

Galatians-Chapter 5

Gal 5:1 For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

- Connecting to the previous chapter (*these were letters that were to be read through without breaks in thought*) and Christians being spiritual decedents of the free woman, Sarah (a.k.a., *the children of promise- 4:28*), the apostle asked (*rhetorically*) why they wanted to become children of Hagar, Sarah's bondservant, who represented the Old Law and all that it demanded. Christ came to free man from the "yoke of slavery" by becoming the ultimate sacrifice thus changing, "once for all" (*Rom 6:10*), the sacrificial system forever. Since the Judaizers were trying to get them to honor the practice of circumcision, as Paul states in verse 5, those who did were to be subject to the rest of the laws under the O.T. That circumcision under discussion here was physical (*"made in the flesh by hands"- Eph 2:11*) and Paul, as he explained to the church at Colossae, was trying to get the Galatian church to understand how Christians are "circumcised with a circumcision made without hands" (*Col 2:11*). Returning to the law would make null and void the freedom they were enjoying in Christ.

=====

Gal 5:2 Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.

- There was no justification under the Old Law and performing any practice under that system in order to be saved would cancel their relationship with the Christ that the Law made way for to "fulfill" it (*Mat 5:17*).

=====

Gal 5:3 I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law.

- testify again- Seems the subject needed repetition. Paul here reiterates, as he did in chapter one on the subject of there being only one gospel, for the sake of emphasizing the disadvantage of circumcision which was tied to the Old Law. The Old Law saved no one. That was not its purpose. Paul's point here was that they couldn't pick and choose from both Testaments to make up "a different gospel" as there were those Jews there, in a prominently Gentile area, who wanted "to distort the gospel of Christ" (*1:6, 7*). Either Testament would require complete compliance.

=====

Gal 5:4 You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

- Not that there wasn't grace in the law just as there must be law in grace. The grace that came from the Law wasn't realized until Christ fulfilled it retroactively.

Zec 14:8 On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea (*past*) and half of them to the western sea (*future*). It shall continue in summer as in winter (*continually*). (*This was the water Jesus offered the woman at the well- John 4*)

fallen away from grace- This verse disproves the false Calvinistic doctrine of the “Perseverance of the Saints”, a.k.a., “once saved, always saved”. These were babes in **Christ** who were teetering on losing their salvation. They were being taught that only **Jews** could become **Christians** and unless they were first converted to Judaism through circumcision they could not be part of **God’s** chosen people (*Act 15:1*).

=====

Gal 5:5 For through the **Spirit**, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.

- We ourselves- **Paul** here making a contrast between those who looked for righteousness through the **Law** and those who waited for it in expectation through the **Spirit**.

=====

Gal 5:6 For in **Christ Jesus** neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

- Referring back in this letter (3:28) **Paul** reiterates the fact that **God** makes no distinction (“shows no partiality”- *Act 10:34*) between **Jew** or **Gentile** when it comes to who would be acceptable to be in **Christ Jesus** since “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of **God**” (*Rom 3:23*). The only thing **God** is concerned with is that all believe in **His Son** as can be evidenced by the acts of love associated with being a faithful **Christian**.

=====

Gal 5:7 You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

- Knowing who it was (*Judaizers*) **Paul** tried to get them to realize the extent of their error. First by saying how good they were doing followed by asking what happened.

=====

Gal 5:8 This persuasion is not from **Him Who** calls you.

- This foreign influence was not coming from the source of their salvation.

2Th 2:14 Whereunto **He** called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our **Lord Jesus Christ**. **15** Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

=====

Gal 5:9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

- Sad but true, even today, when some small seemingly inconsequential doctrine ends up influencing large (*and small*) congregations to where they aren’t even able to be recognized as being the **New Testament** body of **Christ**.

=====

Gal 5:10 I have confidence in the **Lord** that you will take no other view than mine, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is.

- Confidence- **Gk.3982-** to convince; by analogy to pacify or conciliate. **Paul** here, whether stating his conviction to appeal to their conscience or that he was actually

convinced, was backing up such hope in the Lord that they also would share his views on the separation of Old and New testaments. Not knowing (*or not caring*) who was doing the Judaizing, whoever the agitator was, he would have to suffer the consequence of being disciplined. The penalty here has to do with church discipline, whether by rebuke, withdrawal of fellowship, or by other means, Paul does not specify in this verse.

=====

Gal 5:11 But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed.

- Paul had Timothy circumcised because of the Jews (*Act 16:3*), not because he saw that it was necessary to fulfill the requirement for salvation, but in order that there be no hindrance in getting Timothy to accompany him in areas where Jews were. But that didn't satisfy the Judaizers (*who felt it was necessary to be converted to Judaism before anyone could become a Christian*) or the Jews. The Jews persecuted Paul because of his God inspired stance against the necessity of circumcision while the Judaizers did so claiming him to be hypocritical on the subject because of Timothy.

Act 16:1 Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. **2** He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. **3** Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him **because of the Jews** who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

1Co 9:20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) **that I might win those under the law.** **21** To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. **22** To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become **all things to all people, that** by all means **I might save some.**

Either the Old Covenant of circumcision by hands or the New, i.e., the "circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh (*Gk.4561- human nature*), by the circumcision of Christ" (*Col 2:11*). The cross was "a stumbling block to Jews" (*1 Cor 1:23*) and if Paul preached circumcision as being necessary, then the offense of the cross to the Jews (and the Judaizers) would no longer be a problem. But he continued to "preach Christ crucified".

=====

Gal 5:12 I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

- Emasculate- *Gk.609- to amputate; to mutilate (the privy parts): -cut off.* Judaizers were themselves circumcised. Paul must have felt that if it was such a concern to those who were disturbing the Gentile Christians that they be so maimed, that those promoting such would just go even further than just circumcision.

=====

Gal 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

- The gospel is a call to freedom from bondage to the Old Law. But that freedom was not to be used out of context for immoral purposes. The **moral** law of **God** was not nailed to the cross. The Mosaic Law, being “holy, and the commandment holy and righteous and good” (*Rom 7:12*), was fulfilled in one word, love.

=====

Gal 5:14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

- Love- *Gk.25*- Thayer: to have a preference for, wish well to, regard the welfare of.

Rom 8:4 in order that the **righteous requirement** of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the **Spirit**.

- According to *Romans 7:12* “the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good”, “but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died” (*v. 7*). We are no longer to be guided by the human nature (*flesh*) but by “the **Spirit** of **God** [that now] dwells in [us]” (*Rom 8:9*). Our only obligation, then, to each other is to love each other, wanting what’s best for each other. And since we are “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (*Heb 11:13-KJV*) we are to be mindful of those others who are on this journey with us.

Rom 13:8 Owe (*Gk.3784- [through the idea of accruing]; to be under obligation; morally to fail in duty.*) no one anything, except to love (*regard the welfare of*) each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. **9** For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." **10** Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

=====

Gal 5:15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

- This was specifically directed at the strife between the **Gentile** converts and the Judaizers then, but the lesson applies to the church as a whole because of contentions that exist, for whatever reason, within the body today. The affect it can have on the brotherhood is still as devastating. But- (*to do the opposite of v. 14*) here’s what happens when we **don’t** love as a neighbor (*Gk.4139- fellow [as man, countryman, Christian or friend]*) or be a neighbor, in the sense of the word. (*And Jesus answered the question as to who is the neighbor according to His parable in Lk 10:29-37 when He made the lawyer finally admit that the one who shows mercy is the true neighbor.*) Bite (*Gk.1143*), according to Thayer, means “to wound the soul, cut, lacerate, rend with reproaches”. That along with devour (*Gk.2719*), which he defines as “to ruin”, both the **Gentile** and **Jewish Christians**, through the strife that those Judaizers were causing, would end up splitting their fellowship through such prejudices. The only result would be that they would consume (*Gk.355- Thayer: use up, destroy*) one another. And such contention would have a negative influence on evangelizing the rest of the world.

Rom 8:10 But if **Christ** is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the **Spirit** is life because of righteousness.

=====

Gal 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

- Numerous passages speak of God's Spirit dwelling in the Christian. If we "are led by the Spirit of God" (*Rom 8:14*) such discord wouldn't be possible between brethren. If we give in to the desires of the flesh, i.e. our human nature, we are not fulfilling the "righteous requirement of the law" (*Rom 8:4*) "for the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot" (*Rom 8:7*).

=====

Gal 5:17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

- This is the war Paul spoke about in *Romans 7*; the physical impulses of the carnal that oppose the spiritual desires. They "set the mind on the flesh [which brings] death", whereas, "to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace" (*Rom 8:6*).

Rom 7:22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, *23* but I see in my members (*Gk.3196- limb or part of the body*) another law waging war against the law of my mind (*spiritual*) and making me captive to the law of sin (*sin and death- 8:2. In other words, you sin, you die.*) that dwells in my members.

This is why it would be impossible for anyone to sin once we've been relieved of our carnal nature because once the physical body is discarded ...

... "all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions--[which are] not from the Father but [are] from the world. ...will go with it since... the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever" (*1Jn 2:16-17*).

=====

Gal 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

- Since the law was made null and void (*yet not God's moral law which was separate from the Mosaic Law*) all those practices under it were made just as invalid. Including the act of circumcision.

=====

Gal 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,

Gal 5:20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,

Gal 5:21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- sorcery- *Gk.5332- medication* ("pharmacy"), that is, (by implication) *magic* (literal or figurative). Since the goal is to reach some sort of, what they would have thought of as, 'magical' feeling by using drugs, this covers drug addictions, illegal or otherwise.

- and things like these- This, obviously, is not to be considered a complete list of carnal things that will keep us from being saved. "The unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom

of God" (1 Cor 6:11) since those who do such things would be doing wrong and we know that "all wrongdoing is sin" (1 Jn 5:17).

=====

al 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
Gal 5:23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

- Where there is law there is the predisposition to disobey it because of the rebellious human nature within us. Just as the devil tempted Eve with the fruit that God told them not to eat, so he does with any and all sin that we know goes against "the law of the Spirit of life [which] has set [us] free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death" (Rom 8:2).

Rom 7:11 For sin, seizing an opportunity **through the commandment**, deceived me and through it killed me.

Satan does not tempt us with the fruits of the Spirit since they do not lead to death. Anything we are commanded not to do, that leads to death, will be something Satan will use to deceive us.

=====

Gal 5:24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

- When did we crucify the flesh with its passions and desires?

Rom 6:3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Rom 6:6 ...[so] that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

=====

Gal 5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

- Walk- Gk.4748- to march in (military) rank (keep step), that is, (figuratively) to conform to virtue and piety. To conform here would be to fulfill "the righteous requirement of the law" and "not [live] according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Rom 8:4).

1Jn 1:6 If we say we have fellowship with Him (God the Father) while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses (present, active, indicative tense) us from all sin.

=====

Gal 5:26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

- To provoke is to (Gk.4292) irritate. When a person become[s] conceited he desires vain glory and has the tendency to be irritable. More than likely speaking to the Jewish converts of Galatia who were proud of their heritage as physical descendants of Abraham thinking such a status made them above their Gentile brethren. Those doing the envying would have been the Gentile Christians at Galatia who were seeking to satisfy the

Judaizers, wanting to be circumcised to be like them. As the main gist of Paul's letter indicates, the two Testaments were not to be combined since the requirements of either, then, could not be met.

Updated November 20, 2015
www.searchfortruth.church