



EQUIPPING U

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION/JANUARY 2014

Romans 9:30-10:4

[30] What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; [31] but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. [32] Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, [33] as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

THEY DID NOT PURSUE IT BY FAITH

[1] Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. [2] For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

THEY HAVE A ZEAL FOR GOD

[3] For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. [4] For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.



Are you Jealous of Jesus?

For many the question will sound ludicrous or perhaps even blasphemous. But for some of you I've just touched on an unspoken gnawing in your soul.

You couldn't put words to what was going on in your heart, but jealous of Jesus seems to fit. You may wonder, "How can I be jealous of Jesus? I've known him since I was a kid. I've spent my whole life in church. I've served Him in every way imaginable:

Sunday school teacher, missions committee, choir, kid's ministry, nursery ministry, visitation."

Yes, like the Jews before you, you might have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Paul speaks of this in his letter to the Romans when he shares his ongoing prayer and desire that his fellow Jews be saved. (10:1) He laments that "they have a zeal for God, but not



TEACHING TIP. January is a great time to invite someone new to your Sunday school class or Bible study. Often people have reassessed areas of their lives and want to make studying the Word of God a priority in the new year.



TEACHING TIP. Jesus promises to be thirst-quenching, living water to all who drink of Him. (John 4:14) If you find you are thirsty, ask, "Am I truly seeking my satisfaction in Jesus, or has something usurped my affection and attention?"



TEACHING TIP. Do you find that there are quarrels among the students in your class? If so, you probably have a gossip in your midst. "For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases." (Prov. 26:20)

according to knowledge.” (10:2)

This was his own testimony as he described who he once was to the saints in Philippi: “If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.” (Philippians 3:4b-6)

Paul, like many of his countrymen, pursued the law as if it were based on works and not by faith. Unfortunately, we can do that, too, and it leads us to the same end: stumbling over Jesus.

Coming to Jesus is terrible for our pride. For we need to see ourselves as “unclean, and all our righteous deeds... like a polluted garment.” (Isaiah 64:6) I was challenged anew when my husband recently prayed, “There is no righteousness in me apart from Jesus.”

There is no righteousness in me apart from Jesus.

That is a hard thing to recognize, especially when you’ve been in church since your first memory: memorizing scripture, singing about Jesus, avoiding a list of sins, and generally seeing yourself as “a good person.”

Even believers in Christ can be tempted to desert the gospel of grace in Jesus Christ and turn to another “gospel.” God provided Paul’s letter to the Galatians in His Scripture to warn us of this type

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Eric von Oeyen

ICEA is a volunteer staffed ministry. Each month Equipping U highlights and honors one of our faithful volunteers.

Eric has been serving as ICEA’s Media Director since 1981. Because of his diligence, and the efforts of many other volunteers who have served alongside him, cassette tapes, and now CDs and MP3 files, of hundreds of workshops have been used to train and equip believers. Eric, your selfless attitude and can-do spirit has blessed many. We are so grateful for your faithfulness.

of turning from justification by faith to justification by works.

Paul declares, “...we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ.” (2:16) And he asked the Galatians a pointed question, “Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?” (3:2) The answer, according to the Word, is that we receive the Spirit by hearing through faith, “for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” (Romans 10:4)

When we submit to this truth, we will be grateful to, not jealous of, Jesus and his righteousness.

FROM THE EDITOR

New years tend to lend themselves to thoughts of new endeavors, habits, and resolutions. 2014 is no different, I’m sure. As we plan may we remember that we will live barren, unfruitful lives apart from Christ and His indwelling Holy Spirit. So let’s begin 2014 recognizing our need for Christ to abide in us and for us to abide in Him. If we will live the “abided life,” we will bear much fruit to His honor and glory.

Serving with U,

Kimberly von Oeyen
EquippingU@iceaOnline.org



VBS TRAINING COMING SOON

Early-bird pricing is in effect for the Summer of Purpose VBS • Summer Ministries Training. Find curriculum and receive training all at one event! www.iceaOnline.org.

PERMISSIONS

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

EQUIPPING U

ISSUE no. 1
VOLUME 3

Equipping U is a publication of the International Christian Education Association
16130 Northland Drive • Southfield, MI 48075
248-557-5526 • www.iceaOnline.org

Request a free electronic subscription by e-mailing EquippingU@iceaOnline.org

CONTRIBUTORS

Writer

Kimberly von Oeyen

Photographers

Sheri Dillon

Pat Kush

istockphoto from:

JBryson

fstop123

nikamata

esolla