Living by Grace
—Galatians

Adult TEACHING GUIDE
Fall
The Gospel of Grace

Galatians 1:1-12

To understand that we must never compromise the integrity of the true Gospel.

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8).

LESSON AIM

To understand that we must never compromise the integrity of the true Gospel.

KEY VERSE TO MEMORIZE

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8).

GETTING PREPARED

Copymasters 1 and 2, copied for distribution


UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE: GALATIA AND THE GALATIANS

In Paul’s time, Galatia was a large Roman province located on the central plateau of Asia Minor (present-day Turkey). The name Galatia was introduced in 278 B.C. when a large number of Gauls migrated to the region from Europe. The area received full provincial status in 25 B.C.

Paul visited Galatia on his first missionary journey, evangelizing the sophisticated, multiracial towns of Iconium, Antioch, Lystra, and Derbe (Acts 13:14–14:24). Later he returned to strengthen the faith of the converts.

Paul’s first mission through the province of Galatia seems to have taken place while he was suffering from an illness. The circumstances created a close bond between Paul and the churches, and they treated him like an angel of God (Gal. 4:13-14). They were his spiritual children, and with fatherly concern he longed for them to resist false teachers and grow toward maturity.
spiritual maturity. That is why the apostle was deeply troubled when some of them began to turn away from the truth.

**UNDERSTANDING THE ADULT**

It appears that many people today, both inside and outside the church, have decided that commitment is not in their best interest. People view commitment negatively because they think it limits their ability to feel independent and free, to experience new things, to change their minds impulsively, and to focus on self-gratification rather than helping others.

This low level of commitment becomes especially disturbing when professing Christians treat vital Bible doctrines and a Christ-honoring lifestyle as unimportant. Christians must beware of casting aside important Biblical truths, such as salvation by grace. In fact, it was a lack of commitment to this foundational truth that prompted Paul’s letter to the Galatians.

**FOCUS**

All of us stand guilty before God because we have sinned against Him. There is absolutely no way that we could ever earn His love or merit His forgiveness. We need help, and it is found in Christ.

The good news is that Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. When we trust in Him, we are delivered from God’s wrath. We must never allow the integrity of this message to be compromised.

**DISCOVER**

I. PAUL’S DEVOTION TO THE GOSPEL
   (Galatians 1:1-5)

No one has ever held the Gospel more faithfully in his trust than Paul. In his years of seeking to be justified by works, Paul had not found salvation; however, when he trusted in Christ, he received forgiveness and assurance of eternal life. That is why Paul became such an ardent preacher of the Gospel, stressing its great power to change lives.

Bible scholars hold differing opinions about the

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**Memory Verse**

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8).

**Teaching Points**

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**Galatians 1:1-12**

Lesson 1
The Judaizers taught that Gentiles had to become Jews as part of their conversion process (see Acts 15:1, 5).

“Apostle” (Gal. 1:1) means sent one. The term primarily refers to those whom Christ had chosen to be with Him during His earthly ministry. He commissioned them to preach and they witnessed His resurrection. By the distinct nature of their calling, no one could succeed them in their office.

The identity of the churches of Galatia. Some think the churches were situated in North Galatia, probably in the cities of Pessinus, Anyra, and Tavium. Others believe they were located in the cities of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. It seems better to accept the second view because, during his first missionary journey, Paul had established churches in these southern cities of Galatia (Acts 13:14–14:24).

**PAUL’S COMMISSION**

(Galatians 1:1)

The false teachers in the Galatian churches wanted to enslave God’s people to legalistic Judaism. They asserted that keeping the law of Moses was the only way to be saved. They tried to destroy the Gospel of grace by undermining Paul’s apostolic authority.

Paul wasted no time in dealing directly with the question of his authority. He declared that no mere human had chosen or appointed him to his work. Jesus Christ and God the Father had selected him to be an apostle (Gal. 1:1).

Two aspects of Paul’s apostleship were unique. First, it was not of human origin. He had not received his commission from any church body or from other apostles. His authority had come directly from God through Jesus Christ.

Second, Paul was the only apostle commissioned by the Saviour after He rose from the dead. Except for Matthias, the Lord had commissioned the others before His death (Mark 3:14; 6:30). Although Matthias became an apostle after Christ’s resurrection, other church leaders had appointed him to that position (Acts 1:26).

**Discussion:** Why was it important for Paul to emphasize the uniqueness and integrity of his apostolic commission?

**Discussion:** What objections to the Gospel do false teachers make today? How can we counter those objections?

**PAUL’S CONCERN**

(Galatians 1:2-3)

During his journey through South Galatia, Paul met with persecution. He had put his life on the line to bring the good news to the people of that region. Is it any wonder, then, that he was deeply concerned because so many Galatians were abandoning the doctrine of grace? In their backslidden state, those
Galatians were trying to maintain God’s favor and peace by keeping the Law. So Paul and his fellow believers endeavored to defend the Gospel to the churches in Galatia (Gal. 1:2).

The apostle desired that the grace and peace of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ would richly dwell in the lives of the Galatian Christians. “Grace” (v. 3) refers to God’s unmerited favor to believing sinners. “Peace” refers to the inner tranquillity and contentment that result from the reconciling work of Christ. Paul’s greeting makes it clear that both the Father and the Son were involved in bestowing the salvation shared by all believers in Christ.

Discussion: How can a believer experience peace on a daily basis?

PAUL’S CONVICTIONS

(Galatians 1:4-5)

By adhering to a system of rules and ceremonies as a means of justification and spiritual growth, the believers in Galatia were guilty of discrediting the redeeming work of Christ. They were saying, in effect, that their own good deeds had to be added to Christ’s sacrifice in order for them to acquire a right standing before God. By adding self-effort to the atonement, the Galatians were robbing the Saviour of the glory He deserved.

To combat this problem, Paul underscored the uniqueness of Christ’s saving work. He declared that Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins “that he might deliver us from this present evil world” (v. 4a). God the Father had authorized this redemption; therefore, He deserves eternal glory (vv. 4b-5).

Discussion: Why can’t we earn salvation by doing good deeds?

Discussion: Having been saved by grace, does a Christian remain saved by grace alone? by grace plus works? by grace plus confession of sins? Explain your answer.

Memory Verse

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8).
Believers in the Galatian churches had compromised their understanding of the Gospel. Paul declared that the good news of salvation was an exclusive message.

THE INTEGRITY OF THE GOSPEL
(Galatians 1:6-9)

God had called the believers in Galatia to follow Him, and His summons was issued by His grace through Christ. Paul was shocked that the Galatian Christians were already abandoning the Gospel for a false message about salvation (Gal. 1:6). Although there is only one true message, spiritual frauds had insisted otherwise. They had distorted the Gospel of Christ and were confusing the Galatians (v. 7).

Paul declared his disgust with those who misrepresented the Good News and troubled God’s people. He prayed that the Lord would eternally condemn anyone who heralded an unbiblical message of salvation. It did not matter whether that person was Paul himself or an angel from heaven (v. 8).

Paul felt so strongly about this matter that he repeated his terse rebuke. It was his hope that God would punish anyone who preached anything different from the Gospel the believers at Galatia had already believed (v. 9).

Paul included himself among those who had no right to preach any other gospel. Because he did this, no one could charge that he was merely jealous of the legalists, who had won the Galatians’ hearts. Paul was not motivated by jealousy when he called for exclusive acceptance of the Gospel; he was motivated by loyalty to the Gospel.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE GOSPEL
(Galatians 1:10-12)

The false teachers accused Paul of declaring a wishy-washy, easy-to-follow gospel. They also censured him for requiring neither circumcision nor obedience to any of the other laws of Moses (for example, Sabbath rules and dietary restrictions).

Paul answered that he had not constructed a message that would make him popular. He preached
the Gospel to please God, the author of the Gospel. He sought God’s approval, not man’s. If his goal were to please people, he would not be a true servant of Christ (Gal. 1:10).

Paul wanted the Galatians to know that the message he preached did not originate with any person (v. 11). Jesus Christ had revealed it to him (v. 12).

Discussion: Read and compare the following Scripture passages: Romans 1:8; I Corinthians 1:4; Ephesians 1:16; Philippians 1:3; Colossians 1:3; I Thessalonians 1:2. What is common to Paul’s letters to the other churches? (He gave thanks for them.) His letter to the Galatians is the sole exception. What might this say about the seriousness of their situation?

Discussion: Why was it important for Paul to assert his authority as an apostle of Christ?

Discussion: What authority do we have for sharing the Gospel?

The adults in your class have probably learned from secular educators to be accepting of a variety of life-views. However, they need to understand that the Bible teaches absolute truths—and one of those is there is only one way of salvation. It is by grace through faith in the Saviour. Remind your class that Paul, before his conversion, was a religious intellectual. Yet, he found salvation only in Christ (Phil. 3:4-9).

A misguided parent may say, “I don’t want to influence my children one way or the other as far as religion is concerned. When they are old enough, they can choose for themselves what faith they will follow, if any.” Unfortunately, some Christian parents seem to take a similar stance by default because they fail to adequately instruct their children in the Word. Encourage the parents in your class to diligently guide their children to Christ before others lead their precious little ones astray.

Memory Verse
“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8).

Teaching Points

Have your students review the following passages: Isaiah 45:22; John 14:6; Acts 4:12.
We all need to remember that salvation is God’s gift, available only by faith in Christ. Let’s consider how religious charlatans can infiltrate our church and introduce a perverted gospel. Scripturally organized congregations choose their leaders. Therefore, urge the adults in your class to help guard the purity of the Gospel by allowing only pastors, teachers, and other church officers who are committed to the true Gospel of Christ to serve in those positions.

These Scripture passages will remind you of God’s grace and the importance of the Gospel.

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CLASS PRAYER NEEDS
The Geography of Galatia

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Christ Died for Our Sins—According to the Scriptures

ν ζεχλδ διάχγησε μει πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα ομθ βδοπν σπευ αννχλφνη βνυτε Στυεκλ Χιμσε. Σπειντ μοιλε δικαοδ δηδα δηδα δηδα. Συχμες χχρκο δηνμν σδνδ δηχωεθ το δανμπκαπιοδε. Αχζινθε οιρυνη νηδνηλ ηιουδαοδστ.

Νζχλδ δετανγε μει πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα ομθ.

Οιρυνη αηδηναλ πιουδ αομδστ. Νζχλδ δετανγε μει πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα ομθ.

Ηιουδαοδστ. Ωζχλνδ δστδιγηπ µεµ πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνοµ οσκδλ σδυση οµθ.

Πιρυψλ αηδηναλ ηιουδαοδστ.

Χζνθε οιρυνη αηδηναλ πιουδ αομδστ. Νζχλνδ δετανγατιγε μει πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα ομθ.

Δικαοδ δηδα. Αχζινθε οιρυνη αηδηναλ πιουδ αομδστ. Νζχλνδ δετανγε μει πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα ομθ.

Ηιουδαοδστ. Ωζχλνδ δστδιγηπ µεµ πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα ομθ.

οιρυψλ αηδηναλ ηιουδαοδστ.

Ριυα οµθ βδοπν ϖπειυ ανν χλϕδυνη βνυτε Σαισυδη Χιμσε. Σπειντ μοιλε δικαοδ δηδα δηδα. Αχζινθε οιρυνη αηδηναλ πιουδ αομδστ. Ζχλδ ιον δετανγατιγε μει πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα οµθ. Μειον δετανγε μει πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα οµθ.

HE ROSE AGAIN THE THIRD DAY—According to the Scriptures

Χζνθε οιρυνη αηδηναλ πιουδ αομδστ. Νζχλνδ δετανγατιγε μει πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα οµθ.

Ηιουδαοδστ. Ωζχλνδ δστδιγηπ µεµ πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα οµθ.

νεζχκσρτ δστιγηπ µεµ πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνοµ οσκδλ σδυση οµθ.

Πιρυψλ αηδηναλ ηιουδαοδστ.

Ηιουδαοδστ. Ωζχλνδ δστδιγηπ µεµ πεερτλν οσκδλ φοενανδ, εβνμυνη τιτρτιυα οµθ.

HE WAS SEEN

σδυν δηχωεθ τανδαι δηνμν Αχζινθε οιρυ ηιουν αηδηναλ ανννπ νηδνδ.
Living by Grace
—Galatians

Adult Interactive Bible
STUDENT BOOK
Fall
The Gospel of Grace

Galatians 1:1-12

SCRIPTURE TO MEMORIZE

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8).

WALKING WITH THE LORD

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LESSON OVERVIEW

The Book of Galatians, which Paul wrote, may be placed alongside Romans as a fellow companion of the grace of God. Just as the apostle penned Romans to explain that people can be justified only by grace (Rom. 3:24), so he composed Galatians to stamp this truth indelibly upon the hearts of his dear friends.

In this week’s lesson, we will learn that Paul became an apostle through the call of God. The Lord commissioned him to preach the Good News to the lost. We will see that people can be saved only by grace, through faith in Christ, not by good works. Tragically, the churches of Galatia were guilty of turning from divine grace to good works in the hope of being justified and sanctified. Paul, therefore, admonished them to accept only the Gospel of grace and to reject the distorted message of the false teachers.
LIFE AWARENESS

Both inside and outside the church, the presence of commitment is seriously lacking. People shun commitment because they think it will prevent them from doing what they want. This attitude is extremely harmful among Christians who profess to believe in the vital doctrines of the faith. For example, a lack of commitment to the truth of the Gospel can lead to spiritual confusion. It is only when we, as believers, preserve the integrity of the Good News, that the doctrinal foundation of the church will stand against the attacks of spiritual frauds.

PAUL’S DEVOTION TO THE GOSPEL

(Galatians 1:1-5)

Paul started his letter to the Galatians by saying that Jesus Christ and God the Father had chosen him to be an apostle. (God the Father is the One who raised Christ from the dead.) Some tried to discredit Paul’s authority, but he undercut their efforts by declaring that no mere human had chosen or appointed him to be an ambassador for Christ (Gal. 1:1). No matter what opponents to the truth might say, God authorizes us to proclaim the Good News to the lost.

False teachers had told the Galatian believers they needed to maintain God’s favor and peace by human effort through lawkeeping. Paul’s awareness of this prompted him to emphasize God’s grace and peace, which He made available through faith in Christ (v. 3). Grace refers to the Lord’s unmerited favor and blessings. We have everlasting peace when we receive God’s favor and blessings by trusting in Christ.

1. Why was it important for Paul to emphasize the uniqueness and integrity of his apostolic commission?

2. What objections to the Gospel do false teachers make today?

How can we counter those objections?
3. How can a believer experience peace on a daily basis?

By emphasizing their own good deeds, the Galatians had unknowingly discredited the redeeming work of Christ. To counter this terrible situation, Paul declared that Christ obeyed God the Father by giving Himself as a sacrifice for our sins. God rescues those who place their trust in Him from this evil world (Gal. 1:4). The implication of this truth is clear. We are to glorify God for the sacrifice of Christ (v. 5). Therefore, let us give the Lord eternal praise for the gift of His Son.

1. Why can’t we earn salvation by doing good deeds?

2. Having been saved by grace, does a Christian remain saved by grace alone? by grace plus works? by grace plus confession of sins?

Explain your answer.

THE INTEGRITY OF THE GOSPEL

(Galatians 1:6-12)

Paul had labored hard to bring the message of truth to the people of Galatia. As a result, the Lord called them to salvation through His grace by faith in Christ. In light of all the sacrifices Paul had made on their behalf, he was shocked to learn that they were quickly abandoning the grace of God for a perverted gospel message (Gal. 1:6). This was not a valid alternative to the Good News that Paul preached. Rather, it was a twisted form of the
truth, one that had confused the Galatian believers (v. 7). Whenever we deviate from the truth, we harm ourselves and our fellow believers.

Paul prayed that God would eternally punish anyone who preached anything different from the message he had proclaimed to the Galatians. It did not matter whether the person was an ordained minister or an angel from heaven (Gal. 1:8). This issue was so important to Paul that he repeated his point. He hoped that God would eternally punish anyone who proclaimed a religious message that deviated from the Gospel he had declared to the Galatians (v. 9). From this we can see that whenever we distort the good news of salvation, we displease God.

The false teachers accused Paul of declaring a wishy-washy, easy-to-follow gospel. They also censured him for requiring neither circumcision nor obedience to any of the other laws of Moses (for example, Sabbath rules and dietary restrictions). Finally, Paul’s opponents claimed that he had rebelled against the Jerusalem apostles, who supposedly had given him his authority and message.

In response, Paul made it clear that he was not trying to persuade people to accept him. The approval of God, not that of people, was his main concern. If Paul’s motive had been to win a popularity contest, he would not be a true servant of Christ (v. 10). We are true ministers of Christ when our goal is to glorify God, not to win the favor of others.

Paul’s message did not have a human origin (v. 11). Instead, God had revealed it to Paul when Christ appeared to Paul (v. 12). Thus, Paul’s authority originated with God, not with the Jerusalem apostles. We can be thankful that Paul did not distort or dilute the Gospel for self-interest. Likewise, we should do whatever we can to guard the purity of the truth.

1. Read and compare the following Scripture passages:
   Romans 1:8; I Corinthians 1:4; Ephesians 1:16; Philippians 1:3; Colossians 1:3; I Thessalonians 1:2. What is common to all of Paul’s letters to the other churches?

   His letter to the Galatians is the sole exception. What might this say about the seriousness of their situation?
2. Why was it important for Paul to assert his authority as an apostle of Christ?

3. What authority do we have for sharing the Gospel?

**BIBLE AND LIFE APPLICATION**

*It is easy for us to let our guard down, giving religious frauds an opportunity to infiltrate the church. Therefore, we must protect the purity of the Gospel message with all our strength. We should also fortify the lives of our loved ones with the truth of God’s Word. When we take such actions, we will help our families and church withstand the attacks of spiritual frauds.*

**MY RESPONSE TO GOD**

**CLASS PRAYER NEEDS**
COOKING SCHOOL
MINISTRY
RECIPE FOR SUCCESS
VICTORIA QUEEN’S PASSION FOR PEOPLE AND CULINARY ARTS

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY
The daughter of a minister, Victoria Queen went to church every week as a child growing up in Batesville, Arkansas. But once she reached adulthood, Queen felt stifled by rules of strict morality. Although her rebellion didn’t result in drug addiction or sexual promiscuity, it did mean turning her back on God’s involvement in daily life.

Instead of following God, Queen poured herself into obtaining an education and pursuing career goals. She opened her first restaurant at age 25 and later took over the food and beverage service at a country club. She supervised banquets and hosted campus guests working for the president of a private college. Then she worked for a major corporation as the catering director at two universities. Queen didn’t attend church on Sundays; her devotion belonged to her career. During her rise in the culinary industry, she obtained a master’s degree in business administration at Arkansas State University.

But some practices in the corporate world began to bother Queen. For instance, she witnessed salaried leadership running up huge alcohol tabs on travel expense accounts, as hourly workers would be limited to less than 40 hours of work per week to keep them from receiving full-time benefits.

Queen went out on her own again, opening a bar and restaurant.

Queen began to sense God tugging at her to return to Him. One Sunday morning she shocked her staff by saying she wouldn’t be working that day—she planned to go to church instead. At the service, a weeping Queen recommitted her life to Jesus. Feeling convicted, Queen closed her successful bar and restaurant and moved to Springfield, Missouri, to further her education at Missouri State University.

One day a friend asked Queen to drop off a donation at Springfield Victory Mission www.victorymission.com, which serves needy and homeless in the area.

“I didn’t even know rescue missions existed,” says Queen, now 57. While there, she picked up a mission newsletter. Talking to Executive Director James M. Harriger, Queen learned of Victory Mission’s plans to open a trade school that would cater to those in recovery. Queen left her résumé. Harriger hired her to develop the new Victory Trade School, which opened with four employees and nine students in 2003.

“I came to realize making a lot of money is not that important,” Queen says.

Queen devised a plan to gain National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation certification for the new trade school. She also acquired accreditation through the North Central Association, certification with the Missouri Department of Higher Education, and participation in Title IV Pell grants for the school. Students are billed $15,100 for the one year of study, which includes tuition, meals, and lodging. But students don’t
pay any of the costs because they receive a full scholarship in exchange for the unpaid restaurant work they provide. Students rotate as waiters, cashiers, dishwashers, grill, prep, and other positions. Pell grants as well as donations from churches and individuals enable students to avoid incurring school loans.

“Victory Mission helps a lot of people who can’t help themselves, but Victory Trade School helps people help themselves,” Queen says.

VTS started recruiting graduates from recovery programs such as Teen Challenge and the Salvation Army. Although around half the students have a history of drug or alcohol troubles, early on Queen established a zero-tolerance substance abuse policy. Students are subject to urine analysis or breath tests at any time. They are accepted into the culinary arts program only if they have been drug-free for a year.

Food preparation instruction is done in conjunction with classes in the VTS Christian discipleship program called PREP: Prayer, Reading Scripture, Education, and Praise to God for His blessing. The day starts with prayers and Bible reading. Students are required to attend daily Bible-based classes as well as Sunday worship services at a local congregation of their choosing.

“They are dealing with relationship issues, authority issues, motivation issues,” says Queen, whose husband, Alan, is chaplain at the parent Springfield Victory Mission organization. “They may not know how to get a job or how to be a good employee. At VTS they learn how to handle anger, disappointment, and pressure—without resorting to substance abuse.”

Less than three weeks after VTS began, Queen opened Cook’s Kettle Restaurant as a commercial enterprise. In the heart of a city center inhabited by the homeless, Cook’s Kettle serves reasonably priced breakfast and lunch. It also functions as the culinary laboratory for VTS. It’s not fast-food burgers and fries. Two classically trained chefs instruct students on how to craft salads, soups, specialty sandwiches, and pastries. Students learn everything from making salad dressings to following intricate recipes.

In 2010, VTS opened a second location—the Branch Bistro—three blocks away to meet the growing need for a venue to train culinary arts students.
Initially, Queen taught all VTS classes. Now there are 16 employees. Queen, who is president of VTS, says God has sent overqualified staff willing to work for less money.

“Many are fed up with the coarse language, alcohol use, and drug abuse of those working in the secular marketplace,” explains Queen, who earned her doctorate in 2012 from Saint Louis University in higher education administration. “Victory Trade School is a Christian atmosphere, and the staff love to mentor others.”

Since 2003, VTS has graduated 150 students from 15 states. They are certified in areas such as food preparation, customer service, customer controls, and restaurant marketing. All have been placed in the workforce.

John Allen enrolled in the VTS culinary arts program in 2010. Under the tutelage of certified executive chefs Chadwick Isom and Brian M. Romano, he quickly excelled. Allen, motivated as never before, absorbed as much as he could from the experienced and skilled teachers. He worked up to 70 hours a week to gain experience not only at the Branch Bistro but also at VTS banquets and other catering events.

After graduating from VTS in 2011, Allen became general manager and executive chef at a new downtown Springfield eatery, Aviary Café and Creperie. He knew he didn’t want to return to his old stomping grounds in Bakersfield, California.

“There was a lot of baggage waiting for me,” says the 29-year-old Allen, who had kicked a decade-long methamphetamine addiction at Teen Challenge. “I had a lot of friends and family that used drugs.”

Business at the Aviary Café and Creperie has been booming. Allen believes it’s because God is pleased with those he has hired. The restaurant’s kitchen staff includes three VTS graduates and various workers on parole or probation.

“Most of the guys have made bad choices and would have a hard time finding employment elsewhere,” Allen says.

Queen’s goal remains for VTS students to graduate as productive citizens who are debt-free, sober, and accountable to God and to fellow Christians. And to be people who know a thing or two about food.

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**DAILY BIBLE readings**

- **SUNDAY**: 1 Kings 17–19
- **MONDAY**: 1 Kings 20–22
- **TUESDAY**: 2 Kings 1–5
- **WEDNESDAY**: 2 Kings 6–8
- **THURSDAY**: 2 Kings 9–13
- **FRIDAY**: 2 Kings 14–17
- **SATURDAY**: 2 Kings 18–20

I balanced a pot on my hip, grabbed a wooden spoon, and called over my shoulder. “Hey, can someone check the sauce?”

My husband stuck his head through the kitchen doorway. “Smells good in here.”

I blew out a breath. “It’ll taste good too, if I can get it all ready in time. See if the sauce is hot.” I nodded toward the microwave then jabbed my spoon in the direction of the dining room. “Is the table set?”

“Sure is.” Bryan strode to the microwave and opened the door. “Sauce looks perfect. It’s steaming.”

“Great. Go ahead and take it to the table.” I glanced at the clock. In ten minutes, our guests would arrive. Ten minutes to stir and mix, taste and cook, prepare and place. Then, all I wanted to do was sit and feast, and enjoy getting to know the new family from church.

I stuck the wooden spoon into the stew and gave it a twist as Bryan lifted the sauce bowl out of the microwave and moved to the next room.

I turned back to the stew. Bubbles popped to the surface. It did smell good. I leaned over and took a deep breath.

A sniffle sounded behind me, followed by a tug on my pantleg.

I looked down.

Jayden glared up at me. His two-year-old lip quivered.

“What’s wrong, honey?”

He pointed toward the living room. “Sister mean.”
“What happened?”
He folded his arms across his chest.
“Told toy.”
I sighed. “Did she take your pen- guin toy away again?”
He stared at the floor. “I no like penguin.”
“But it’s your favorite.”
“No like.” He sat down and scowled. Tears rolled down his cheeks.
“Well, our friends are coming in just a minute. Maybe you want to go put together a puzzle while we wait.”
“No like puzzle.”
“How about your blocks, then? Sister won’t take your blocks.”
“No like blocks.”
“Your train set?”
“Hate train.”
I squatted down in front of him. “Well, you just don’t like anything, do you?”
“Me mad.”
“Yes, I see that.” I stood back up and took the stew off the stove. Then, I picked up a ladle and spooned the stew into a large serving terrine.
“What dat?”
I glanced down. “Stew. You want some?”
He sniffed. “Like stew.”
Ah, that was the problem. Jayden was hungry. And like his daddy, he got grumpy when he was overdue to eat.
I ladled a bit of stew into a small bowl, blew it cool, and set it on the kitchen table. “Sit on up and eat.”
He did.
Five minutes later, he licked his lips, pushed back his empty bowl, and grinned. “I play sisters now. We play penguin. Puzzles too.”
“Okay, you go play.”
He trotted off.
As I carried the stew terrine to the dining room table, I wondered if it wasn’t only Jayden and Bryan who got cranky when they were hungry. Maybe I was that way too.
Jesus said, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hun- gry…” (John 6:35).
So when I’m anxious and irritable, when nothing seems right, when I “no like” life, maybe I’m just hungry for more of Jesus. Perhaps it’s not about sister being mean or the penguin or the puzzle. Maybe it’s just about needing to gobble up more Scripture, chew on more truth, do more than just nibble at the corners of my prayer life. Perhaps I need to fill up on more time with God, tasting the goodness of His presence with me.
On the days when my husband seems inconsiderate, when I don’t like my job, when people don’t treat me like I think they should, before I start casting blame, I’ll try to remember Jayden and make sure I’m all filled up. Then I can hold onto a much better attitude, even when someone is just a little bit mean.
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