

JESUS FREES US FROM THE PURSUIT OF SELF-SALVATION

YEAR: UNITE / FOCUS: LIVING IN FREEDOM
SERIES: GALATIANS

BIG TRUTH: JESUS FREES US FROM THE PURSUIT OF SELF-SALVATION

Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Corinthians 3:5; Romans 1:17; Hebrews 10:38

BIBLE VERSE: GALATIANS 3:10-13

"For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.' Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for 'The righteous shall live by faith.' But the law is not of faith, rather 'The one who does them shall live by them.' Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree'—"

BIG IDEAS

- The curse of the law is that we are unable to keep it.
- The law revealed our inability to rescue ourselves from our spiritual condition.
- The righteous live by faith.

BIBLE PASSAGE: GALATIANS 3:10-14

UNITE: LIVING IN FREEDOM

The Unite year is an exploration of what it means to be united in Christ as the family of God (Romans 12:5). When we are saved, we are brought into the family of God- seen throughout the Old Testament as "God's People" and in the New Testament and today as the church (Exodus 6:7; Colossians 1:18). We are set free from our sin to walk in freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1) and use our influence to call others to do the same.

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- True freedom is only found in being a servant of Jesus
- We are set free not to do whatever we want, but to live for Christ



Every student should feel...

- Grateful for Christ who sets us free
- Convicted of the ways that they are ruled by the desires of their flesh
- Responsible to use their influence to make much of God alone



Every student should strive to...

- Read through the book of Galatians each week
- Memorize the Bible verse each week
- Deny the desires of their flesh to walk in step with the Spirit



Every student should want...

- See the ways that they are tempted to pursue self-salvation, and repent of these
- Live for the approval of God, not others
- Help others move out of slavery to sin toward freedom in Christ

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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JESUS FREES US FROM THE
PURSUIT OF SELF-SALVATION**BIBLE VERSE: GALATIANS 3:10-13**

“For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.’ Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for ‘The righteous shall live by faith.’ But the law is not of faith, rather ‘The one who does them shall live by them.’ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’—”

Relying on our obedience to the law or our own moral code will never save us.

“For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.’ Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law...”

- Morality and an understanding of right and wrong are written into the DNA of every person because we are a reflection of God, yet we all reject God’s commands and His way. Instead, we choose our way and we follow the desires of our sinful hearts.
- We all arrive at a knowledge that some things are right, and some things are wrong, though we may not be submitted to the Lordship of Christ. This understanding or sense of morality can drive us to rely upon our own moral code and obedience to save us instead of the salvation offered by Jesus. No amount of obedience or adherence to good morals will ever save us.

Christ followers know they are not justified by the law.

“Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for ‘The righteous shall live by faith.’ But the law is not of faith, rather ‘The one who does them shall live by them.’”

- Those who experience saving faith in Jesus have reached an understanding of their own sinful condition and their need for the salvation that Jesus offers. They know that they cannot save themselves and they need Jesus to save them.
- Because they reach this understanding, they live by faith in the work that Jesus accomplished on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. They trust that His sacrifice on the cross was sufficient to pay their sin debt and they are forgiven for the debt they owe.

Jesus frees those who trust in Him because He took on the sin of the world when He died on the cross.

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’—”

- Every person is born enslaved to his or her sin nature. This enslavement is a curse that cannot be overcome on our own. We are cursed by the law because we cannot keep the law.
- Jesus became a curse in our place by taking on the sin of the world and dying in our place. He became our substitute and paid our sin debt.

JESUS FREES US FROM THE
PURSUIT OF SELF-SALVATION**BIG IDEA #1: THE CURSE OF THE LAW IS THAT WE ARE UNABLE TO KEEP IT.¹****[THIS]**

God has given His commands and law to His people to guide them to salvation. When God first called Abraham and created a people for Himself from Abraham's offspring, God gave the law to this people and commanded them to obey it. The expectation was that the Israelites would follow God's law and keep His commandments. No one could do this perfectly. Every person failed to keep all of God's commands. In Deuteronomy 27:26, God warned His people that anyone who did not keep the commands and follow the law would be cursed. This curse is the sin debt that every person owes and cannot pay. Because every person is born with a fallen and broken sin nature, every person disobeys God's commands at some point in their lives. No one seeks after God or naturally desires to obey Him. The curse of the law is present in every person's life.

[THEREFORE]

Read Jeremiah 11:3 and Ezekiel 18:4. How do these verses help your understanding of the purpose of the law?

The Israelites received the law as a guide to help them live for God, and to also show them their inability to keep God's commands. The curse for the Israelites was that they could not keep the law. Anyone who disobeyed God's law was under a curse because it condemned them.

[THIS]

The curse of the law for people now is our inability to keep it perfectly. Though people can come up with a moral code and even attempt to establish a code of ethics that speaks to some form of morality, no person ever lives perfectly. The curse is that we cannot do good things all the time. Just as the Israelites could not keep God's law, we cannot and will not always do good. Often, our hearts will condemn us even if our actions appear righteous. Romans 3:23 reminds us that we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. This means that the standard by which we are measured is not other humans, but God Himself, and God is perfect and holy. We fall short of the glory that is always true of God. The curse of the law is that His law is perfect, and we are unable to attain perfection.

[THEREFORE]

How have you been able to see your own inability to keep God's commands in your daily life?

Ephesians 2:10-13 helps us understand that we do not have the ability to save ourselves. When we try to follow God's commands, we fail miserably. The law shows us that we cannot practice patience in our own power, we cannot love correctly in our own power, we cannot do what God requires in our own power. We need the power of His Spirit to help us.

What evidence in the world shows the world as under the curse of the law?

In every culture around the globe, people create their own moral codes to live by. These codes exist because a sense of right and wrong is written into the hearts of people. Yet, people cannot keep their own codes of right and wrong. Romans 8:22-23 tells us that creation itself groans to be free from the curse of sin.

1. Galatians 3:11: Every person born on earth is born enslaved to sin. No one is able to keep the law perfectly; therefore, we are all cursed by it.

JESUS FREES US FROM THE
PURSUIT OF SELF-SALVATION**BIG IDEA #2: THE LAW REVEALED OUR INABILITY TO RESCUE OURSELVES FROM OUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION.²****[THIS]**

In Galatians 3:11, Paul reminds the Galatian believers that no one is justified by the law. This truth serves as a reminder of every person's spiritual condition. The spiritual condition of every man and woman is brokenness. Because of the sin nature every person is born with, each man and woman walks a journey toward eternal death. The spiritual condition of every person is depravity and spiritual blindness. Isaiah 53:6 says that all people have gone astray like sheep. They have wandered away and followed his or her own way. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 reminds us that the gospel is veiled to those who are perishing because of their spiritual condition. Many times people will recognize that morality exists in the world, but they do not understand how they can have rescue until the Spirit awakens them to their need of salvation.

[THEREFORE]

What are some ways that people use morality as a means of rescuing themselves from their spiritual condition?

We often recognize that there is a code of right or wrong that we should all live by, yet we do not attribute this to God. We do not acknowledge the depravity of our spirits and turn to God. Isaiah 64:6 tells us that any of our righteous acts are like filthy rags to God. They fall short.

[THIS]

The law given to God's people and the world reveals that no one is able to rescue themselves from their spiritual condition because it first reveals their spiritual condition. The Israelites could easily point to the law and become prideful, but Jesus taught that the heart mattered when it came to keeping the law. Today, a person's good deeds may seem good, but no one's heart is ever completely pure and perfect. The law reveals that there is no person who is completely just. There is no person who lives righteously. Every person goes astray and breaks the law. Our spiritual condition is such that without the help of the Holy Spirit, we do not even realize that we need to be rescued. We are totally dependent upon God for salvation in every way.

[THEREFORE]

How have you tried to use morality and good deeds as a means of righteous living?

Ecclesiastes 7:20 and Romans 3:10 show us that no person is righteous. Only Jesus lived the perfect life; therefore, there is no good deed we could do that could save us. Even our best deeds are tainted by our sinful hearts.

How does it bring you hope to know that you are unable to save yourself?

Romans 10:9-13 teaches us that when we confess with our mouths that Jesus is Lord, we are saved. The truth that we cannot save ourselves means that we do not have to save ourselves. God has made a way for us to be saved that isn't dependent upon us.

2. Galatians 3:11-12: No one can save themselves. We are all in need of Jesus to rescue us from our fallen and broken condition.

JESUS FREES US FROM THE
PURSUIT OF SELF-SALVATION**BIG IDEA #3: THE RIGHTEOUS LIVE BY FAITH.³****[THIS]**

When we gain an understanding of our spiritual poverty and know that we cannot save ourselves, we are left to choose Jesus. Jesus is the only way to be reconciled to God. He is the only source of salvation and the way we can be redeemed from the sin debt we owe. In Galatians 3:10-14, Paul writes that Jesus became a curse for us. He did this by taking on the curse of the law in our place. He lived the perfect life, obeying the law perfectly in our place and taking on the curse that is the law. When He went to the cross, He did so for our sins and not for His own. He did not break the law, we did. He sacrificed His life on the cross bearing the burden of our sin and not any that He had committed. This is how He became a curse for our sake. He was our substitute. He stood in our place and took the punishment that we deserved. The faith we have is faith in this work He did on the cross. We trust that He did this and that His sacrifice was sufficient to save us and reconcile us to God.

[THEREFORE]

What is the object of our faith? Can our faith be passive?

Galatians 3:10-13 tells us that Christ became the curse for us. He redeemed us from the curse of the law by taking our punishment on the cross. Our faith is in Him and the work He did on the cross. This is not a one-time decision to trust in Jesus, rather it is the daily pursuit of trusting in Christ and His work.

[THIS]

Because Jesus is the substitute for us and became a curse in our place, we are free from needing to save ourselves. There is no pressure for us to figure out how to secure our own salvation. God made a way and provided redemption that requires man's faith, which is given to him as a gift from God. Man's responsibility is to live by this faith. They trust daily that they have been saved and it is this faith that compels them to live for God by obeying His commands. People aren't obeying in order to be right or to rescue themselves. They obey because they have been rescued and redeemed. The perspective changes and the behavior switches to one of obedience out of love and delight rather than a felt need of having to rescue oneself. Jesus' work on the cross was sufficient to save. His sacrifice was sufficient, and God declared it a finished work. Now, all those who trust in this work are redeemed and set free to live obedient lives to God.

[THEREFORE]

Since Jesus is our substitute, how does this free you to live by faith daily?

Read Galatians 3:10-14. In these verses, Paul teaches that Jesus became a curse for our sakes, and it is His sacrifice on our behalf that sets us free. In verse 13, he writes that Christ redeemed us from the curse by becoming the curse. We are free to live trusting in this redemption daily.

How does relying upon the Holy Spirit help you live by faith daily?

In Galatians 3:14, Paul writes of the promised Holy Spirit that believers receive because of the work that Christ has done. We are given the Holy Spirit as a helper, to lead us to repentance of our sin and to walk in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord. When we trust that the Spirit is at work in us, we seek to be led by the Spirit.

3. Galatians 3:13-14: The righteous, or those redeemed by Christ, live by the faith they have in His salvation.