

the **DRIFT** *grace*

We Jews know that we have no advantage of birth over “non-Jewish sinners.” We know very well that we are not set right with God by rule-keeping but only through personal faith in Jesus Christ. How do we know? We tried it—and we had the best system of rules the world has ever seen! Convinced that no human being can please God by self-improvement, we believed in Jesus as the Messiah so that we might be set right before God by trusting in the Messiah, not by trying to be good.

¹⁷⁻¹⁸ Have some of you noticed that we are not yet perfect? (No great surprise, right?) And are you ready to make the accusation that since people like me, who go through Christ in order to get things right with God, aren’t perfectly virtuous, Christ must therefore be an accessory to sin? The accusation is frivolous. If I was “trying to be good,” I would be rebuilding the same old barn that I tore down. I would be acting as a charlatan.

¹⁹⁻²¹ What actually took place is this: I tried keeping rules and working my head off to please God, and it didn’t work. So I quit being a “law man” so that I could be God’s man. Christ’s life showed me how, and enabled me to do it. I identified myself completely with him. Indeed, I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not “mine,” but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not going to go back on that.

Is it not clear to you that to go back to that old rule-keeping, peer-pleasing religion would be an abandonment of everything personal and free in my relationship with God? I refuse to do that, to repudiate God’s grace. If a living relationship with God could come by rule-keeping, then Christ died unnecessarily.

Galatians 2:15-21 MSG

Day 1—READ Galatians 2:15-21 MSG

Underline the portions in the passage where you notice that grace is...
...God’s unmerited favor.
...His supernatural power.
...necessary for our past, present, and future.

Days 2-5—READ Galatians 2:15-21 MSG

The outline for this week asks the question, “What are the signs you have fallen away from grace?” Choose several of the following signs that may apply to your life today. Study one each day, evaluate your motivations, and journal your thoughts. How can you begin to live in the grace of God?

- I don’t pray.*
- I am trying to prove my worth.*
- I don’t rest.*
- I am punishing myself.*
- I carry foolish guilt.*
- I am being judgmental.*
- I won’t forgive.*
- I try to earn acceptance.*

Go Deeper

- Highlight in the scripture passage some of the signs listed above.
- What does the author of Galatians have to say about these signs?
- What does the author say is central to living in God’s grace?
- What’s your next step in accepting God’s unmerited grace?
- Read Ephesians 2 for more about grace.