

Master Teacher Outline **TRANSFORMED THROUGH FAITH**

(15–20 minutes, easy set-up)

Use this outline and the Biblical Commentary to prepare to share the truths of this passage with learners. Encourage learners to take notes on their copies of the Learner Worksheet as you teach. The underlined words in the Master Teacher Outline correspond to the blanks on the worksheet.

Introduction: Gang members are required to wear certain colors, have distinguishing tattoos, flash signs, use gang lingo, and carry out certain gruesome tasks. A person has the status of a gangster when he or she complies with these very explicit rules. Some people act like they have an acceptable status before God for similar reasons. They presume that their status with God depends on what they wear and how they talk and act. Paul reminded his readers that our righteous status—our transformed identity—becomes ours only through our dependence on Christ.

1. Faith in Christ transforms our relationship with God (Gal. 2:15–18).

- Paul reminded believers that law-keeping could not make them right before God since Salvation is by Faith Alone (vv. 15–16).
- Paul reminded believers that sin is not promoted when faith in Christ replaces keeping the law (v. 17).
- Paul reminded believers that returning to law-keeping made them into law-breakers. (v. 18)

Illustration: Jim, a defendant in a lawsuit, was found guilty as charged and ordered to pay \$5,000 for damages to the car that he hit. That amount would wipe his family's finances out, Jim explained to the judge. The judge, though caring, did not relent. When the clerk handed Jim's check to the plaintiff, Fred, Fred handed the check back to Jim. "I know you need the money more than me," he said with a sympathetic gaze. "Thank you," Jim replied as he accepted the check. The next day, unable to shake his indebtedness, Jim called Fred. "I have two thousand dollars to spare," he said. "I want to at least pay you that." "The damages were five-thousand dollars," Fred replied. Unable to accept Fred's freely given gift, Jim returned to the law, where he still found himself a debtor to Fred. In what ways do you still try to pay God back for His freely given grace?

2. Faith in Christ transforms our life (Gal. 2:19–21).

- Paul abandoned self-reliance as the way to stand rightly before God (vv. 19–20a).
- Paul embraced reliance on Christ's works as the way to stand rightly before God (v. 20b).
- Paul embraced God's gift of Christ's death since Paul's righteous status depended on it (v. 21).

Illustration: Theologian Wayne Grudem says: "If you say, 'I am acceptable because of my beauty and intelligence,' I think of the wrinkles invading my face and the forgetful moments replacing my wit. Some people accept us as friend, spouse, employee, or associate because of our personal qualities or ways that we benefit them. So, if the things that earned our acceptance go away, the relationship suffers. But God does not accept us that way. The only person who ever earned God's acceptance was Jesus; He kept God's laws perfectly and took our punishment for our law-breaking guilt. When we totally depend on Christ and His work on our behalf, God wipes away our guilty sentence and declares Christ's perfect record to be ours. He declares us both "not guilty" and "perfectly righteous" forever." Have you given up hope that your self-righteous efforts will save you? Are you living in confidence that God has forgiven and accepted you?

Conclusion: Protestant reformer Martin Luther exclaimed that justification by faith is the "first and chief article" of Protestantism "on which the church stands or falls." Why? Because it is only through faith in Christ that we are given a new identity—a new righteous status. Is there anything that you can

contribute? The answer is no! By His grace, through faith alone, God supplied Christ alone.