

22. The Book of Galatians 4:9 (Topical)

Liberty From Law-Part 21

a message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
(6-23-24)

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We have been studying the Book of Galatians here at Calvary on Sunday mornings going through the book topically based on its main theme.

The main theme of Galatians is **liberty—the liberty (or freedom) that is ours in Christ.**

In our study we are currently in the second major section—“**Liberty from Law**”—which is really liberty from *religion and legalism* as a way of **being made righteous in God's eyes.**

Galatians 4:1–9 (NKJV)

¹ Now I say *that* the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, ² but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. ³ Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. ⁴ But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” ⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. ⁸ But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. ⁹ But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, **how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?**

When Paul uses the phrase, “**The weak and beggarly elements**” he is using the same word for **elements** used in Galatians 4:3 to **speak of the religion of Judaism**—but it applies to any human religious system which has been invented by man instead of revealed by God (Christianity).

As we have said many times,
every religion and religious system in the world apart from Christianity falls under the
category of **human achievement**,
in other words, what we do for God to earn His favor and a place in heaven.

Whereas, only Christianity (which is not a religion but a relationship) falls under the category of “divine accomplishment”—in other words, what God has done for us through His Son, Jesus Christ to offer us a place in heaven as a gift.

Religion is spelled “DO” (as in ‘do’, ‘do’, ‘do’ and maybe someday you’ll do enough to earn heaven)—whereas **Christianity is spelled “DONE”** (as in Jesus’ declaration from the cross, “*It is finished*”—John 19:30).

All religions are based on legalism—or in other words, they’re based on the belief that “*If I keep the laws of my religion, I will make myself worthy of God’s favor and earn a place in heaven someday.*” In turning to legalism, the Galatians were not turning to a new error, but coming back to an old one—the idea of a works/righteousness relationship with God (or ‘gods’)—**which is what paganism was based on.**

REFLECTION: How Would you define “divine accomplishment”?

“How is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?” (verse 9)

One author said—

“These **elements of the world** are **weak** because they offer no strength; they are **beggarly** because they bestow no riches—all they can do is bring us again into bondage.”

In other words, there is no strength in religion to save a person no matter how many candles they light, sacraments they keep, church services they attend or holy days they observe.

The practice of religion turns a person into a **beggar** who is constantly trying **to ‘get on God’s good side’** by doing little religious duties and chores—which they believe will allow them to extend their hand to God and beg Him to, ‘*Bless them and let them into heaven.*’

But as Paul rightly points out—**legalism doesn’t save us it enslaves us!**

The insidious nature of religion is that the devil uses it to make people believe it will bless them and set them free from his (the devil’s) hold on their lives—when in reality it does the very opposite and makes them the **voluntary slaves of Satan** by willingly putting themselves under legalism—which he uses to condemn them.

Everywhere Paul went he had to confront false doctrine—including the church in Colosse:

Colossians 2:8–10 (NKJV)

⁸ Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. [Comment on Gnosticism]

In verse 8 when Paul said, “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world...”

“**Basic**” is the same Greek word Paul used in Galatians 4:3 and 4:9—a word that stands for the ‘rudimentary principles’ or the ‘ABC’s.’

Paul is saying to the Colossians— “Your deep mysteries are nothing more than the ABCs of the world. They’re **nothing more than the devil’s basic lies** that he fed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. You haven’t bought into something that’s deep and profound—you’ve been deceived by the devil’s elemental or basic lie.”

➤ What exactly did Paul have in mind when he talked about the basic lie that Satan fed the human race?

In John 8, Jesus and the Pharisees had gotten into a highly explosive confrontation with each other regarding spiritual truth.

REFLECTION: How does Satan use religion to confuse the human race?

Jesus, who is the Truth, came into the world (a world of lies and spiritual deception) **to declare God's truth—** whereas the Pharisees had embraced Satan's lies that their religious works saved them:

John 8:44 (NKJV)

⁴⁴ You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *does not* stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources* [*the NIV—“he speaks his native language”*], for he is a liar and the father of it.

When Jesus said that Satan was the **'father of lies'**—I don't believe He was claiming that Satan was the source of every lie ever spoken upon the earth. Remember, the context is false doctrine—the lies Satan has gotten the human race to believe that will send people to hell!

When the Lord Jesus Christ talked about Satan being the **'father of lies'**—I believe He had in mind one particular lie that has given birth to many different lies (false doctrines/belief systems).

This lie is referenced by Paul in Romans 1:25 and 2 Thessalonians 2:11 as **"the lie"**—not "a lie" as in one of many, but **"the lie"**—as in the 'mother of lies!'

The world is full of lies—that's true. But **there is one lie that is the 'mother' of all spiritual lies** that the father of lies introduced into the human race in the Garden of Eden.

It's the lie that, before it's all over, will cause the deaths of billions and billions of people—both physically on earth and spiritually in hell.

It's a lie that has been growing and spreading since the Garden of Eden like an evil tree filled with poisonous fruit—and has now reached its 'full ripeness' in these last days and will soon be enthusiastically devoured by most of the people of this world during the Tribulation Period. (Revelation 13 & 17)

1 Timothy 4:1 (NKJV)

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times ['last days'] some will depart from the faith [*N.T. doctrine*], giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

➤ **Did you know that demons have doctrines (teachings)?**

God's Word is telling us that—demons are teachers!

These doctrines are what occultists and New Agers have called the 'Cosmic Gospel.'

Dave Hunt—

"It's the same message people have heard from extra-terrestrials (*close encounters of the third kind*), in séances, while on LSD trips (*which the Bible calls sorcery and forbids*), in deep yoga trances, while practicing transcendental meditation, out of Ouija boards, through mediums that are in contact with the spirit realm. It's a message that has flooded into our world (*especially in these last days*) from dozens of different directions—proclaiming the same thing over and over again with amazing consistency..."

This main lie is made up of four tenets or doctrines that together they make up 'the lie' that Satan told Eve in the Garden of Eden. I believe that the very lie that caused the human race to fall in the beginning—is going to be the ultimate lie (spiritual deception) that Satan is going to use against the human race to bring it down in the end.

>>> That's because I believe that this very lie that Satan introduced into the human race in the Garden of Eden—will be the very lie that the Antichrist will use as the basis for his false religious system which he's going to use to deceive the world into worshipping him as God during the **Tribulation Period**.

>>> The Bible tells us that at the beginning of the Tribulation Period (the last 7-years of human history before Jesus returns to establish His Kingdom) a world leader will arise and unite the world in a one world government—we call this leader the **Antichrist**.

The Bible also tells us that he will have a cohort called the **False Prophet who will unite the world in a one world religion**. Together they will deceive the whole world with the exception of those who will come to Christ during the Tribulation Period.

- Paul the Apostle said that the "**mystery of iniquity**" is already at work—in other words, **Satan is already preparing the world to receive this LIE**—and has been for six-thousand years!
- **The battle between God's truth and Satan's lie goes back to the beginning of time—all the way back to the Garden of Eden.**

C.S. Lewis traced all major religions and cults back to two primary sources—Judeo-Christianity (God's truth) and Hinduism (Satan's lie)—both of which started in the Garden of Eden.

Let's go back to Genesis 3 and look at the lie that Satan told Eve in the Garden of Eden—

Genesis 3:1-5 (NKJV)

¹ Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" ² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;

³ "but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' " ⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵ "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

This lie that Satan told Eve was made up of 4 different false doctrines.

You can find these 4 doctrines, in part or in total, in many false religions, cults, the occult and in many humanistic teachings on the face of the earth—like PMA (Positive Mental Attitude).

These 4 basic doctrines that make up Satan’s lie are:

1. God is not personal but an impersonal force that fills the universe and everything and everyone in it.

When Satan came to Eve one of the things he subtly planted into her mind was the concept that—the Person she had come to know as God was not God because of *who He was*, but was God because of *what He knew* —“*you will be like God knowing*”(verse 5)

In other words, He had learned (gained knowledge) on how to tap into a force that made Him God and now He was trying to keep her from understanding what this ‘God-force’ was because He did not want her to find the same divinity that He had found.

So here you have the first part of the lie—**God is not personal but is an impersonal force that fills the universe and flows through everything and everyone in it (pantheism)**. Of course, that was the main message that was being preached through the Star Wars movies—“*May the Force be with you.*”

George Lucas fancied himself as the ‘Billy Graham’ of the *force*. Why is the belief in the Force so popular with so many people?

Well, first of all because—it allows a person to be their own God... But also, a force (like electricity) is impersonal and amoral and isn’t going to hassle you with moral standards.

If God is an impersonal force—that means that I am not held to any personal God’s standard of right and wrong.

Those who believe this doctrine don’t believe in moral absolutes (truth is relative they believe) because the God-force is in you and so you only need to ‘*look within*’ to find *your* ‘*truth*’ and what’s right and wrong for *you*—as God!

REFLECTION: Can you think of ways you could dispute the idea of God being an impersonal force?

2. The second element of the lie that Satan told Eve was that there is no ultimate death.

When Satan told Eve, “*You will not surely die*” he was saying to her, “*Eve there is no penalty for disobeying God* (no judgment)—*no death* (ultimately speaking) *in hell.*”

God told Adam and Eve, that in the day they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil *'they would surely die'* (Genesis 2:17)—but Satan told Eve God lied about the consequences of disobeying Him—there is no death—not really, not ultimately.

>>> This became the basis for the doctrine of reincarnation. Reincarnation is the process of 'spiritual evolution' whereby our spirit keeps being reincarnated (recycled) upon the earth into a new body in the hope that we will live a more moral, spiritually enlightened life each time until we finally evolve to godhood. You see, if we are all part of the 'God-force'—the 'God-force' is eterna! So, if my body dies my spirit never dies because it's part of the eternal God-force—it just keeps getting 'recycled' into a new body, which means—there is no ultimate death!

We saw this also being taught in those Star Wars movies which promoted and preached New Age doctrine (Westernized Hinduism).

Remember when Obi-Wan Kenobi was struck down by Darth Vader how he didn't stop existing—he continued to communicate with Luke Skywalker as a disembodied spirit from out on the astral plane.

This is one of the most damning and destructive doctrines of demons ever fed the human race—that there is no *ultimate* death, that reincarnation keeps giving a person another chance to get things right on the earth—and eventually evolve into godhood.

That's what Hinduism and the New Age believes and teaches—that when we die our spirit simply moves out onto the astral plane where we wait for a new body to be reincarnated into. That is why Mormon's (who embrace this teaching) consider it a great sin not to have a lot of children—it's because all these disembodied spirits are waiting for new bodies to be reincarnated into.

Satan uses this teaching to deceive those who embrace it into the false hope that if they blow it in this life it's no big deal there's always going to be another opportunity to 'redeem' themselves in the next life.

But the Word of God clearly teaches that *"...it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes the judgment"* (Hebrews 9:27).

But again, reincarnation says, "There is no judgment after death, you just keep getting another chance to come back to the earth and do better next time."

Of course, that's the big problem with the doctrine of reincarnation—it takes away the consequences of sin (judgment/hell) and keeps people from experiencing what the Bible calls, *"the fear of the Lord"*—which is the *"beginning of wisdom"*. (Proverbs 9:10)

When the fear of coming judgment is removed from a society, the inevitable result is an explosion of sin rooted in self-love—just as we're seeing in our society today.

REFLECTION: What would your definition of reincarnation be? Why is this belief system so dangerous?

Paul the Apostle warned us of this very thing—he prophesied, “*In the last days perilous times will come...men will be lovers of self, lovers of money...lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God...*” (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

Now, reincarnation is believed to work in conjunction with ‘karma’ which is the spiritual law of “cause and effect”.

- **Karma** doesn’t solve the problem of sin (as does the atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross)—in fact, it perpetuates the problem of sin!
- **Karma** is one of the cruelest jokes the devil ever played on the human race—because it robs mankind of some of the most basic, beautiful and important attributes that God has given to it—compassion, mercy and kindness toward his fellowman.
- As a true Hindu if you see a person who is starving, impoverished, and begging by the side of the road—you can’t go over and help him because he is working off the bad karma from his past life. Yet Hindus *will* sometimes help others for no other reason than they are trying to set themselves up for a better life next time around - **making it a very selfish system.**
- But if karma was true the person, they’re ‘helping’ will have to come back again to work off the bad karma they ‘rescued’ them from.

REFLECTION: Why is “KARMA” one of the cruelest jokes the devil has ever played on mankind?

Most of the charities, hospitals, and orphanages in the world (by far)—have been established by Christians or at least by organizations that have a Christian worldview.

Why is that?—It’s because of the love of God which He has placed in our hearts as His children. It’s because our God, the God of the Bible—is a loving, kind, gracious, giving, generous and merciful God!

Next time, we’ll finish looking at the first and greatest lie Satan has fed the human race—as we continue looking at the topic of ‘Liberty from Law (religion).’

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower— please, reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

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