



In this series we will see the Apostle Paul confronting the false teachings in the church of Galatia. In the process we have the opportunity to join these first-century brothers and sisters in examining ourselves. How are we viewing the grace of God? How can we shift from trying to earn God's favor in our own strength and instead live free by faith knowing that we have God's acceptance?

Week One: Confronting Error

Text: Galatians 1:1-10

Sermon Summary:

This week we are reminded of the essence of the gospel. God showed us His grace when Jesus sacrificed Himself to rescue us from the present evil age and grant us peace with God. Grace refers to God's unmerited favor toward us. We don't deserve and could never earn God's favor...it is a gift. The joy we experience in God's grace and peace is threatened when the Good News of the Gospel is turned to bad news through the perverse and confusing teaching that those who have received the gift of salvation must now work to gain God's acceptance.

Discussion Questions: *These questions can be thought of as variations on three larger questions:*

1. What did the Holy Spirit say to you through Sunday's sermon and the associated passage?
2. What are you going to do about it?
3. How can others in the group help you and pray for you so you can do what God told you to do?

What did the Holy Spirit say to you through the sermon?

- Read Galatians 1:1-10
- Define "grace". (A short definition from the sermon is that grace is God's *unmerited favor*.)
- Why is grace critical to the message of the Gospel?

- Think about Paul's description of why Jesus died ("to rescue us from the present evil age"). How have you been rescued?
- Do you ever find yourself believing that the grace of God is a gift that you must earn? What might be wrong about that belief?

What are you going to do about it?

- How does God's love and grace motivate you to live for Him? Give some examples. How is this different from working to earn God's love?
- How would you explain the good news of the gospel to someone far from God? If you find that idea intimidating, what are some ways that you can grow in your confidence? *(This could be a good opportunity to do a mini-training on a short gospel presentation for those who aren't sure how to go about it. The Three Circles Illustration sums up what was in the sermon and it's easy to learn:*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5W8ynRMr59k>)

How can others in the group help you and pray for you?

- Reflect on how each of you is struggling to live out the truth of this lesson:
 - Maybe some have never accepted the gift of forgiveness and salvation that Jesus offers. *(Be prepared to explain the gospel more clearly for these friends and invite them to accept God's gift of Grace.)*
 - Others find themselves trying to earn a gift they already received and are living with a burden of legalism and guilt.
 - Many have trouble sharing the good news of the gospel with others.
- Pray for each other about these struggles. Try going around the circle with each group member praying for the friend to their right.
- Close by reading the memory verse as a benediction or a blessing over your group.

Scripture Memory:

*"Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,
 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age,
 according to the will of our God and Father,
 to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

Galatians 1:3-5