**Live free – Galatians wk 5 – Prison Break!**

**Escape from Alcatraz – fascinates me. A spoon. Saw it person last fall.**

**This letter is about living free! From self, sin, shame, & religion**

**Background: By the Apostle Paul to the Galatians - warriors**

**False teachers came teaching that strict loyalty to the law of Moses and 10 commandments is required for salvation. Paul was furious.**

**Using OT as his source he is teaching them that it’s thru faith.**

**The Gospel is simply - Jesus lived, was crucified, buried and rose again to rescue from our sin. That alone is the gospel that saves.**

**Jesus + Nothing = Everything / Jesus + Anything = Nothing**

**Today we pick up where we left off last week at – Galatians 3:15**

**Gal 3 is a power packed & complex - we will take our time.**

**Last week: Paul made the case that Abraham was credited as righteous by faith not by following rules. (Gen 15) And so are we by faith in Jesus.**

**Paul said something strange. Law (OT) is not able to save us, but only a curse- Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.”**

**Law of God is a curse? For them and us that seems confusing**

**Other letters - The law kills (2 cor 3:6) brings a curse and wrath (Ro 4) Brings death (Ro 7) Empowers sin (1 Co 15:56) Is merciless (He 10:28)**

**I thought the OT was good & from God, how can it be a curse?**

**And are rules bad? Should we not have them or give them?**

**Paul explains starting with an everyday life illust. - Galatian 3:15 Brothers and sisters, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case.**

**The terms of a contract are set – Can’t just say I’m going to do it diff. Contracts says mortgage payment due on 1st - I think I’m going to pay it when I want or not at all. What happens? Why? It was already established. Contracts / covenants among people are established.**

**In the same way, faith is already established as our means to righteousness – back with Abraham.**

**16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. (Gen 22:18 - God promised Abe that in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.)**

**Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ.**

**That promise to Abe was a prophecy of the promised one - (Christ / Messiah) JESUS!**

**17 What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, (430 after Abe was declared righteous by faith) does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. (the commandments of God – do not override the righteousness by faith convent with Abe)**

**Those false teachers may quote the commands, but**

**Paul quotes the promise. The original agreement with God.**

**Another great example of the faithfulness of God - God keeps his word! He is not finicky or fickle, but firm in his promises (6X – promise of God)**

**Gal 3:18 For if the inheritance (salvation) depends on the law, (commandments) then it no longer depends on the promise; (promise of Jesus) but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. (the coming of a son)**

**\*\* Just as Abe was promised one chosen son, that son gave us the one chosen Savior.**

**19a Why, then, was the law given at all? (the million-dollar question: Why was it given at all?) It was added because of transgressions until the Seed (Jesus) to whom the promise referred had come. (It was temporary, until Jesus)**

**Paul gives 3 Reasons For OT Commandments (why we’re given the OT)**

1. **Guide - It was given to reveal God’s Holy standards and character**

**God was giving mankind his standards and expectations.**

**The law is a teacher of the heart and character of God.**

1. **Curb - given to restrain the transgressions of people**

**Lest we tear ourselves apart with selfish destructive behavior – keeps us in check. Tells us what we ought and need to do.**

**A yard to keep us safe from the oncoming cars.**

1. **Mirror - given to reveal our innate rebellion and need for salvation**

**That same yard to keep us safe, becomes a point of contention and frustration. “You can’t tell me what to do.” / “But my feelings and desire want something else”**

**The OT says you’re bankrupt – deep in sin debt.**

**The OT reveals our rebellion and need for salvation –**

**Romans 7:7 Well then, am I suggesting that the law of God is sinful? Of course not! In fact, it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, “You must not covet.” (5-8)**

**OT commands prepare us for the need & work of the Messiah (read gospels first, then you will see Jesus all over the OT)**

**Matthew 5:17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.**

**Jesus fulfilled them, he did not destroy them. They still serve the same purpose – as a guide / a curb / a mirror.**

**The Law is how God looked at us before Jesus = Cursed & condemned**

**The Cross is how God looks at us now = Righteous & forgiven**

**Maybe you are not feeling yourself… You know it, you just can’t figure it out. Feeling sick. You can either ignore it or go to a doctor. What do you do?**

**If you don’t go, you live unsettled and oblivious. But if you do go - you might be told of you are very sick. You go you get bad news. That diagnosis reveals a problem, and it is not good news. It is news that brings despair. That is why some avoid the doctor. But you’re still sick, you’re just ignorant and unaware.**

**In the same way you are given a diagnosis when you read the OT – it reveals a problem – it is by itself, not good news.**

**And it gives you the diagnosis – death. That is the OT.**

**OT commands still have the same purpose today. Guide, Curb, Mirror.**

**According to the God’s laws you are sick and need help. Jesus doesn’t destroy the OT doctor – the need to know – he is however the remedy.**

* **The OT – The symptoms, diagnosis, and prognosis**
* **The NT – The prescription and remedy**

**Gal 3:19b The law was given through angels (spiritual beings) and entrusted to a mediator. (Moses and the prophets where mediators) 20 A mediator, however, implies more than one party; but God is one. (this is a tricky passage)**

**OT commands need two parties – God and a mediator.**

**\*Law & prophets are OT Mediators – “If you do this, God will do…”**

**BUT – we don’t follow His commands very well.**

**But what God does thru Jesus – is by God alone – One**

**1 Timothy 2:5 There is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus (Jesus is God / man = God himself is the mediator. God does it alone.) 6 He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time.**

**\*Law & prophets are OT Mediators – “If you do this, God will do…”**

**\*Jesus is the new mediator – “If you have faith in me, I will…”**

**Another question: Galatians 3:21 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? (the OT commands opposite the promise of Jesus?)**

**Some cults have this opinion; OT God is diff than the NT God. “They’re opposed to each other. They can’t be the same!”**

**Gal 3:21 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. (the Law is incomplete – it’s the primer coat)**

**If our righteousness is based on our ability to keep commandments – we are in trouble.**

**It is incomplete - It simply says to keep it and that if you break it you will be judged. They do not impart life or righteousness.**

**Leads to another problem, some say it’s good for nothing.**

**But Paul gives a great word picture - Gal 3:22 But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. 23 Before the coming of this faith, (faith in Jesus) we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come (Jesus) would be revealed.**

**The OT is not imprisonment, but it reveals you are imprisoned as one who breaks the laws of God. The scriptures point out our rebellious nature and puts us in a spiritual prison – on death row**

**\*\* Scripture is the judge, sin is the prison and the abusive jailer.**

**\*\* We are born behind bars and sit captive to sin.**

**“Well, I’m not a prisoner to sin” Okay, then stop sinning. You can’t. (Romans 6:15-23) We are salves and chained to sin.**

**You cannot get out - this prison is inescapable. But Jesus swings the bars wide open – it a mass prison break = Setting free the captives!!**

**Observations From the Prison Break:**

**1. We are all born prisoners (Rom 3:23, Ecc 78:20, Is 53:6, 1 Pet 2:25)**

**We have all fallen short of the law – born behind bars.**

**You, your family, kids, neighbors, friends - born prisoners.**

**We don’t choose to sin – we sin. (1 John 1:8-10)**

**2. You cannot break yourself out of prison!**

**All your efforts will never gain you access to God. Maybe raised in church or maybe you can try to start today- still too late!**

**Falling short – We are in Texas... Imagine God's kingdom is Hawaii - all we got to do is walk to the coast & swim there. Some will get farther than others - some to the Rockies, the desert - maybe a couple miles out to sea - but no matter how great an athlete - no one can do it, we will all fail. Some will get farther than others, but no one can do it. \* Some will get more help than others (in the ocean / climbing a Mt, crossing a desert) but we all needed lifesaving help.**

**Every one of us have failed and fallen short of God's standard.**

**Some more than others... so some of you know great grace..**

**But we all still fail miserably - and apart from the grace of Jesus, we will all still all perish in a sea of sin.**

**Works vs. Faith**

**Ladder to God God comes down**

**About what you do About what Jesus did**

**Compares self to others Compares self to Jesus**

**Causes pride and despair Causes humility and joy**

**Brings the curse of God Brings the blessing of God**

**3. You must realize you are a prisoner in need of rescue**

**Adam and Eve needed Jesus - Seed of woman is promised to crush Satan**

**Abraham and Sarah needed Jesus – Seed of the promise will rescue**

**Moses needed Jesus – the law points our need and to a promise**

**The Disciples and Paul needed Jesus- “What a wretched man am I”**

**Every man & woman, You, Me, We, They (world) needs Jesus**

**Luke 5, Mark 2, Matthew 9 - Jesus says I have come for those who know they are sick and in need of help – not those who think they do not need help.**

**Matt 5:3 - Blessed are those who are poor in spirit (Bankrupt, flat broke spirit)**

**\*\* Over and over – we are to humble ourselves before God.**

**This is why so many never give their life to Christ – “I don’t need him.” I go to church, I am a decent person, I do good things. No matter your lot in life – raised in church or raised in the streets – you need Jesus!**

**4. We must respond if we are to walk away from this prison**

**(Rom 10:9-15, John 1:12, 3:16-18, Ac 2:38, 16:31, 1 Jo 1:9, Mk 16:16, Ep 2:8-9)**

**Gal 3:22 Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.**

**This is not automatically applied to everyone – Some false teach because of Jesu we will have go to heaven. False!**

**Acts 13:38 “Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. 39 Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.**

**Romans 10:4 Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. (FAITH in Jesus work on the cross)**

**The only power that can actually change a heart and our actions – is found in the gospel of Jesus – released by faith.**

**5. We still need the deterrent of the prison.**

**Even if prison and laws do not stop all crime - we still need laws to deter crime lest we destroy each other.**

**Likewise – Paul tells us we still need the commandments of God to Curb, Mirror, and Guide us. The OT is still God beautiful word.**

**Are you in prison today? A prison of sin and pride. I was there once…**

**Matt 11:28-29 - Jesus says to you today - "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”**

**The doors are open – you need to walk thru! What are you waiting for? You mistake your chains for freedom, and your prison for a home. It’s time for a prison break!**

**Zack Williams – Chain breaker - Live from Harding Prison**

**Assignment - Les Misérables – is about this Chapter 3**

**Law says: I will chase you down your good efforts will never satisfy me**

**Grace says: You are forgiven, declared right - now give it to others**

**LAW – Commencement, school president said that they were only accepting people who not only had a 4.0 but never had a red mark on a paper or missed a question on a quiz. Every person who had worked so hard was called forth and declared “failed”.**

**GRACE -1 perfect student came forth and was declared “passed”. Imagine that student then stood forth to give the commencement address. They tell all the other students, if you respond in faith & come back on the stage I would like to shake your hand and trade/exchange transcripts with you. I will take your “F”, and give you my “A”.**

**The law as a judge – prison 22-23**

**The law as a teacher – classroom 24-25**

**Family of Abraham - Who are the children of Abraham?**

**Jewish Christians**

**Gentile Christians**

**Jewish non-Christians**

**Gentile non-Christians**

**We are better than you are –**

**Either you have Jesus or you don’t – simple. Regardless of culture, ethnicity, or background.**

**Christ to the present. It appears like one of Paul’s most**

**complex chapters. One commentator said verse 20, alone, has**

**300 possible interpretations!**

**Gal 3:6 Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” (Gen 15:6) 7 Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. 8 Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” (Gen 22:18) 9 So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.**

**Jesus is for everyone – faith the gospel – no limits!!!**

**Monty Python clip -**

**Many people’s idea of the gospel is that some day we’ll get to the bridge to paradise and be asked, “Why should you be allowed to cross?” As long as we answer correctly, we make it across. Answer wrongly, and we’re cast into the abyss. The gospel is redefined to be the announcement of the minimal entrance requirements for getting into heaven . Jesus never said, “Now I’m going to tell you what you need to say to get into heaven when you die.” Jesus’ good news is we no longer have to live in the guilt, failure, and impotence of our own strength. The transforming presence and power of God is available through Christ right here, right now. To live in that power, you must become his disciple.**

**The law says do – the cross says done**

**If we are performance driven rather than relationship driven - we will never understand the joy of our salvation**

**If we are performance driven rather than relationship driven - we will never understand the power of our salvation.**