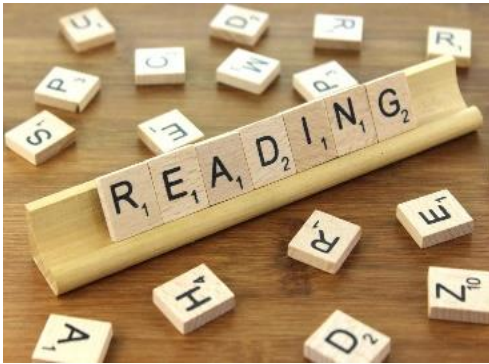




**Introduction:** God must have known that I would love the writings he inspired Paul to produce. Galatians is yet another example of style and structure that excites me as a former English teacher. Additionally, in the passages for today's lesson, Paul has combined two of my passions; sports and cooking! He utilizes these two activities to create a metaphor to emphasize the need for Christians to be grounded in the Word of God. This allows believers to combat false doctrines, live as examples of Christ, and share the gospel message clearly with those who do not know or have confusion about salvation.



**This week's background readings:**

Acts 15: 1-11, Galatians 4: 8-20, Galatians 5

**Passage for current lesson:** Galatians 5: 7-9

## I. You Are Trippin'

Paul uses imagery of a runner to question the Galatian church regarding their adherence to their acceptance of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The focus of the letter to the Galatians (remember, Paul's writings were letters that were delivered to different churches or cities where Christians lived) centered on a false doctrine that believers needed to become Jewish converts before being fully saved. Paul calls them Judaizers. This issue is first proposed in Acts 15: 1-11. Peter has now become the leader of the early church and emphatically addresses this issue, with a conclusion in verse 11. "We are saved by grace."



**LAST WEEK:** You will remember that in last week's lesson, we learned that The Mosaic Law was never designed to provide salvation for us. The Law shows the boundary of God's expectations and reminds us that even at our best, we cannot live up to the standard. Peter calls it a yoke that no one has been able to achieve (See Acts 15: 10).

Paul asks the following question of the Galatian church. “Who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?” In modern English, it reads “You were running well, who tripped you are or cut in on you and stopped you from obeying the truth?”

This analogy to running and being tripped is a wonderful image. To understand the image, we should envision someone running a race and as they run, someone from the sidelines comes in and cuts them off causing them to stumble and fall.

The Judaizers (Jewish Christians) were teaching that non-Jews (Gentiles) had to go through circumcision and had to follow the Mosaic Law before they could be fully saved. This is in direct opposition to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Faith, not works, saves us.

These Christians were on the verge of leaving the truth they had learned because of the influence of teachings that were not in line with God’s prescription for salvation. Paul intends for his readers to understand that our freedom from the punishment of sin is only found in the completed work of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we must not be “trippin’” or allow anyone to add or take away from our position in Christ. We are saved by faith and need not add a single requirement to what Jesus did on the cross for the entire world.

To solidify this fact, read the following verses:

1. Acts 16: 30-31
2. Romans 10: 9
3. Ephesians 2: 8-9

1. What are some ideas you have heard about salvation which do not line up with God’s word?


2. How would you refute these ideas based on your understanding of this lesson?


## **II. The Wrong Yeast Can Mess Up the Whole Batch!**

For those who like to cook (ME!), you understand the power of yeast (leaven). A little yeast can cause a lump of dough to rise. This concept would have been common to the readers of Paul's day. The context is similar to the idea above with some additional ideas.

First, Paul is implying in verse 8 that the teaching of circumcision was not part of the original teaching thus by adding this requirement it moved the emphasis from faith to works.

Secondly, Paul is implying that a small addition to the gospel may appear insignificant but, could have a major impact.

- How do you think this change could impact people long term?
  
- Why do you think they wanted to add this requirement to salvation?

While the issue may have seemed small, we must remember that trivial things have the ability to fester into larger issues. How often have you said, "It's no big deal" to later find out that "it" was a huge deal! This is the critique Paul has for his readers in Galatia.

1. What are some modern-day "trivial things" which can mess up your faith walk with Christ?


2. How can you protect yourself against what “they say” versus what “the word says” about God’s intent for your life?


Conclusion: We find that these verses indicate that the truth of God’s Word has been under attack since the early church. Our purpose and intent should be to identify what God’s word says and means. This allows us to stay in the FREEDOM that He intends for us. There is no need for us to add more steps to salvation since Jesus did more than enough on His own!

Prayer: Dear God thank you for showing us your plan of salvation. We appreciate that it is as simple as saying “Yes!” to your free gift of Jesus. Amen!