

A Reader's Guide to Discipleship©: Readings in the New Testament

2009

The sufficiency of the scriptures for all things pertaining to life and godliness
(II Tim 3:16)

Galatians: Life on the tightrope of faith- looking back to the cross and forward to the promise.

I. A reminder of God's redemptive purpose 1:3-10

- A. God's purpose 1:3-5 to deliver us from this present evil age for the display of his glory
- B. Occasion 1:6-10 the church was turning away from the authentic gospel

II. The gospel of faith is a proven message of God 1:11- 2:21- Paul's uses his testimony to drive home the fact that it is God who has established faith alone as the foundation of the gospel

- A. The gospel of Jesus is God's revelation not man's 1:11-12
- B. The teaching of the gospel of Jesus is God's calling not man's 1:13-17
- C. The purity of the message of the gospel is proven by the consistency of Paul's testimony 1:18-2:16
- D. The purity of the message of faith is not polluted by imperfect messengers 2:17-18
- D. Paul lives what he teaches about faith 2:19-21

III. The gospel of faith is verified by the activity of the Spirit in us

- A. Receiving the blessing of the Spirit is not possible unless we become sons of Abraham which can only occur through faith 3:1-9
- B. The law can only bring a curse. It was this very curse that Jesus endured to free us from the law 3:10-14
- C. The law came long after the promise of blessing 3:15-18
- D. The law was added to point to our problem of sin not to replace the promise 3:19-25
- D. It is faith alone that makes us heirs (and therefore recipients of the Spirit). 3:26-4:7

IV. Paul confronts the legalists: it is living by faith alone that brings life in the Spirit and therefore the ability to live uprightly

- A. Paul's loving concern for the Galatians 4:8-4:20
- B. Our legal right to freedom as children of the promise 4:21-31
- C. The only hope of righteousness is through the Spirit by faith 5:1-5
- D. Faith expresses itself through love to fulfil the law 5:7-15
- E. The fruit of the Spirit fulfils the law and more 5:16-24

V. The out workings of faith working through love

- A. Healthy community 5:25-6:5
(Bearing one another's burdens: standing alongside in faith doesn't mean we try to fix others burdens.)
- B. Generosity 5:6-10

VI. Final words about faith

- A. Selfish motives of those who promote circumcision 6:11-13

B. Faith looks backwards to the cross but forwards to the promises 6:11-15
(compare 6:15 to 5:6)

**Faith is complete satisfaction with the future God has planned for us including suffering. This letter is not about the superiority of grace over the law but rather the superiority of faith over any external system of regulations.
Prayer = our response of faith to the future grace of Jesus**