



## SPIRITUAL CHARACTER

Part 010 - Living by the Gospel - Rejecting Self Reliance.

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### I. DISTRACTIONS FROM THE GOSPEL

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**(Gal 4:15)**

What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me.

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**(Gal 5:15).**

But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

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**(Gal 1:6-7)**

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

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### I. DISTRACTIONS FROM THE GOSPEL

**(Gal 4:11)**

I am afraid I may have laboured over you in vain

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### I. DISTRACTIONS FROM THE GOSPEL

**(Gal. 3:1,3)**

O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.

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#### **Questions**

- **How had the Galatian believers fallen away from the Gospel?**
- **Have you ever lost your sense of joy in Christ? If so, why?**
- **Have you ever started to put the focus on the law and the rules rather than Christ?**

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## II. THE DANGERS OF SELF RELIANCE

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### Gal 5:4

Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

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### Matthew 5:28

"But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

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## III. THE CENTRALITY OF THE GOSPEL IN PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH

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### Galatians 3:2-5

Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith

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## III. THE CENTRALITY OF THE GOSPEL IN PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH

### Example:

During the Protestant Reformation, Luther and Erasmus were debating about what best portrays our salvation and our need for grace. Erasmus admitted that sin had made man sick, but he went on to say that our need for grace is more like a young toddler who is learning to walk. A person is able to take some steps to God, but sometimes he also needs His heavenly Father to catch him and help him along. Luther was repulsed by such a little need for grace and told Erasmus that he was most assuredly wrong. He said that our salvation is more like a caterpillar that is completely surrounded by a ring of fire. Unless someone reaches down and rescues the caterpillar, it will certainly perish.

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### Questions:

*In what ways do we or others try and add to the finished work of the cross after we have received salvation?*

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## IV. THE CENTRALITY OF THE GOSPEL IN MINISTRY

One Saturday you get up and go to a prayer meeting as is your custom. On the way out of the house, you have a brief but pleasant conversation with your neighbour. You go on to have a wonderful day in which God's presence is obvious in many ways. On the way home, you have an opportunity to share the Gospel with someone, and so you share Christ and His salvation with him. The next Saturday is quite a bit different. You wake up late, miss the prayer meeting, and speak unkindly to your neighbour on your way out. In general, the day is filled with confusion and God does not seem to be near. You begin to feel badly about what you have done, but to your surprise, you have another opportunity to share the Gospel with someone.

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**Questions:**

***How do you let your worst days effect you? What does that say about the way we view God's grace?***

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V. LEARNING TO ROOT OUR FAITH IN CHRIST

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**Example:**  
On August 21, 1544, Martin Luther wrote to one of his faithful and trusted friends, George Spalatin. Spalatin had given some advice that he later came to regard as sinful. When he reached this conclusion, he was immersed in grief and guilt. He was convinced that he should have known better and that he, of all people, should not have made this mistake.  
He could not be consoled.  
When Luther learned of his condition, he wrote to offer him comfort, saying,  
" ... my faithful request and admonition is that you join our company and associate with us, who are real, great, and hard-boiled sinners. You must not by any means make Christ to seem paltry and trifling to us, as though He could be our Helper only when we want to be rid of imaginary, nominal, and childish sins. No! No! That would not be good for us. He must rather be a Saviour and Redeemer for real, great, grievous, and damnable transgressions and iniquities, yea, and from the greatest and most shocking sins; to be brief, from all sins added together in a grand total..."

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V. LEARNING TO ROOT OUR FAITH IN CHRIST

CHRIST + ANYTHING = NOTHING.

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**QUESTIONS**

- ***How does the Gospel apply to us as believers?***
- ***What is the difference between self-effort and faith?***
- ***How does living by faith impact our daily thoughts and actions in life?***

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