



Week 40: Galatians

Study Guide for the week of Sept. 28 - Oct. 4

Personal reflection / journaling exercise

This week, spend time on Gal 5:22-23

When you spend lots of time with someone else, you tend to adopt the behavior, mannerisms, and even speech patterns of that person – just ask any parent of a teenager why they closely monitor their child’s friends! One way to assess how you are growing in faith is to ask if you are looking more like Jesus, and the list of the fruits of the Spirit is a handy list of many of Jesus’ character traits.

Take your spiritual temperature this week. List all nine fruits of the Spirit. For each one, reflect on how you manifested that trait six months ago and compare it to where you are today.

Where are you looking more like Jesus? Where are you struggling or stuck? Take both your celebrations and challenges to God in prayer. Ask him to show you how he delights in you and your uniqueness and ask for help in those areas where you are struggling to follow Jesus more closely.

Discussion starters

1. In the letter to the Galatians, Paul is arguing against those who were teaching a “Gospel Plus ...” – the idea one must follow Jewish religious rituals in addition to what the Gospel teaches (e.g., believers must be circumcised). Where have you encountered situations of “Gospel Plus ...”? What does Paul counsel if you find yourself in that situation (Gal 1:11-12)?
2. Paul, one of the most educated religious scholars of his day, spent three additional years in preparation for ministry after his conversion experience (Gal 1:18). How does this message play in our world of instant gratification? How do you feel about the idea of a life-long apprenticeship to Jesus? Is it hard to accept you’ll never “graduate” from the “school of Jesus”? Why or why not?
3. Read Gen 12:1-3, the first mention of the promise through Abraham. In it, God promises Abraham a place to call home, many descendants, and that Abraham would be a blessing to all the families of the earth. Reread Gal 3:28-29. Has God kept his promise? What human barriers to community has God broken (Gal 3:28)? How does this affect the way you treat others?
4. What does “freedom” mean to you? What would your life look like if you were free to be the way you wanted to be?
Reread Gal 5:1, 13-15. Does your idea of freedom differ from the freedom Paul writes of? How?

Bible verse to memorize: Gal 3:28