

# who's counting?

Journey with Jesus:  
Matthew 23:23-25:13

April 17, 2016  
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## W hat does the merit system bring?

1. The merit system obligates unattainable \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:2-4

a. But graces understands inevitable \_\_\_\_\_.

2. The merit system sabotages imputed \_\_\_\_\_.

Galatians 5:5-6

a. But graces exercises unexplainable \_\_\_\_\_.

3. The merit system fosters undesirable \_\_\_\_\_.

Galatians 5:7-12

a. But graces enables indescribable \_\_\_\_\_.

## TAKE HOME TRUTH

The love of our neighbor \_\_\_\_\_  
in the soil of \_\_\_\_\_. Galatians 5:13-14

### Today's Core Practice:

Love: I unconditionally love others.

(from 1 John 4:10-12)

Today's Action: Who can you reach out to  
this week in order to model God's grace?

Make an appointment to accomplish that  
before next Sunday.

hand in  
hand  
verse by  
verse

### Deeper Connection Study

In Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia, he asserted that the gospel he preached - and they accepted - was from God and not from man, and it was based on grace, not on adhering to the Jewish law. In chapter 5, Paul reminds us that since Christ set us free it would be folly to return to slavery under the Law. This has huge implications on our freedom to live and serve others in love.

*Today's Core Virtue discussed: Love.*

### Read Galatians 5:1-14

1. How could Christians be "burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (v. 1)? What is Paul warning against? What practical benefit does this warning have for us today?
2. What are the consequences of wanting to be justified by law (vv. 2-4)? Why does an attempt to earn God's favor through works [or even rituals] devalue God's grace (cf. Eph. 2:8-9)?
3. What really counts for a Christian (v. 6; cf. Jas. 2:18, 20, 22)? What was Paul emphasizing?
4. When a person comes to faith in Christ, he or she becomes spiritually rich. How is this so (cf. Rom. 11:33; Eph. 1:7, 18; 3:8; Phil. 4:19)? How do you think this influences the way we should live as Christians?
5. It should be apparent that freedom has its limits. What boundaries exist for Christians, and what responsibilities do we have in the way we live (vv. 13-14; cf. I Cor. 9:19)?
6. How should serving others be a joy rather than an obligation? Why should we serve one another? How are you motivated to serve others in love?

**PRAYER TO THE POINT:** Praise God for his amazing grace! Pray for God to remind you of his grace and to motivate you to serve others in love.

## Who's My Neighbor?



here are many things in life that operate on the merit system. Education is one example. In order to move through the educational system you must "meet the grade" through necessary preparation, which is followed by some type of examination. Athletics is another example. In most cases if an individual desires to be a participant in an organized sport, whether it is soccer, football or even field hockey, he or she must prepare themselves through rigorous training. Sequentially some type of tryout follows this training. In each of these cases there is a reward or a merit that is granted based upon the person's perceived success. Though the merit system has an accepted place in society it has its dilemmas when it comes to the aspect of faith. One of the many is that the merit system is in conflict with the doctrine of grace. Consequently, when we approach God based upon our merit we invite difficulties into our lives and relationships, as we will see today!