

First Missionary Journey Acts 13 and 14

Galatians 4:13            “You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first;”

2 Cor. 12:7 “**Thorn in the flesh**”

### The Christian meaning of human suffering

1. Suffering is good for me
  - a. Suffering purifies our love from purely self-interest into a true gift of self to do what is good or pleasing for God - into true love
    - i. Do I do these things for what God gives me?
    - ii. Do I do these things purely for the love of him?
      1. What if I receive nothing in return immediately?
      2. What if I receive suffering in return immediately?
        - a. Which requires the greater love?
2. Suffering is good for others

**Paul's letter to the Galatians** (probably written in the early to mid 50s)

### Works of the Law

Eight times in his letters Paul uses the expression “works of the law”

- Twice in Romans (Rom 3:20, 28)
- Six times in Galatians (Gal 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10)

### How are we saved?

1. We are saved by God's grace
2. which comes through faith and Baptism
3. We remain in relationship with God through **love** and **obedience** to His Will revealed through Scripture and Tradition

**Matthew 21:28            The parable of the two sons**

- **Matthew 7:21** “Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”
- **Matthew 7:26** “Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man...And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like the foolish man”

Pauls uses the phrase “works of the law” to refer to the Mosaic ceremony works:

- circumcision, dietary regulation, purity codes
- Sabbath observance
- And the liturgical calendar of the OT and its feasts
  - Paul contrasts this with Faith

Paul stresses the irrelevance of ceremonial rites like:

- Circumcision: **Galatians 2:3; 5:2-12; 6:12-15**
- Dietary issues: **Galatians 2:11-14**
- Feast day observances: **Galatians 4:10**

This is what Jesus is condemning in

- Matthew 23 “Woe to you scribes and Pharisees”
- Luke 11:37-41
- Which leads to Mark 7:14-23

God created the world and humanity for this purpose:

1. to give us His Spirit and a share in His divine life;
2. raising us up to be His adoptive children

Genesis 2:7 the gift of the Spirit

- The Fall and original sin
- Naked and ashamed because they have lost the Glory of God

Jesus opened the way to heaven by His death and Resurrection

- Then He gives us His Spirit through Baptism

The Spirit is the Giver

- The gift He brings is grace:
- a share in the very life and love of God
- This makes us His adoptive sons and daughters

The gift of the Holy Spirit and His grace are what saves us

- i.e. makes us children of God

**This makes way for two things**

1. Circumcision counts for nothing:
  - a. it only foreshadowed and prepared for the coming of Christ. Now that this is fulfilled it passes away.
  - b. We are saved by grace which comes from the Holy Spirit
  - c. **Gal 3:21-4:7**
2. Once we are saved it is not over
  - a. We must grow from vice to virtue, from Slavery to Freedom through grace and virtue (**Galatians 5:13-25**)
  - b. Grace through
    - i. Prayer
    - ii. Frequent Eucharist and Reconciliation
  - c. Virtue
    - i. Identify one’s dominant vices
    - ii. Practice and gain the opposite virtue