

Decluttering Christianity

APPLYING GALATIANS TO TODAY



Real Stories Really Change Lives (Galatians 1:11-2:21)
Decluttering Christianity sermon series
 By Pastor David Hillis, 05.05.19

BIG IDEA: God becomes real for people through the real stories of broken, grace-filled lives.

1. Paul's broken past is part of his grace-filled story.

([Galatians 1:6-7](#); [Acts 7:54-60, 9:1-31, 22:1-23](#); [Philippians 3:1-11](#))

[READ GAL 1:13-16a]

- a. We do all this outward stuff to make ourselves look good and holy; we fast, tithe, study scriptures and are disciplined and follow all of the rules.
- b. Jesus+anything makes us slaves to sin and makes what Jesus did on the cross mean nothing.

2. Paul's present brokenness is part of his grace-filled story, too.

([Galatians 2:15-21](#); [Romans 7:1-8:17](#); [Philippians 3:12-21](#))

[READ GAL 2:19-21]

- a. Grace is amazing, but it does not fix us and make us perfect, it just shows why we need more of it.
- b. We must admit our old, sinful life needs to stay nailed to the cross and that we need to die to our own desires that continue to pop up over and over again.

3. Justification versus sanctification

- a. Justification or being justified, is what happens when we accept God's grace.
- b. Sanctification is a lifelong process of obedience and disobedience as we learn through our mistakes what it means to be children of God.
- c. Two things that make your story life-changing to others is:
 - i. What God *did* for you (your past story of brokenness is the justification part).
 - ii. What God is doing in you through your present brokenness to make you into a better person (that is the sanctification part!)

NEXT STEP: What parts of your life would you just assume hide, never tell anyone about? With whom does God want you to share your messy, undignified story today?

FOR MY PERSONAL TIME WITH GOD THIS WEEK:

1. This week, in part 2 of *Decluttering Christianity*, we were in [Galatians 1:11-2:21](#). See Paul's early story of faith and how it speaks to you. Paul was thoroughly changed by his encounter with Jesus (1:11-17). What do you think it was like for him to go from violently opposed to the message of Jesus to arguing with people to accept the message of Jesus? What did he lose? What did he gain? How has Jesus changed your life?
2. The remarks Paul makes in this part of Galatians gives part of his faith story. Read [Acts 7:54-60, 9:1-31, 22:1-23](#); and [Philippians 3](#). You might also want to read [Romans 7:1-8:17](#), where he talks about his ongoing struggles. How can you relate to his story?
3. Paul's life was so completely changed by grace that he could say, as in [Galatians 2:20](#), that Christ lived in and through him. Do you feel like it is Christ living in you, influencing all of your actions and thoughts, or do you find yourself living life on your own?
4. This week, Pastor Dave explained two very important terms, *justification* and *sanctification*. Do you understand them? If so, why do you see it is important for people to understand the difference? To explore more about them in a simplified article, visit gotquestions.org/justification-by-faith.html.
5. To come to a good grasp of what this book teaches, consider reading Galatians each week of the series in a different Bible translation (the [New Living Translation](#), [English Standard Version](#), [Easy-to-Read Version](#), [New Century Version](#) and the [Message](#) are good options). As you read, pay attention to Paul's words and consider his motivations behind them. In this read-through, you also might notice how he talks about justification in the first 4 chapters, and then talks about the process of sanctification in chapters 5 and 6.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

- **Tullian Tchividjian's story.** Read the initial news story in [The Washington Post](#), his [interview with Religion News Service](#) a year later after he had hit bottom. You can also read two of his blog posts here: [Being Kicked into Freedom](#) and [My New Ministry](#).
- **Justification & sanctification.** These are terms that seem intimidated and many do not understand. However, they are surprisingly simple to understand and critical to understanding the grace Jesus offers every person. A couple of helpful resources here: ["Why Is Justification by Faith Such an Essential Doctrine?"](#) and [Matt Chandler short video clip on the critical difference between the two](#). If you would like to "nerd out" a bit on the difference between positional and progressive sanctification, click [HERE](#).