

KNOWING WHAT COUNTS

Starting point:

If you have not heard the sermon, please take the time to go to our website www.vcfj.org and listen to it BEFORE you start this small group lesson. It will allow you to take notes along the way and be ready for the questions at hand. Remember, this is not an exercise but rather a group discussion to help you on our Journey to Greatness. May the Lord bless your faithfulness.

OVERVIEW

- What are the three foundational statements Paul makes in Galatians 5:1?
- Explain the application of verse 1 to the Judaizers, the Galatians and to us?
- We gain our freedom when we accept Christ as our Savior. What is the enemy of our freedom?
- What is the definition of “legalism” that Pastor shared with us?

We forsake THE BLESSINGS OF THE NEW COVENANT

Gal. 5:2-4

- What does Paul mean when he tells the Galatians if they embrace circumcision, they should go all the way and embrace “the whole law?”
- What happened to the Galatians when they embraced the law?
- Paul offers an argument in *Galatians 5:2-4* by describing four problems caused by reverting to legalism.
- If you revert to legalism then:
 - Christ profits you _____
 - You are a debtor to _____
 - Christ is of _____
 - You have fallen from _____
- Discuss how these consequences effected the Galatians both spiritually and eternally. If we lose sight of what counts and embrace a legalistic life style we lose all the benefits of grace and whose important help do we also lose?

We stop to WAIT FOR THE HOPE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Gal. 5:5-6

- What does Paul tell the Galatians that ultimately counts and what doesn't count?
- What will make the difference on judgement day?
- In 21 century America, we don't struggle with people trying to persuade us to be circumcised in order to be saved. But we do struggle with legalism in other ways. What are some of the other ways we've added conditions to people accepting God's grace or salvation? God's love or grace can only be available when.....
- What should we do when we are tempted to turn something good (bible) into something ultimate (law)?
- What is Paul telling us about righteousness in **verse 5**? Does he mean that we do not have any righteousness today and have to wait until judgement day?
- What did Pastor teach about the context of it in Paul's letter?
- What did Pastor say about what the bible clearly states about righteousness?

APPLICATION

- How highly do you value your freedom in Jesus Christ? Does it mean more to you than money, home, family, friends, job, or reputation?
- Do you compromise on Christian freedom in order to fit in at church, among your Christian friends, or at your job?
- How strongly do you resist having your freedom stolen? Do you submit to rules that strap you down spiritually, stopping or even reversing your Christian growth?
- Do you actually check the bases for the accepted Christian norms fed to you from other sources?
- Do you have trouble separating that which is good from that which is essential? Do you confuse the two?
- How tolerant are you of other Christians and their exercise of freedom?
- Do you insist that fellow believers adopt your personal preferences on nonessential matters?
- Do you flaunt your freedom in front of those with weaker consciences?
- Do you know what really counts in light of eternity; in light of the day of judgment?
- Do you consider every day a new opportunity to live and breathe the freedom Christ has provided? And if so, let grace be your way of life.