

GALATIANS

LIVING IN

freedom



GALATIANS

LIVING IN *freedom*

What does it mean to be truly free?

Free from the pressure to perform.

Free from the weight of shame.

Free from the sin that clings, and the striving that exhausts.

This is the freedom the apostle Paul urges us to live into in his letter to the Galatians. In a world where it's easy to confuse religion with rules, and faith with fear, Paul calls us back to the simple, stunning truth of the gospel: we are loved, chosen, and made whole by grace, not by effort.

Through this series, we'll explore what it means to live free from sin and deception, and free for life in the Spirit. We'll discover that the gospel frees us to love boldly, serve generously, and stand firm in the truth when false versions of faith creep in.

Each week, we'll uncover both the invitation and the challenge of gospel freedom. Because when we know who we are, as God's beloved children, we learn how to live, how to love, and how to walk in step with the Spirit. And that's where real freedom begins.

CONTENTS

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| How to Use This Book | 6 |
| What To Expect | 7 |
| How to Read Galatians | 8 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| THE GOSPEL THAT SETS US FREE | 12 |
| Day 1 Overview | 15 |
| Day 2 Read Scripture: Primary Passage | 16 |
| Day 3 Read Scripture: Supporting Passage | 19 |
| Day 4 Listen & Receive | 22 |
| Group Prayer Page | 23 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| FAITH THAT SETS US FREE | 24 |
| Day 1 Overview | 27 |
| Day 2 Read Scripture: Primary Passage | 28 |
| Day 3 Read Scripture: Supporting Passage | 31 |
| Day 4 Listen & Receive | 34 |
| Group Prayer Page | 35 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| A NEW IDENTITY IN THE FAMILY OF GOD | 36 |
| Day 1 Overview | 39 |
| Day 2 Read Scripture: Primary Passage | 40 |
| Day 3 Read Scripture: Supporting Passage | 43 |
| Day 4 Listen & Receive | 46 |
| Group Prayer Page | 47 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| FREEDOM FROM PERFORMANCE AND SIN | 48 |
| Day 1 Overview | 51 |
| Day 2 Read Scripture: Primary Passage | 52 |
| Day 3 Read Scripture: Supporting Passage | 55 |
| Day 4 Listen & Receive | 58 |
| Group Prayer Page | 59 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| FREEDOM TO LOVE AND CARE | 60 |
| Day 1 Overview | 63 |
| Day 2 Read Scripture: Primary Passage | 64 |
| Day 3 Read Scripture: Supporting Passage | 67 |
| Day 4 Listen & Receive | 70 |
| Group Prayer Page | 71 |
| | |
| THE SPIRIT WHO FREES US | 72 |
| Day 1 Overview | 75 |
| Day 2 Read Scripture: Primary Passage | 76 |
| Day 3 Read Scripture: Supporting Passage | 79 |
| Day 4 Listen & Receive | 82 |
| Group Prayer Page | 83 |
| | |
| DO NOT GROW WEARY | 84 |
| Day 1 Overview | 87 |
| Day 2 Read Scripture: Primary Passage | 88 |
| Day 3 Read Scripture: Supporting Passage | 91 |
| Day 4 Listen & Receive | 94 |
| Group Prayer Page | 95 |

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book was created as a companion guide to the Sunday teaching series, *Living in Freedom*. In it, you will find passages of scripture that pertain to the week's Sunday message, as well as spiritual practices that promote relationship building between you and God, and between you and your community circle.

If you miss a Sunday gathering, you can listen to the message on your favorite podcast platform, via YouTube, or directly from our website.

The content in this book is designed as a tool to aid you in the process of reflecting on the weekly Sunday message and giving it time to settle deeper. We do this by slowing down to study scripture, and stepping into practices of spiritual formation that lead to outward action.

All passages of scripture found in this book are in the New Living Translations (NLT), unless noted.

WHAT TO EXPECT

DAY 1

Gain context by reading a short overview of the week's teaching.

DAY 2

Explore the week's primary scripture passage, using prompts to guide your study and reflection.

DAY 3

Engage with a supporting scripture passage, considering how it deepens and complements the main teaching.

DAY 4

Practice listening prayer, slowing your pace to hear God's voice and receive what He wants to give.

GROUP PRAYER JOURNAL

Pray for one another, and use these pages to record prayer requests and God's answers along the way.

HOW TO READ GALATIANS

(AND OTHER NEW TESTAMENT LETTERS)

1. REMEMBER THESE WERE WRITTEN TO REAL PEOPLE

Each New Testament letter was written to a particular church or person facing real situations.

Ask yourself:

- Who is the author?
- Who is the audience?
- What's the occasion or reason for the letter?

GALATIANS SNAPSHOT

- **Author:** The Apostle Paul
- **Date:** 48–49 AD (before the Jerusalem Council)
- **Audience:** Churches in southern Galatia (Lystra, Derbe, etc.), planted during Paul's first missionary journey.
- **Occasion:** The Judaizers, a group of Christian Jews coming from Jerusalem, argued it was not enough to have faith in Christ to be justified, but that observance to the law was required. Paul argued people are first justified by faith in Christ, and then are able to live out the law by the Holy Spirit.

At the heart of the issue was a deeper question: How do Gentiles become part of the people of God? Did they need to become culturally Jewish first? Was faith in Christ enough, or was something more required?

Paul writes Galatians to answer this directly: we are justified by the faithfulness of Christ and our trust in Him, not by works of the law. Faith in Jesus is what marks someone as a member of God's family. And once someone belongs, the Holy Spirit empowers them to live in step with God's ways, not out of obligation to the law, but out of transformation by grace.

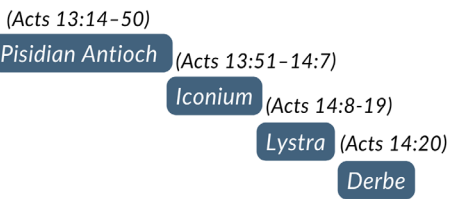
This issue wasn't just theological, it had real social and relational consequences. Paul recounts an incident in Antioch

where Peter, who had been freely eating with Gentile believers, withdrew from them when some Jewish Christians arrived. His actions signaled that Gentiles were somehow “less than” unless they adopted Jewish customs. This wasn’t just a social misstep, it was, in Paul’s words, a betrayal of the gospel (Gal. 2:11–14). Paul confronted Peter publicly, because the heart of the gospel was at stake: no one is more or less acceptable to God because of ethnicity, tradition, or outward observance. We are all one in Christ.

CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

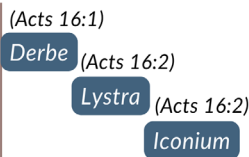
ACTS 13-14

Paul makes his first missionary journey with Barnabas, and they founded churches throughout the province of Galatia.



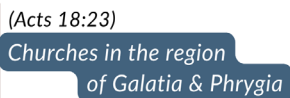
ACTS 16

Paul goes back there on his second journey. Paul meets Timothy in this region.



ACTS 18:23

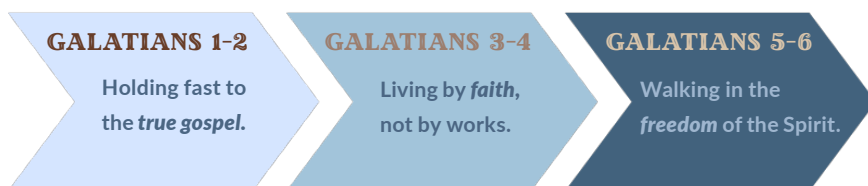
Paul makes another trip through this region, strengthening the disciples as he traveled during his third missionary journey.



2. READ THE WHOLE LETTER AS ONE UNIFIED MESSAGE

Paul didn't write Galatians as a list of one-liners or devotionals. It's one letter that builds from start to finish. He's writing to help believers stay focused on Jesus without drifting into legalism or division.

Tip: *In addition to the weekly sermons, read Galatians in one sitting if you can. Let Paul's urgency, tone, and encouragement inspire you all at once.*



3. DISTINGUISH UNIVERSAL TRUTHS FROM CULTURAL APPLICATIONS

Some commands we come across in Scripture are timeless, for example, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” But others address specific cultural issues, like head coverings or greeting with a holy kiss.

The book of Galatians contains truths that are timeless: justification by faith, unity in Christ, life by the Spirit. But it also speaks into specific first-century issues, like dietary laws, circumcision, and ethnic identity markers.

Tip: *Ask what the principle behind the instruction is, then consider how it applies today. For example, you probably won't be tempted to require someone to follow dietary laws or get circumcised before they can follow Jesus, but it's easy to start thinking they need to vote like you, parent like you, or share your personal convictions in order to fully belong in God's family.*

4. LOOK FOR THE GOOD NEWS

The heartbeat of Galatians is the good news of Jesus Christ, His life, death, and resurrection from the dead. With every challenge and issue the Galatian church faces, Paul keeps returning to what Jesus

has done, how his death broke the curse, set us free from the law, and made a new kind of community possible: a community where we do the things Jesus is asking us to do together, in unity and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Tip: Keep asking, “How does this section relate to the gospel?” You’ll see that Paul isn’t just correcting doctrine, or sharing disconnected truths; he’s reminding the Galatians, and us, what it means to live under grace, not under law.

5. READ IN COMMUNITY

New Testament letters were written to communities, not just individuals. This letter was meant to be heard by a whole community. It challenges communal behavior, how we as a community treat others who are different from us (3:28), and whether our community is shaped by the works of the flesh, like divisions and envy, or the fruit of the Spirit, like love, patience, and gentleness (5:13–26). Paul is reminding an entire community of their shared identity, and calls them to bear one another’s burdens. The Spirit uses community to shape our understanding, and our lives.

Tip: Group reflection often reveals insights we miss on our own. Don’t just study Galatians alone. Talk about it with others in Community Life circles. Ask each other questions, pray with one another and encourage one another with what the Spirit is teaching you through Paul’s letter.



THE GOSPEL THAT SETS US FREE

The one true Gospel brings freedom--welcoming us into God's family through grace, by Christ alone.

LIVING IN FREEDOM

Message Notes

DAY 1 | OVERVIEW

Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live.

GALATIANS 1:4

Something essential is at risk. The believers have started turning to a different gospel, one that looks right on the surface but adds requirements that were never part of God's grace. Paul reminds them that there is only one gospel: the good news of Jesus Christ, who gave Himself to rescue us. We are welcomed into God's family by grace, not by our performance. That grace brings true freedom.

Any message that relies on our efforts to earn God's love is not the gospel. The cross is enough. Jesus has already done the work, and we are invited to live in the freedom of belonging rather than the pressure of proving.

For those following Jesus:

What false gospels might be competing for your trust?

For those exploring faith:

Could grace really be enough to welcome you into God's family?

DAY 2 | READ SCRIPTURE: PRIMARY PASSAGE

Read the passage slowly, noticing any words or phrases that stand out. Pause where you feel drawn to linger. Allow space for God to speak through His Word.

GALATIANS 1:1-9

¹ This letter is from Paul, an apostle. I was not appointed by any group of people or any human authority, but by Jesus Christ himself and by God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead.

² All the brothers and sisters here join me in sending this letter to the churches of Galatia.

³ May God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. ⁴ **Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live.** ⁵ All glory to God forever and ever! Amen.

⁶ I am shocked that you are turning away so soon from God, who called you to himself through the loving mercy of Christ. You are following a different way that pretends to be the Good News ⁷ but is not the Good News at all. You are being fooled by those who deliberately twist the truth concerning Christ.

⁸ Let God's curse fall on anyone, including us or even an angel from heaven, who preaches a different kind of Good News than the one we preached to you. ⁹ I say again what we have said before: If anyone preaches any other Good News than the one you welcomed, let that person be cursed.

FROM READING TO REFLECTION // LET GOD SPEAK TO YOU

Take time with the passage, inviting God to speak as you consider these questions.

- **What does this passage reveal about the gospel which is God's grace through Jesus?** *Look for what it says about what saves us, shapes us, and sets us free.*

- **How does this truth free you from sin, shame, pressure, or performance?** *Consider what burdens you may be carrying that the gospel invites you to lay down.*

- **What does this passage say about who you are as a child of God?** *Notice what God says about who you are, and how His words bring healing to the places where other voices have spoken confusion, criticism, or untruth.*

- **How might this truth lead you to live differently in your relationships, decisions, or priorities?** *Let the Spirit show you one way you can live in step with your freedom today.*

PRAYER // *Jesus, open my heart to your truth. Help me see your grace, hear your voice, and walk in your freedom today. Amen.*

DAY 3 | READ SCRIPTURE: SUPPORTING PASSAGE

JOHN 8:31-38

³¹ Jesus said to the people who believed in him, “You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. ³² And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

³³ “But we are descendants of Abraham,” they said. “We have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean, ‘You will be set free’?”

³⁴ **Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin. ³⁵ A slave is not a permanent member of the family, but a son is part of the family forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free. ³⁷ Yes, I realize that you are descendants of Abraham. And yet some of you are trying to kill me because there’s no room in your hearts for my message.**

³⁸ I am telling you what I saw when I was with my Father. But you are following the advice of your father.”

EXAMINE & ENTRUST // JOURNALING PRAYER

Jesus defines true freedom as something found only in Him, not in religion or heritage, but in relationship with Him. Where are you looking for freedom apart from Jesus, and how is it falling short?

*Ask Jesus to show you where you're still living as if you're not free.
Invite Him to speak truth over you and remind you that, in Him, you
are already free.*

This image shows a full page of blank white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

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DAY 4 | LISTEN & RECEIVE

Cultivate a deeper awareness of what the Holy Spirit is doing in your everyday life. This quiet space is a way to grow in discernment.

Find 10–15 minutes of quiet space, away from distractions. Then ask God:

Am I living in the freedom of the true gospel, or am I trusting something else?

Pay attention to what arises:

- A word or phrase?
- A sense of peace or tension?
- A scripture or image?
- A physical feeling in your body?
- A memory or conviction?

Don't rush to fix or analyze it. Just notice.

See what God might be inviting you to recognize or release.

**Adapted from a listening prayer practice originally shared by novo.org.*

GROUP PRAYER PAGE

Pray for one another. Use this page to record prayer requests, praises, and God's answers along the way.

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FAITH THAT SETS US FREE

Faith, not works, is the pathway
into God's family where we are
free.

LIVING IN FREEDOM

Message Notes

DAY 1 | OVERVIEW

So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by trying to keep the law. For the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life."

GALATIANS 3:11

Out of love for the Galatians, Paul confronts a church that started with faith but slipped back into striving. He asks a piercing question: did you receive the Spirit by following the law, or by believing what you heard? The answer is clear, yet the pull to prove ourselves runs deep. We often forget that the way into God's family is by faith, not by effort. What begins as a gift can easily turn into a performance.

Paul reminds them, and us, that relying on the law brings a curse, but faith connects us to the blessing promised to Abraham. Through Christ, we are set free from the need to earn approval. We are already accepted. The gospel invites us to rest in that truth and trust God's power, not our own.

When we return to faith, we return to freedom.

For those following Jesus:

Where might you be striving for approval instead of trusting the Spirit's work in you?

For those exploring faith:

What would it mean for you to stop performing and start trusting?

DAY 2 | READ SCRIPTURE: PRIMARY PASSAGE

Read the passage slowly, noticing any words or phrases that stand out. Pause where you feel drawn to linger. Allow space for God to speak through His Word.

GALATIANS 3:1-14

¹ Oh, foolish Galatians! Who has cast an evil spell on you? For the meaning of Jesus Christ's death was made as clear to you as if you had seen a picture of his death on the cross. ² Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the law of Moses? Of course not! You received the Spirit because you believed the message you heard about Christ. ³ How foolish can you be? After starting your new lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort? ⁴ Have you experienced so much for nothing? Surely it was not in vain, was it?

⁵ I ask you again, does God give you the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you because you obey the law? Of course not! It is because you believe the message you heard about Christ.

⁶ In the same way, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." ⁷ The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God.

⁸ What's more, the Scriptures looked forward to this time when God would make the Gentiles right in his sight because of their faith. God proclaimed this good news to Abraham long ago when he said, "All nations will be blessed through you." ⁹ So all who put their faith in Christ share the same blessing Abraham received because of his faith.

¹⁰ But those who depend on the law to make them right with God are under his curse, for the Scriptures say, "Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the commands that are written

in God’s Book of the Law.” ¹¹ **So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by trying to keep the law. For the Scriptures say, “It is through faith that a righteous person has life.”** ¹² This way of faith is very different from the way of law, which says, “It is through obeying the law that a person has life.”

¹³ But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” ¹⁴ Through Christ Jesus, God has blessed the Gentiles with the same blessing he promised to Abraham, so that we who are believers might receive the promised Holy Spirit through faith.

FROM READING TO REFLECTION // LET GOD SPEAK TO YOU

Take time with the passage, inviting God to speak as you consider these questions.

- **What does this passage reveal about the gospel which is God’s grace through Jesus?** *Look for what it says about what saves us, shapes us, and sets us free.*

- **How does this truth free you from sin, shame, pressure, or performance?** *Consider what burdens you may be carrying that the gospel invites you to lay down.*

- **What does this passage say about who you are as a child of God?** *Notice what God says about who you are, and how His words bring healing to the places where other voices have spoken confusion, criticism, or untruth.*

- **How might this truth lead you to live differently in your relationships, decisions, or priorities?** *Let the Spirit show you one way you can live in step with your freedom today.*

PRAYER // *Jesus, open my heart to your truth. Help me see your grace, hear your voice, and walk in your freedom today. Amen.*

DAY 3 | READ SCRIPTURE: SUPPORTING PASSAGE

LUKE 7:36-50

³⁶ One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him, so Jesus went to his home and sat down to eat. ³⁷ When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume.

³⁸ Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them.

³⁹ When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a sinner!"

⁴⁰ Then Jesus answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you." "Go ahead, Teacher," Simon replied.

⁴¹ Then Jesus told him this story: "A man loaned money to two people—500 pieces of silver to one and 50 pieces to the other. ⁴² But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, canceling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?"

⁴³ Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt."

"That's right," Jesus said. ⁴⁴ Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You didn't greet me with a kiss, but from the time I first came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You neglected the courtesy of

olive oil to anoint my head, but she has anointed my feet with rare perfume.

⁴⁷ “I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love.” ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to the woman, “Your sins are forgiven.”

⁴⁹ The men at the table said among themselves, “Who is this man, that he goes around forgiving sins?”

⁵⁰ **And Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”**

EXAMINE & ENTRUST // JOURNALING PRAYER

This story demonstrates how faith, not moral perfection or religious performance, connects someone to Jesus and His saving grace. Where are you tempted to hide your need instead of bringing it to Jesus?

Tell Jesus where you feel unworthy, and ask Him to meet you there with compassion. Let His mercy remind you that your faith, not your perfection, is what draws you near.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

DAY 4 | LISTEN & RECEIVE

Cultivate a deeper awareness of what the Holy Spirit is doing in your everyday life. This quiet space is a way to grow in discernment.

Find 10–15 minutes of quiet space, away from distractions. Then ask God:

Where am I trying to earn what you’ve already given me by grace?

Pay attention to what arises:

- A word or phrase?
- A sense of striving or relief?
- A scripture or mental image?
- A physical response in your body?
- A gentle nudge to trust?

You don’t need to solve anything. Just notice.
Ask God what it might look like to return to faith instead of performance.

**Adapted from a listening prayer practice originally shared by novo.org.*

GROUP PRAYER PAGE

Pray for one another. Use this page to record prayer requests, praises, and God's answers along the way.

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A NEW IDENTITY IN THE FAMILY OF GOD

The gospel is an invitation into the family of God where we receive a new identity.

LIVING IN FREEDOM

Message Notes

DAY 1 | OVERVIEW

*For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ,
like putting on new clothes.*

GALATIANS 3:26-27

In this passage, Paul declares something radical: through faith in Christ, we are no longer defined by old labels or divided by status. We are children of God. In Jesus, human distinctions like Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, no longer determine our value. The gospel redefines who we are and binds us together in a new kind of family.

This identity is not something we earn. It is a gift of belonging. The ground is level, and the invitation is wide. We are seen, chosen, and clothed in Christ. We do not need to prove our worth to belong.

When we live from this place, it shapes how we see ourselves and how we treat others. God's family is marked by grace, unity, and shared inheritance.

For those following Jesus:

*Are you living from your identity in Christ
or still chasing one of your own?*

For those exploring faith:

What would it mean to belong before you change?

DAY 2 | READ SCRIPTURE: PRIMARY PASSAGE

Read the passage slowly, noticing any words or phrases that stand out. Pause where you feel drawn to linger. Allow space for God to speak through His Word.

GALATIANS 3:15-29

¹⁵ Dear brothers and sisters, here's an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or amend an irrevocable agreement, so it is in this case. ¹⁶ God gave the promises to Abraham and his child. And notice that the Scripture doesn't say "to his children," as if it meant many descendants. Rather, it says "to his child"—and that, of course, means Christ. ¹⁷ This is what I am trying to say: The agreement God made with Abraham could not be canceled 430 years later when God gave the law to Moses. God would be breaking his promise. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance could be received by keeping the law, then it would not be the result of accepting God's promise. But God graciously gave it to Abraham as a promise.

¹⁹ Why, then, was the law given? It was given alongside the promise to show people their sins. But the law was designed to last only until the coming of the child who was promised. God gave his law through angels to Moses, who was the mediator between God and the people. ²⁰ Now a mediator is helpful if more than one party must reach an agreement. But God, who is one, did not use a mediator when he gave his promise to Abraham.

²¹ Is there a conflict, then, between God's law and God's promises? Absolutely not! If the law could give us new life, we could be made right with God by obeying it. ²² But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God's promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ.

²³ Before the way of faith in Christ was available to us, we were placed under guard by the law. We were kept in protective custody, so to speak, until the way of faith was revealed.

²⁴ Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. ²⁵ And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian.

²⁶ For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

²⁷ And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. ²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God’s promise to Abraham belongs to you.

FROM READING TO REFLECTION // LET GOD SPEAK TO YOU

Take time with the passage, inviting God to speak as you consider these questions.

- What does this passage reveal about the gospel which is God’s grace through Jesus? *Look for what it says about what saves us, shapes us, and sets us free.*

- How does this truth free you from sin, shame, pressure, or performance? *Consider what burdens you may be carrying that the gospel invites you to lay down.*

- **What does this passage say about who you are as a child of God?** *Notice what God says about who you are, and how His words bring healing to the places where other voices have spoken confusion, criticism, or untruth.*

- **How might this truth lead you to live differently in your relationships, decisions, or priorities?** *Let the Spirit show you one way you can live in step with your freedom today.*

PRAYER // *Jesus, open my heart to your truth. Help me see your grace, hear your voice, and walk in your freedom today. Amen.*

DAY 3 | READ SCRIPTURE: SUPPORTING PASSAGE

JOHN 1:1-14

¹ In the beginning the Word already existed.

The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

² He existed in the beginning with God.

³ God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.

⁴ The Word gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone.

⁵ The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness can never extinguish it.

⁶ God sent a man, John the Baptist, ⁷ to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. ⁸ John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light.

⁹ The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. ¹² **But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.** ¹³ They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

¹⁴ So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

EXAMINE & ENTRUST // JOURNALING PRAYER

Jesus invites people into a new identity as children of God, not based on heritage or status but on belief in Him. Where do you look for your sense of identity, and how might Jesus be inviting you to see yourself as God's beloved child?

Ask Jesus to help you receive your identity as one who is deeply loved and chosen by God. Let His truth shape the way you see yourself today.

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

DAY 4 | LISTEN & RECEIVE

Cultivate a deeper awareness of what the Holy Spirit is doing in your everyday life. This quiet space is a way to grow in discernment.

Find 10–15 minutes of quiet space, away from distractions. Then ask God:

Do I believe I'm fully included in your family and am I living like I belong?

Pay attention to what arises:

- A feeling of closeness or distance?
- A label you've been carrying?
- A verse or word of truth?
- A gentle reminder of who you are in Christ?

Let God speak identity over you, not based on what you've done, but on whose you are.

**Adapted from a listening prayer practice originally shared by novo.org.*

GROUP PRAYER PAGE

Pray for one another. Use this page to record prayer requests, praises, and God's answers along the way.

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FREEDOM FROM PERFORMANCE AND SIN

Through Christ, we are freed
from a life of performance
and sin.

LIVING IN FREEDOM

Message Notes

DAY 1 | OVERVIEW

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

GALATIANS 2:20

Many of us live with an inner pressure to prove our worth. We try to earn approval from God and others through good behavior, spiritual effort, or personal achievement. But in Galatians 2, Paul reminds us that no one is made right with God by keeping the law. We are made right through faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul speaks personally and powerfully: “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” That is the invitation. Not to try harder, but to trust more deeply. Not to perform, but to believe that Christ’s life, death, and resurrection are enough.

Freedom begins when we stop trying to earn what has already been given. In Jesus, we are fully known and fully loved. We do not need to justify ourselves. He already has.

For those following Jesus:

Where might you be relying on your own effort instead of trusting in Christ’s finished work?

For those exploring faith:

What would it mean to be accepted, not for what you’ve done, but for what Jesus has done for you?

DAY 2 | READ SCRIPTURE: PRIMARY PASSAGE

Read the passage slowly, noticing any words or phrases that stand out. Pause where you feel drawn to linger. Allow space for God to speak through His Word.

GALATIANS 2:8-21

⁸ For the same God who worked through Peter as the apostle to the Jews also worked through me as the apostle to the Gentiles.

⁹ In fact, James, Peter, and John, who were known as pillars of the church, recognized the gift God had given me, and they accepted Barnabas and me as their co-workers. They encouraged us to keep preaching to the Gentiles, while they continued their work with the Jews. ¹⁰ Their only suggestion was that we keep on helping the poor, which I have always been eager to do.

¹¹ But when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him to his face, for what he did was very wrong. ¹² When he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile believers, who were not circumcised. But afterward, when some friends of James came, Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore. He was afraid of criticism from these people who insisted on the necessity of circumcision. ¹³ As a result, other Jewish believers followed Peter's hypocrisy, and even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.

¹⁴ When I saw that they were not following the truth of the gospel message, I said to Peter in front of all the others, "Since you, a Jew by birth, have discarded the Jewish laws and are living like a Gentile, why are you now trying to make these Gentiles follow the Jewish traditions?"

¹⁵ "You and I are Jews by birth, not 'sinners' like the Gentiles. ¹⁶ Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law. And we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God because of our faith in Christ, not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be made right with God by obeying the law."

¹⁷ But suppose we seek to be made right with God through faith in Christ and then we are found guilty because we have abandoned the law. Would that mean Christ has led us into sin? Absolutely not!

¹⁸ Rather, I am a sinner if I rebuild the old system of law I already tore down. ¹⁹ For when I tried to keep the law, it condemned me. So I died to the law—I stopped trying to meet all its requirements—so that I might live for God. ²⁰ **My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.** ²¹ I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.

FROM READING TO REFLECTION // LET GOD SPEAK TO YOU

Take time with the passage, inviting God to speak as you consider these questions.

- **What does this passage reveal about the gospel which is God’s grace through Jesus?** *Look for what it says about what saves us, shapes us, and sets us free.*

- **How does this truth free you from sin, shame, pressure, or performance?** *Consider what burdens you may be carrying that the gospel invites you to lay down.*

- **What does this passage say about who you are as a child of God?** *Notice what God says about who you are, and how His words bring healing to the places where other voices have spoken confusion, criticism, or untruth.*

- **How might this truth lead you to live differently in your relationships, decisions, or priorities?** *Let the Spirit show you one way you can live in step with your freedom today.*

PRAYER // *Jesus, open my heart to your truth. Help me see your grace, hear your voice, and walk in your freedom today. Amen.*

DAY 3 | READ SCRIPTURE: SUPPORTING PASSAGE

JOHN 8:1-11

¹ Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives, ² but early the next morning he was back again at the Temple. A crowd soon gathered, and he sat down and taught them. ³ As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd.

⁴ “Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵ The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?”

⁶ They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. ⁷ They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” ⁸ Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.

⁹ When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. ¹⁰ **Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?”**

¹¹ **“No, Lord,” she said.**

And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.”

EXAMINE & ENTRUST // JOURNALING PRAYER

Jesus frees this woman from both sin and shame, not by denying the truth, but by meeting her with grace. Where do you feel weighed down by shame or stuck in patterns you cannot change?

Ask Jesus to meet you with His grace. Invite Him to speak truth and freedom over you, just as He did for this woman.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

DAY 4 | LISTEN & RECEIVE

Cultivate a deeper awareness of what the Holy Spirit is doing in your everyday life. This quiet space is a way to grow in discernment.

Find 10–15 minutes of quiet space, away from distractions. Then ask God:

Where am I still trying to prove something to you, to others, or to myself?

Pay attention to what arises:

- A feeling of pressure or performance?
- A phrase like “I should” or “I have to”?
- A scripture or truth you’ve forgotten?
- A quiet reminder that Christ lives in you?

Let God remind you: you are free. You are loved. You don’t have to earn what He’s already given.

**Adapted from a listening prayer practice originally shared by novo.org.*

GROUP PRAYER PAGE

Pray for one another. Use this page to record prayer requests, praises, and God's answers along the way.

[illegible]

FREEDOM TO LOVE AND CARE

The freedom we have in God's family is not for self-indulgence but for love and service to one another.

LIVING IN FREEDOM

Message Notes

DAY 1 | OVERVIEW

*For the whole law can be summed up in this one command:
“Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

GALATIANS 5:14

Paul reminds the Galatians that true freedom is not the right to do whatever we want, but the opportunity to love well. In Christ, we are free from sin and striving, but this freedom is meant to lead us outward. When we understand how deeply we've been loved, we begin to love others not out of obligation, but from gratitude.

In these powerful verses, Paul points to love as the fulfilling of the law. Loving our neighbor is not a side effect of the gospel. It is the expression of it. Freedom finds its fullest purpose in service.

Rather than using our freedom to compete, compare, or isolate, we are called to build up the family of God with compassion, gentleness, and care. This is how the world sees what grace really looks like.

For those following Jesus:

How are you using your freedom to serve and love others right now?

For those exploring faith:

What kind of love would make freedom feel safe, not self-serving?

DAY 2 | READ SCRIPTURE: PRIMARY PASSAGE

Read the passage slowly, noticing any words or phrases that stand out. Pause where you feel drawn to linger. Allow space for God to speak through His Word.

GALATIANS 5:1-15

¹ So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law.

² Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: If you are counting on circumcision to make you right with God, then Christ will be of no benefit to you.

³ I'll say it again. If you are trying to find favor with God by being circumcised, you must obey every regulation in the whole law of Moses. ⁴ For if you are trying to make yourselves right with God by keeping the law, you have been cut off from Christ! You have fallen away from God's grace.

⁵ But we who live by the Spirit eagerly wait to receive by faith the righteousness God has promised to us. ⁶ For when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, there is no benefit in being circumcised or being uncircumcised. What is important is faith expressing itself in love.

⁷ You were running the race so well. Who has held you back from following the truth? ⁸ It certainly isn't God, for he is the one who called you to freedom. ⁹ This false teaching is like a little yeast that spreads through the whole batch of dough! ¹⁰ I am trusting the Lord to keep you from believing false teachings. God will judge that person, whoever he is, who has been confusing you.

¹¹ Dear brothers and sisters, if I were still preaching that you must be circumcised—as some say I do—why am I still being persecuted? If I were no longer preaching salvation through the cross of Christ, no one would be offended. ¹² I just wish that those troublemakers who want to mutilate you by circumcision would mutilate themselves.

¹³ For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. ¹⁴ **For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."** ¹⁵ But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another.

FROM READING TO REFLECTION // LET GOD SPEAK TO YOU

Take time with the passage, inviting God to speak as you consider these questions.

- **What does this passage reveal about the gospel which is God's grace through Jesus?** *Look for what it says about what saves us, shapes us, and sets us free.*

- **How does this truth free you from sin, shame, pressure, or performance?** *Consider what burdens you may be carrying that the gospel invites you to lay down.*

- **What does this passage say about who you are as a child of God?** *Notice what God says about who you are, and how His words bring healing to the places where other voices have spoken confusion, criticism, or untruth.*

- **How might this truth lead you to live differently in your relationships, decisions, or priorities?** *Let the Spirit show you one way you can live in step with your freedom today.*

PRAYER // *Jesus, open my heart to your truth. Help me see your grace, hear your voice, and walk in your freedom today. Amen.*

DAY 3 | READ SCRIPTURE: SUPPORTING PASSAGE

LUKE 10:25-37

²⁵ One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶ Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?”

²⁷ **The man answered, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.”**

²⁸ “Right!” Jesus told him. “Do this and you will live!”

²⁹ The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰ Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.

³¹ “By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by.

³² A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

³³ “Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. ³⁴ Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of

this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here.'

³⁶ "Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked.

³⁷ The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy."

Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."

EXAMINE & ENTRUST // JOURNALING PRAYER

Jesus shows that love, especially to those who are different, is the true fulfillment of God's law and the natural fruit of gospel-shaped lives. Where is God inviting you to move toward someone with compassion instead of avoidance?

Ask God to soften your heart and help you love generously, even when it feels inconvenient or uncomfortable.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

DAY 4 | LISTEN & RECEIVE

Cultivate a deeper awareness of what the Holy Spirit is doing in your everyday life. This quiet space is a way to grow in discernment.

Find 10–15 minutes of quiet space, away from distractions. Then ask God:

Who are you inviting me to love, or serve this week, with no strings attached?

Pay attention to what arises:

- A name or face?
- A situation that needs compassion?
- A nudge to listen or care?
- A reminder of how God has loved you?

Let God shape your freedom into love, not by obligation, but as a joyful response.

**Adapted from a listening prayer practice originally shared by novo.org.*

GROUP PRAYER PAGE

Pray for one another. Use this page to record prayer requests, praises, and God's answers along the way.

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THE SPIRIT WHO FREES US

The Holy Spirit frees us from our sinful nature and empowers us to produce fruit that reflects our new identity.

LIVING IN FREEDOM

Message Notes

DAY 1 | OVERVIEW

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

GALATIANS 5:22-23

Life in the Spirit is not about trying harder. It is about learning to walk with the Spirit who empowers us to live differently. In Galatians 5, Paul contrasts two ways of living: following our own desires or keeping in step with the Spirit. The results are clear. One path leads to brokenness and selfishness, while the other leads to love, joy, peace, and all the fruit that comes from being shaped by God.

The Spirit changes us from the inside out. Obedience becomes a response to God's love rather than an obligation to fulfill. When we allow the Spirit to guide us, our lives begin to reflect the character of Christ.

Following Jesus is not about perfection. It is about direction. The Spirit helps us take each step in freedom, not fear.

For those following Jesus:

Where in your life are you being invited to walk more closely with the Spirit?

For those exploring faith:

What might change if God's Spirit began to shape your life from within?

DAY 2 | READ SCRIPTURE: PRIMARY PASSAGE

Read the passage slowly, noticing any words or phrases that stand out. Pause where you feel drawn to linger. Allow space for God to speak through His Word.

GALATIANS 5:16-26

¹⁶ So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. ¹⁷ The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. ¹⁸ But when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses.

¹⁹ When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

²² **But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**
²³ **gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!**

²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. ²⁵ Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.

FROM READING TO REFLECTION // LET GOD SPEAK TO YOU

Take time with the passage, inviting God to speak as you consider these questions.

- **What does this passage reveal about the gospel which is God's grace through Jesus?** *Look for what it says about what saves us, shapes us, and sets us free.*

- **How does this truth free you from sin, shame, pressure, or performance?** *Consider what burdens you may be carrying that the gospel invites you to lay down.*

- **What does this passage say about who you are as a child of God?** *Notice what God says about who you are, and how His words bring healing to the places where other voices have spoken confusion, criticism, or untruth.*

- **How might this truth lead you to live differently in your relationships, decisions, or priorities?** *Let the Spirit show you one way you can live in step with your freedom today.*

PRAYER // *Jesus, open my heart to your truth. Help me see your grace, hear your voice, and walk in your freedom today. Amen.*

DAY 3 | READ SCRIPTURE: SUPPORTING PASSAGE

JOHN 14:12-26

¹² “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. ¹³ You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!

¹⁵ “If you love me, obey my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. ¹⁷ He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. ¹⁸ No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you. ¹⁹ Soon the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Since I live, you also will live. ²⁰ When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them.”

²² Judas (not Judas Iscariot, but the other disciple with that name) said to him, “Lord, why are you going to reveal yourself only to us and not to the world at large?”

²³ Jesus replied, “All who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home with each of them. ²⁴ Anyone who doesn’t love me will not obey me. And remember, my words are not my own. What I am telling you is from the Father who sent me. ²⁵ I am telling you these things now while I am still with you. ²⁶ But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.

EXAMINE & ENTRUST // JOURNALING PRAYER

Jesus teaches that the Spirit will dwell with believers and empower them, shaping their inner lives toward obedience and love. Where in your life do you need the Spirit's help to live with greater love, courage, or obedience?

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen you. Invite Him to shape your heart and actions today with His love, truth, and power.

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DAY 4 | LISTEN & RECEIVE

Cultivate a deeper awareness of what the Holy Spirit is doing in your everyday life. This quiet space is a way to grow in discernment.

Find 10–15 minutes of quiet space, away from distractions. Then ask God:

What part of my life needs to be more in step with you, Holy Spirit?

Pay attention to what arises:

- A relational dynamic?
- A place of resistance or tension?
- A fruit of the Spirit that feels lacking?
- A desire to surrender?

Let the Spirit guide you. He draws you near, not through shame, but through love.

**Adapted from a listening prayer practice originally shared by novo.org.*

GROUP PRAYER PAGE

Pray for one another. Use this page to record prayer requests, praises, and God's answers along the way.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

DO NOT GROW WEARY

We can grow weary of doing good, but the Holy Spirit will help us press on.

LIVING IN FREEDOM

Message Notes

A large grid of dotted lines for handwriting practice, consisting of 20 rows and 30 columns of dots.

DAY 1 | OVERVIEW

*So let's not get tired of doing what is good.
At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.*

GALATIANS 6:9

Paul closes his letter with a pastoral word of encouragement: do not grow weary in doing good. Faithfulness can be slow and unglamorous. When we plant seeds of love, patience, and service, we may not see immediate fruit. Still, we are reminded that in time, God brings a harvest from even the smallest acts of faithfulness.

This isn't about earning or striving. It's a reminder that the choices we make matter, and the Spirit gives us the strength to keep going. When we feel weary, we are reminded that we need to return to the source of our strength.

The Galatians had started to drift. They had forgotten the simplicity and power of the gospel. Paul calls them (and us) back not just to right doctrine, but to Spirit-empowered love in action.

For those following Jesus:

Where do you need God's strength to keep doing good?

For those exploring faith:

*What might change if you believed God honors small,
unseen acts of love?*

DAY 2 | READ SCRIPTURE: PRIMARY PASSAGE

Read the passage slowly, noticing any words or phrases that stand out. Pause where you feel drawn to linger. Allow space for God to speak through His Word.

GALATIANS 6:1-10

¹ Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. ² Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. ³ If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.

⁴ Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. ⁵ For we are each responsible for our own conduct.

⁶ Those who are taught the word of God should provide for their teachers, sharing all good things with them.

⁷ Don't be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. ⁸ Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. ⁹ **So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.** ¹⁰ Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.

FROM READING TO REFLECTION // LET GOD SPEAK TO YOU

Take time with the passage, inviting God to speak as you consider these questions.

- **What does this passage reveal about the gospel which is God's grace through Jesus?** *Look for what it says about what saves us, shapes us, and sets us free.*

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PRAYER // *Jesus, open my heart to your truth. Help me see your grace, hear your voice, and walk in your freedom today. Amen.*

DAY 3 | READ SCRIPTURE: SUPPORTING PASSAGE

MATTHEW 11:25-30

²⁵ At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: “O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike.

²⁶ Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way!

²⁷ “My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

²⁸ Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”

EXAMINE & ENTRUST // JOURNALING PRAYER

Jesus invites the weary into His rest, offering gentle encouragement to keep walking in faith and love with Him. Where do you feel weary or burdened in your faith or life right now?

Ask Jesus to meet you in your weariness, to carry what you cannot, and to lead you in the unforced rhythms of His grace.

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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

DAY 4 | LISTEN & RECEIVE

Cultivate a deeper awareness of what the Holy Spirit is doing in your everyday life. This quiet space is a way to grow in discernment.

Find 10–15 minutes of quiet space, away from distractions. Then ask God:

Where do I need your strength to keep doing good, and how do you want to meet me as I grow tired?

Pay attention to what arises:

- A place of discouragement or fatigue?
- A small act of love that feels unseen?
- A mental image of Jesus with you in the weariness?
- A verse of comfort or perseverance?
- A deep exhale, a new perspective, a quiet sense of hope?

Don't force anything. Simply notice, receive, and rest.
You are not alone. He is with you, and He is enough.

**Adapted from a listening prayer practice originally shared by novo.org.*

GROUP PRAYER PAGE

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