Walk By Faith, and You Won’t Desert God
(Overview of Galatians)

Intro:
- Gal. 1:1-9 Galatians, Paul writing because many had deserted God

- two lesson series overviewing Galatians – Sunday morning and evening

What does it mean to desert God?
- desert: to leave, run away from, abandon, thus unable to fulfill one’s duty and obligation
  - illus.: desert a friend, leave alone without any help
  - illus.: husband deserts family, leaves wife alone to raise children, not help in any way ($)
  - illus.: desert the army, a military post, not fulfill obligation

- illus.: desert
  - Jer. 52:12-16 Jerusalem taken by Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 588
    - the army fled when Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem to destroy the city
    - many people in the city deserted, giving themselves up to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians, and were taken into Babylonian captivity
    - as deserters, they abandoned their city, nation, fellow citizens
  - Acts 15:36-38 Paul didn’t want to take John Mark on the 2nd missionary journey, because he had deserted them the 1st time
    - John Mark had turned away and gone back to Jerusalem when they were in Perga, deserting them
    - John left, ran away, abandoned them, left them to do the work without him
    - John didn’t do his work, left others to take up the slack, was not responsible as he should have been
      - deserted his friends
      - deserted his duty and obligation as an evangelist

- if we desert God:
  - we are no longer his friend, because we have left Him (run away, abandoned God)
  - we have not fulfilled our duty and obligations

- we don’t want to desert God, as many had done in Galatia
  - so, we must learn important lessons from the epistle Paul wrote to them
Don’t desert God by following a different gospel
- Gal. 1:6 we desert (leave, abandon) God if we follow a different gospel
  - illus.: Muslim Koran, Oprah Winfrey’s A New Earth doctrine

- Gal. 1:7 we desert (leave, abandon) God if a doctrine is a distortion of Christ’s gospel
  - illus.: Galatia, Jewish false teachers (false brethren), must be circumcised and keep the Mosaic Law
  - illus.: Gnostics, mixed philosophy with doctrine of Christ to create different doctrine
  - illus.: Laodiceans, lukewarm, advocate okay if not fervent and zealous
  - illus.: denominations, denominational doctrine

- Gal. 1:8-9; 5:4 teachers are accursed; adherents are severed from Christ and fallen from grace
  - world takes this lightly, God does not
  - illus.: unity in diversity doctrine – not matter what church yo attend, all the same, going to same place
  - illus.: Israel, offered their children to Molech as burnt sacrifices
    - deserted God to serve a pagan god
    - they were accursed, severed from fellowship with God, fallen from grace

- 1 Tim. 6:3-4a anyone who advocates a different doctrine, not agree with sound words, is conceited and understands nothing
  - our view toward false teachers, and believers who advocate a different gospel

- 2 Tim. 4:3 people who don’t endure sound doctrine accumulate false teachers to tickle their ears, tell them what they want to hear
  - illus.: Rick Warren’s, Purpose Driven Church, system of starting a church and growing it into a super-church, poll the community and give them what they want, everything from music to manner of dress to teaching – it’s easy to grow a super-church based on tickling people’s ears

- What is one of our most important jobs as Christians, working with a local congregation? – everyone
  - Eph. 4:11, 14, 15, 16 each person has a part in helping everyone else remain faithful, not following every wind of doctrine
  - Heb. 12:15-17 see to it, no one comes short of the grace of God, like Esau who sold birthright for single meal, could not get it back

- if we distort the gospel of Christ in any way, or adopt a different gospel:
  - desert God, who gave His only begotten Son for our sins
  - desert Jesus, who died on the cross for us
  - sell our souls to the devil
  - we can’t help anyone get to heaven
Don’t desert God by sinning to please other people – put God before man
- Gal. 1:10 Paul was still persecuted because he didn’t sin to please other men
  - choice: teach the truth and be persecuted, or change and teach a false doctrine to please men
  - if Paul changed to avoid persecution, he would desert God (vs. 6-9)

- Gal. 2:11-14 Paul didn’t sin to please Christians – confronted other Christians when they were sinning
  - Paul wouldn’t sin to make anyone happy, not even another apostle
  - he was not hypocritical, treated everyone the same, didn’t teach error to please anyone

- Acts 5:17-42 illus.: apostles jailed for preaching, then brought before the Sanhedrin
  - apostles ordered to stop preaching, but refused to sin to please men
  - apostles scourged, left there rejoicing, continued preaching

- 1 Cor 10:13 God is faithful, always provides a way of escape – we never have to sin to please men
  - the way of escape may include persecution, or even a whipping, like the apostles suffered
  - but we’ll always be blessed by God when we stand for what is right, and not give into sin (Matt. 5:11-12)

- illus.: Boxer Rebellion in China, an anti-Christian movement by the "Righteous Harmony Society" between 1898 and 1901
  - the purpose of the movement was to expel foreign influence from China, including Christianity (i.e., the effects of Christian missionary evangelism)
  - it’s called the Boxer Rebellion (among other things), because trained fighters would persecute and kill individuals they deemed a threat
  - during the rebellion, insurgents captured a mission station with 100 students inside, blocked all the gates but one (revised from SermonIllustrations.com, taken from Today in the Word, February, 1989, p. 17)
    - in front of that one gate was placed a cross, flat on the ground
    - students inside had to pass through the gate
    - if they trampled the cross underfoot they were given their freedom and life
    - anyone who refused to trample the cross were to be shot (executed)
    - the first 7 students fearfully trampled the cross under their feet and were allowed to go free
    - but the 8th student, a young girl, refused to trample the cross
      - she came out the gate, knelt and prayed, rose, and carefully walked around the cross
      - then she went to face the firing squad
    - strengthened by the girl’s example, every one of the remaining 92 students followed her around the cross and to the firing squad
    - imagine being in the girl’s place, or one of the students behind her who heard their peers shot

- we shouldn’t sin in order to please people
  - if we do, we desert God
  - Ja. 4:4b whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God

End Part I
- we’ll desert God if we follow a different gospel, or sin in order to please other people
- inv.: follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and faithfully serve God all your life – not desert Him
Part II

- Gal. 1:6-10 Galatians, Paul writing because many had deserted God
  - two lesson series overviewing Galatians – Sunday morning and evening

- review PP
  - desert: to leave, run away from, abandon, thus unable to fulfill one’s duty or obligation
  - don’t desert God by following false doctrines
    - if we do, we are severed from Christ, fallen from grace
  - don’t desert God by sinning to please other people
    - we shouldn’t sin at any cost, and certainly not to please other people, make them happy

- in Part I we examined the don’t(s), in Part II we examine the do(s)
Walk by faith, and you won’t desert God
- Gal. 3:6-7, 11 Abraham walked by faith; we must walk by faith as sons – inherit the promise
- Heb. 11:1 faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen
  - illus.: Abraham left family, offered Isaac – obeyed
- illus.: heaven, salvation, promise

- Gal. 3:13-14, 16 we must be in Christ to walk by faith – inherit the promise
  - Gen. 12:1-7 great nation, give descendants land (Canaan), all families of the earth shall be blessed
  - Gal. 3:17-25 the Mosaic Law did not invalidate the promise, rather it was added because of transgression as a tutor to bring them to Christ

- Gal. 3:22 the promise is given to those who believe – by faith in Jesus Christ
  - Heb. 11 without faith impossible to please God, chapter giving examples of faith
    - illus.: Noah, Abraham, Rahab
  - Rom. 1:5; 16:26 obedience to the faith
  - since we must be in Christ to walk by faith, we must be in Christ to receive the promise

- Gal. 3:26-28 we are made sons of God through faith in Jesus when we are baptized into Christ
  - “into” (eis) preposition denoting movement and contact
    - before baptized: not in Christ, not a son of God, not an heir of the promise
    - after baptized: in Christ, a son of God, an heir of the promise

- Gal. 3:29 because we belong to Christ as Christians, we are descendants of Abraham and heirs according to the promise
  - Gal. 3:16 Jesus is the “seed” through whom the promise is given to us

- Gal. 4:6 because we are sons of God, we have the Spirit of God in our hearts, crying Abba Father, and we’re heirs of the promise
  - Gal. 4:28 we are children of promise – receive promise in Christ
  - Gal. 4:31 we are children of the free woman – freedom in Christ

- we will not desert God if we walk by faith, because we’ll be His children through faith in Jesus
  - children of promise
  - heirs of the promise – join-heirs with Christ
- Desert: to leave, run away from, abandon, thus unable to fulfill one’s duty and obligation

1: don’t desert God by following different gospel, or sinning to please other people

2: walk by faith so you don’t desert God

- **Walk by the Spirit, and you won’t desert God** – if walk by faith, walking by the Spirit
  - Gal. 3:1-5 if we walk by faith, we walk by the Spirit – visa versa
  - Gal. 3:2, 3, 5 first occurrences of “Spirit” - Paul ties Spirit to faith, and faith to Spirit
  - Gal. 5:1f Paul proceeds to not talk about walking by the Spirit
    - Rom. 10:17 faith comes by the word of God
    - when we obey the word of God, we are walking by the Spirit

- **- in Christ, our faith is working through love; thus, we are walking by the Spirit** – Spirit vs. flesh
  - Gal. 5:1 Christ sets us free (Gal. 4)
  - Gal. 5:13 we do not turn our freedom into an opportunity for the flesh – sin
  - Gal. 5:16-18 we walk by the Spirit, not flesh – walking by faith, word, led by Spirit
    - led by Spirit is living the way the Spirit tells us in God’s word – walking by faith (Rom. 10:17)
  - Gal. 5:19-21, 22-23 our manner of life shows whether we are walking by the flesh or Spirit
    - deeds of flesh, vs. fruit of Spirit
  - Gal. 5:24-25 Christians, crucified flesh with passions and desires, live by Spirit, thus walk by Spirit
    - Gal. 2:20 we’ve been crucified with Christ, Christ lives in us, live by faith in Jesus who died for us
    - Gal. 6:14 world crucified to us
    - Rom. 6:3, 6, 7 when baptized into Christ

- because we walk by faith, we are led by the Spirit (word)
  - we have crucified the flesh when we were baptized into Christ, so we live and walk by the Spirit
desert: to leave, run away from, abandon, thus unable to fulfill one's duty and obligation
1: don’t desert God by following different gospel, or sinning to please other people
2: walk by faith so you don’t desert God, walk by the Spirit

➤ **Fulfill the law of Christ, and you won’t desert God**
   - walking by faith and by the Spirit, we fulfill the law of Christ

➤ **- Gal. 6:2 part of fulfilling the law of Christ is bearing one another’s burdens**
   - Gal. 6:1 includes helping each other when we sin
   - Gal. 6:6-10 includes doing good and sharing

➤ **- Gal. 6:18 when we do these things (walk by faith and Spirit, fulfill law of Christ), the grace of Jesus Christ is with our spirits**
   - with the grace of Jesus Christ, we can do everything He sets forth, the way He desires it to be done

Summary / Inv.
- we will desert God if we follow a different gospel, or sin to please other people
- we won’t desert God if we walk by faith and the Spirit, fulfilling the law of Christ

- **Heb. 13:5 but the Lord will never desert us**
  - He is always near by
  - wants everyone to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth

- **inv.: obey the word of God – walk by faith, walk by the Spirit, fulfill the law of Christ**