*“Such A Deal”*

Paul’s Letter to the Galatians

Chapter 6

***“It Is Finished”***

“M

y house is on a median strip. I leave my driveway doing 60.”

“I shop in the generic brands section at a place called Store.”

“Our school colors are clear. In my yearbook I *look* nude, but that’s my band uniform.”

After sampling his act, you can visualize Steven Wright, right? Just think Art Garfunkel, asleep. And Woody Allen *looks* like he *sounds:*

“I failed to make the chess team because of my height.”

“I love this watch. My grandpa sold it to me on his deathbed.”

“I wonder about parents. Mine put a ‘live’ teddy bear in my crib.”

“It was a double date. I asked the other girl to bring a sister for me. She did. Sister Magdalena. For dinner she ordered loaves and fish.

About 1400 B.C. the Jews got a picture of God’s sinlessness; the 10 Commandments. Joseph Aaron writes in the *Chicago Jewish News:*

*“Anything that evokes guilt tells us we didn't live up to the standards Judaism demands of us. … Rosh Hashana gives us the opportunity to find our guilt (and) focus on our guilt … guilt is good for all of us. For guilt is the necessary first step on the road to change, and change is what … being Jewish, is all about.*

Jesus, God’s’ Son, came to earth:

•to show us what His Father is like (John 14:5-11)

•to prove that only God can keep the Law (Hebrews 4:14-15)

•to die for our sins (John 3:17; Hebrews 4:14-15; Titus 3:4-7)

But 1st century Jews rejected their Messiah. Because of His death and resurrection, people of any ethnicity, gender or caste can hop on that “Gospel train.” “Don’t need no ticket; jes’ git on board.”

The Bible says once you’ve put your life in God’s hands and trust in what Christ did on the cross for you, you have been:

•freed from the *guilt* of sin -- *completely, forever forgiven*

•freed from sin’s *penalty* – (Romans 3:20, 10:4, 11:32)

•freed from the *power* of sin over your life

•freed from the need to perform to deserve rewards from God

As the Newsboyz sing, “No guilt in life, no fear in death. This is the power of Christ in me.” What a sound bite: “No guilt, No fear!” **More good news from Paul: Romans 8:1-11, 34 (p 332, Msg).**

**DISCUSS: God will never again condemn a believer for sinning. What does that mean? Why does it sound so outrageous?**

After Paul releases Jesus’ post-resurrection Gospel upgrade, false teachers warn new believers, “Unless you play Religionoply, God won’t save you” (Acts 15:1; 20:24). This is how movements control their faithful. But Jesus just says, “Follow me” (Matthew 4:19).

Paul reminds the Galatians that faith in Christ counts, not religious calisthenics. If you’ve put your life in God’s care, He’s never angry with you because He *forgave all* your sin when Jesus took it to His grave and *left* it. Case closed. He’s moved on; you need to also. God says to the believer, “If you *never* change, I *still* love and accept you.” **Let’s do Titus 3:1-11 (p 887, NIV).**

**Let’s finish Paul’s letter to Galatians, 6:1-18 (p 868, NIV).**

**He Ain’t My Brother; He’s Heavy.**

**Galatians 6:1-6 (p 418, Msg)**

God’s Holy Spirit lives in Christ’s follower and guides him each day. For example, when a believer discovers that another brother is struggling with sin, he humbly comes alongside to help restore right behavior, gently, like setting a fracture (Romans 8:33-34).

**DISCUSS: From God’s perspective, who are you really, and what mission in life has He prepared you to carry out?**

“The law of Christ” urges us to love others (John 13:34-35). Aware of how much God has forgiven you softens you toward those who wrong you (2 Corinthians 5:19). If you don’t forgive others, you’re saying their sin against you is worse than their sin against God.

**DISCUSS: Why do we compare ourselves with others?**

We’re to help others lift life’s big burdens. Yet there are some that each must bear alone, but Jesus is always there to share the load.

DISCUSS: How are you coping as a burden-bearer?

Some suspect preachers are just after your stash. God’s view is that the one who explains the Scriptures to us deserves our support (Matthew 6:21; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8; Hebrews 13:16).

**Sow What?**

**Galatians 6:7-10**

Employing the Law of Sowing and Reaping, the farmer who plants a seed expects to reap that kind of crop in spades. When bosses treat employees with TLC, cash registers purr. A spouse sows disloyalty, and the marriage reaps pain. God warned Israel not to sow the wind (make flimsy alliances) lest they reap a whirlwind of invaders like Assyria and Babylon (Hosea 8:7). Sin takes us where we don’t want to go, keeps us longer than we planned to stay, and costs more than we wanted to pay. What are you sowing?

Unless we trust Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross as total payment for our sin, we’re “choosing” permanent separation from Him in a place the Bible calls hell, an unquenchable “lake of fire” which God made for Satan and his angels, NOT for people! People, not God, send themselves there (Luke 16:19-31).

No one knows if Christ will return in 2011. It could be “Heaven Come Eleven.” The time for sowing by “focusing on forever” is now.

**Circumcision Doesn’t Cut It Anymore**

**Galatians *6:11-18***

Circumcision had been practiced by the Jews for 1900 years. This “incision decision” is Bible shorthand for legalism. Despite his boffo resume’, Paul would only boast about Jesus, the cross and the empty tomb (1 Corinthians 1:18-2:8). For ages people have ignored or denied the cross because it shouts: (1) we’re all sinners, (2) no sin will enter heaven, and (3) only faith in Christ, not in good intentions, can save us. Paul was motivated by knowing that the Creator knew him intimately, loved him unconditionally and lived in him (Galatians 2:20)! Do you know that?

**There Oughta Be A Law**

Only Christ can live the Christian life, and He wants to live *His* life *in*, *through* and *as* you. Without a Savior, you and I are toast. Burnt toast. Jesus has done *everything* to earn your trust. As He said … “It is finished.” Your sin is not the issue. Your reliance on His grace and mercy, not your worthiness, is on the table. Why not settle it once and for all now? Silently tell Him,

“God, I’ve tried to earn Your love by being a stand up guy. Now I know that I can’t earn something I already have. Thank You for forgiving me of my sins and for this new life, Jesus’ life, that You’ve promised me. Come on in, Jesus. *Mi* *casa es* now *su* *casa*. Amen.”

His Deal

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