices many of us once took part in. Which of these do you find you have to confront most often in your everyday life? Sacrifice can be painful. In fact, if it costs us nothing it really isn’t a sacrifice. Can you think of an area that used to be difficult for you to surrender to God, but that you now no longer struggle to surrender? (That’s evidence of a changed life!)

WRAP-UP

No matter how “good” you were, without Jesus you really had nothing of value. You can’t truly encounter Him and remain unchanged. But change is not easy. We still tend to fall back into old habits and make ourselves miserable trying to be good enough in our own strength. But the true Christian life is not about trying harder to be good, it is about surrendering your life to God daily and allowing Him to live His life through you. The evidence of an encounter with Jesus is a changed life.

Memory Verse

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. - Galatians 2:20 NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more space)

Challenge- Make a list of the things you thought were most important before you were a Christian and compare them to the things you find most important today.

Bible Verses

1.

Galatians 1:10-24 NLT - 10 Obviously, I’m not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ’s servant. 11 Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning. 12 I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ. 13 You know what I was like when I followed the Jewish religion--how I violently persecuted God’s church. I did my best to destroy it. 14 I was far ahead of my fellow Jews in my zeal for the traditions of my ancestors. 15 But even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace. Then it pleased him 16 to reveal his Son to me so that I would proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles. When this happened, I did not rush out to consult with any human being. 17 Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to consult with those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went away into Arabia, and later I returned to the city of Damascus. 18 Then three years later I went to Jerusalem to get to know Peter, and I stayed with him for fifteen days. 19 The only other apostle I met at that time was James, the Lord’s brother. 20 I declare before God that what I am writing to you is not a lie. 21 After that visit I went north into the provinces of Syria and Cilicia. 22 And still the Christians in the churches in Judea didn’t know me personally. 23 All they knew was that people were saying, “The one who used to persecute us is now preaching the very faith he tried to destroy!” 24 And they praised God because of me.

Philippians 3:4-7 NLT - 4 though I could have confidence in my own effort if anyone could. Indeed, if others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more! 5 I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin--a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the