Bible Reading Devotional

For the Week of Feb. 26, 2023
Weekly Reading: Galatians 5: 1–15 | Leviticus 19: 1–37 | Acts 15: 1–21
Philippians 2: 1–18 | Philippians 3: 1–11 | James 1: 19–2:12 | 2 Peter 3: 1–18

"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." | *Galatians 5:1*

This week, Growth Group Leader Al Grossnickle shares his reflections on each of the assigned passages. As you move through the week's readings, check out the insights and encouragements that Al has drawn from these passages in God's Word.

Galatians 5:1–15 | This passage spends a great deal of time discussing circumcision and the law. The important thing to remember in this section is that in verse 15, we are given a new birth and a new creation in Christ. Therefore, it is important to remember that "Jesus ± Nothing = Salvation." In other words, we are accepted and adopted into the body of Christ—nothing else is needed. This should bring reassurance to all of us as children of God in Christ.

Leviticus 19:1–37 | The Lord has given Moses numerous statutes and ordinances for the Israelites to follow, which sound very similar to the Ten Commandments. However, there are also references to growing fruits as well as cheating with weights and measures. There are references to offerings of a ram for sins, resulting in forgiveness. (It is quite interesting to read about laws for tattoos, mistreating strangers, hair and beard restrictions.) All in all, what a difference from the freedom we have in Christ.

Acts 15:1–15 | Paul and Barnabas were faced with people teaching "Unless you are circumcised, you cannot be saved." The issue here is that the people were preaching legalism. In truth, there are no "acts" or "hoops" one must jump through to be saved. We are saved by God's grace through faith in Christ. Period. (See *Ephesians 2:8–9*)

Philippians 2:1–18 | Paul was emphasizing Jesus Christ died for us and came back in human form. Verses 10 and 11 stand out to me: "… every knee shall bow …" and "… every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." Amen.

Philippians 3:1--11 | Paul explained that we should not attempt to follow the Old Testament law while acknowledging he had been circumcised as a child. His Lord was now Jesus Christ, and he had received righteousness, which only comes through faith in Christ Jesus. We also receive righteousness through our faith in Christ, just as Paul did.

James 1:19–2:12 | James is talking about our demeanor and how we should act. He emphasizes listening and acting through love. Christ wants us to love others and not judge.

2 Peter 3:1–18 | Simon Peter is talking about the coming of Christ. One day to the Lord is like a thousand years. He will come, and He will not be tardy, "like a thief in the night." Peter is warning us and asks us to be on guard. He urges us to grow in grace since eternity will come.

Do you have questions about this week's Bible reading? We'd love to help! Rather than relying on the first thing you find on the internet, email us at biblequestions@warsaw.cc. We are more than happy to answer that nagging question, provide you with some clarity or point you in the right direction for further study.