

Week 7 October 28th 2012

Reading: Galatians 3:1-9

Reflection:

Society teaches us from a young age that hard work and dedication are the key factors to success and happiness. We are told to “be all you can be” and “fake it till you make it” and as the great philosopher Miley Cyrus so eloquently stated, “If you believe in yourself anything is possible.” While these phrases make for great t-shirts and inspirational posters, this mentality has caused hundreds of thousands of people to pursue occupations and life paths in which they will never have success. For instance, as a 5’11, 30 year old, athletically challenged guy, I can believe in myself all I want, but the NBA is not an option for me!

In Christian faith the “fake it till you make it” mentality has done irreparable damage in our understanding of Justification and Sanctification. Paul in Galatians 3 lovingly reprimands his readers telling them that it is the spirit of God who saves us (Justification) and the spirit of God who maintains our faith (Sanctification) – not our adherence to the law. For the church today, in a society where everything is based on achievement and personal accomplishment, the idea of resting in something rather than working for something, is enough to fry our mental circuits. This week in our study of Galatians 3 we will dig into the Gospel reality of resting in Christ’s sufficiency while turning from our own accomplishment as a means to salvation.

Questions:

1. Read vs.1. How does this correlate to the phrase, “The opposite of love is not hate but indifference?” What implications does this have for your relationships?
2. What can we learn about Justification and Sanctification from vs. 1-3? (How is the Gospel presented? How did the Galatians respond? What was the result?)
3. What does this passage teach us about spiritual growth? How is this different from what you have been taught or from what you see in the church at large?
4. What is the significance of the statement, “Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith?” (Reference: Gen. 12:1-5, 15:1-6, 22:1-14) Why is this an important statement for the Galatians and for us?
5. How is Abraham’s saving faith a model for us?
6. What solution does Paul give us in this passage to keep from being “bewitched” and turning away from the Gospel?