

Grace: God's Favor to those who don't deserve it

The book of Galatians powerfully speaks of justification through faith in God. Two main words in this book that bring perspective--Law and Faith. Justification through faith in God--therefore God confers His grace to us. A group of Judaizers had come in and preached another doctrine to the Galatians. Paul writes to them to remind them that justification is achieved by faith and not of works.

Say it! Play it! Pray it!

Objectives:	Play out the Role of Paul, the Galatians and the Judiazers. Gain insight into your own faith. Have fun with your family.
Number of Players:	3 - 6 or more -- narrator, Paul, a Scribe (tommy), A runner (Postman) Galatians, Judiazers
Length:	30 minutes - 1 hour
Set up:	You can get as elaborate as you like. Have Paul and his scribe on one side of the room, and the Galatians and the Judiazers on the other. The scribe will run between the two sides. As the Narrator is reading, the separate characters should act out what is being said and dramatize how these events make them feel.

Narrator: Paul, an apostle, writes letters of encouragement and reproach to the Churches. Today he is writing to the Galatians and he uses very strong language and large letters to convey his message to the Galatians. Let's find out what has Paul so riled up.

Paul to his scribe: Write this to the Galatians: "Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

(Tommy the scribe writes furiously)

Paul: "I am surprised and astonished that you are so quickly turning renegade and deserting Him who invited and called you by grace! And now you are transferring your allegiance to a different, even an opposing gospel!" Are you getting this Tommy? Please be sure to use VERY, VERY, VERY large letters and exclamation points too.

Tommy the Scribe: I'm getting it Sir, please continue.

Narrator: Let's head over to Galatia and see what Paul is so riled up about....

Judiazers to the Galatians: Dear Brother, now we know that Paul means well.....However, Paul didn't tell you everything. If these Gentiles want to be saved, they must be circumcised and follow the law.

Galatians: Really? Paul didn't tell us this. Please tell us more.

Judiazers: In order to be justified, you must follow the law. Those who do not, are not saved.

Narrator: Can you see now why Paul was so upset? The Galatians were turning away for the free gift that God gave, from grace. Let's listen in some more on Paul's letter to the Galatians.



FAMILY STUDY

Paul: Now, where was I Tommy? Oh yes, “Do not listen to these false brothers who are perverting the gospel. I tell you the truth, If we, or even an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be cursed. I say again, if ANYONE preaches any other gospel to you, let him be cursed!

I want to assure you of my authority. I am advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation. I have been exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace.

Narrator: Paul continues his letter and Tommy writes it all carefully down. Then Paul puts his seal on the finished letter and Tommy runs the letter to Galatia.

Tommy (running, out of breath, hands letter to Galatians): I have this letter from Paul. Please read it aloud to the church.

The Galatians and the Judiazers gather together to read Paul’s letter.

Galatians: Thank you Tommy! Gather around everyone, we have some news from Paul. Let me read his letter to you. “Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh you dear idiots of Galatia! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Just as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, “The righteous will live by faith.” The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, “The man who does these things will live by them.” Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.”

Someone in the crowd: What purpose then does the law serve?

Galatians: SSSSHHHH! He’s getting to that. “The law was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Daddy, Daddy!”

Someone in the crowd: Well if there are no laws, then there will be lawlessness and everyone will do as they want without restraint (probably one of the Judiazers.



FAMILY STUDY

Galatians: “Stand firm! Do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. For you, brothers, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love take care of each other. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

These are the works of the flesh: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires . If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Someone in the crowd: Grumble, grumble, grumble.

Galatians: Hush, I’m almost done “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way fulfill the law of Christ. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Someone in the crowd: I’m not listening to this, I take pride in my suffering! I bear the marks of circumcision and I’m proud of that!

Galatians: Please! Keep it down. Paul has a point and I think we should listen to him. This is the last of his letter. “As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who were circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation...a new nature. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit brothers. Amen

Discussion: Have each person share how it felt to them to play the role they did and what insights they gained about the people they played, God’s character and their own life. Questions to consider: Can you explain the difference between faith and works? Was there anything in what Paul said that puzzled you? Are there things that you are doing because you are trying to earn God’s favor. How can we as a family love our neighbors? Have you ever been on the receiving end of unmerited favor...someone does something nice for you even though you don’t deserve it?

Prayer: Close in prayer thanking God for His provision and for all that you have learned and the fun you had with your family.