

BIBLE CLASS – HPC SUNDAY JULY 10, 2022

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

(Chapters 5 and 6)

“The Law condemns the best of men and women,
Grace saves the worst of men and women”

Galatians Chapter 5: 1-12 THE FREEDOM OF THE GOSPEL

A Greek paraphrase: “For this afore mentioned freedom Christ set you free. Keep on standing firm therefore, and stop being held again by the yoke of bondage. Behold I, Paul am saying to you that if you persist in being circumcised, Christ will be advantageous to you in not even one thing, and I solemnly affirm again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to do the whole law. You are without effect from Christ, such of you as in the sphere of the Law are seeking your Justification. You have lost your hold on (Sanctifying) Grace.” (Dr. Kenneth Wuest)

The same is true of anyone who is seeking their justification by their “good” works. Works are not a condition of salvation but the fruit of it.

In this section Paul is saying Christian living does not require obedience to the law. Thus circumcision as a part of conversion to Judaism does not matter. What matters is faith, (Sola Fide), ongoing trust in Jesus Christ as expressed through love. While the NT often views love as an attitude or emotion (Rom 5:28; 1 Cor 4:21; 13:3), here the Apostle has in mind the outworking of love as Godly action. Joseph Fitzmyer defines love as “a spontaneous affection of one person for the other and impels one to self-giving.” Where does love originate? It comes from God who is love and is produced in us as a fruit of the Spirit.

FREEDOM FROM LEGALIST –

The legalists were disturbing the Galatians and misrepresenting Paul. Their “persecution” is better rendered “false rhetoric”, which is a leaven that if not cut-off could harm the whole church. Therefore the legalists should be cut-off from any relationship with the Galatians.

Legalism mean the abandonment of Christ as one’s only hope of Justification and Righteousness. Paul in verse 4 is speaking of people who might profess to be Christian but are not truly saved. They are seeking to be justified by keeping the law. Paul is telling them that they cannot have two Saviors. They must choose either Christ or the Law. If they chose the law they they are separated from Christ as their only possible hope of Righteousness; they have fallen from Grace.

Hogg and Vine express it clearly: “Jesus Christ must be everything or nothing to a man or woman; no limited trust or divided allegiance is acceptable to Him. The person who is justified by the Lord Jesus Christ is a Christian; the person who seeks to be justified by the works of the law is not.”

Galatians 5:13-15 NOT LEGALISM NOR LICENSE BUT LIBERTY

The gospel of grace has always been accused of permitting me to live as they like. People say: “If salvation if by faith alone, then there is not control over a person’s conduct afterwards.” The Apostle is quick to point out that Christian liberty does not mean a license to sin. The believer’s standard of life is the Lord Jesus and love for the Lord Jesus so we hate sin and love holiness. A. T. Pierson says: “True freedom is found only in obedience to proper restraint. A river find liberty to flow, only between banks: without these it would spread out into a slimy, stagnant pool. Planets, uncontrolled by law, would only bring wreck to themselves and to the universe. The same law fences us in, fences others out; the restraints which regulate our liberty also insure and protect it. It is not control, but the right

kind of control, a cheerful obedience which make the free man or woman.”

Galatians 5: 16-18 – THE SPIRIT VS. THE FLESH – THE POWER OF HOLINESS.

Gerald Peterman says: Paul states that since God’s Spirit and the sinful nature (flesh) are opposed, following (walking by) the Spirit will insure that one avoids sinful desire, however imperfect that avoidance may be. As in Galatians 3:3 there is not a third option. Paul often uses the term “walk” similar to the OT idiom (Gen 5:24; 2 Kgs 20:3; Psa 1:1) to refer to lifestyle (Rom8:4; 1 Cor 3:3; Col 2:6; 1 Thes 2:12). Walk by the Spirit is an imperative with a promise, if one walks by the Spirit, then this is one that is not fulfilling the desires of the flesh. The imperative walk by the Spirit is based on the fact that “those who are led by the Spirit are the sons of God (Rom 8:14) and if you are led by the Spirit “You are not under the law (Gal 5:18). Believers can walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh precisely because of the fact that they have the Spirit. “You will not carry out” is better rendered, “You are not ever going to carry out” the desires of the flesh. The Apostle does not expect the child of God to be characterized by the flesh as an unbeliever is, because the Holy Spirit is present and working in the believer’s life.

There are many spiritual realities that are “now” and “not yet” for the believer. Here are a few:

1. We are adopted as God’s children (Rom 8:15) but await the Adoption as God’s children (Rom 8:23).
2. We are dead to sin (Rom6: 2,7) but must reckon that it is so (Rom 6: 11).
3. Christians are led by and walk in the Spirit so that they are Not typified by carrying out the desire of the flesh, but neither are they sinlessly perfect in the world as they await.

the “not yet” of their full and future redemption and “the present evil age” is still exerting its influences.

Therefore it is safe to say that the believer’s life will not be typified in a complete, undefined, global way, by fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.

Galatians 5:17-21 THE FLESH

THE FLESH REFERS TO A CONGLOMERATION OF HUMAN TRAITS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO ONE’S DISPOSITION TO SIN, ALSO KNOWN AS “THE OLD SIN NATURE”. These are traits that even a believer still has as a result of one’s descent from Adam, including weakness and also rebellion. For the unbeliever living according to the flesh is the only option. Both believers and unbelievers have the flesh and both believers and unbelievers can do the kind of sins in 5:19-21. But Paul does not expect the child of God to be characterized persistently by the flesh because the Spirit is present and is leading him or her so there is a difference between the Christian sometimes doing these acts and an unbeliever practicing them.

THE LEADING OF THE SPIRIT is an objective entailment of being converted, as having one’s flesh crucified in Christ 5:24 and being alive by the Holy Spirit in 5:25. Christians are not under the Law of Moses (Rom 1:14; Gal 3:23-4:3) however, the Christian is under the Law of Christ (1 Cor 9:21; Gal 6:2) Everything that God has for the believer is in the Lord Jesus. In order to receive the blessings, we must be united to Him by faith) Sola Fide). The moment a person believes in Jesus as their Savior he or she becomes a possessor of all. Louis Sperry Chafer writes: “To be in Christ, which is the position of all who are saved, is to partake of all that Jesus Christ has done, and all that He is, and all that He ever will be.”

In Christ is critical and there are two clearly related lines of truth in the NT.

1. The truth of the believers position or standing
2. The truth of the believers daily practice (lifestyle) or walk.

First, the believer's position or standing. Everyone in this world is either in Adam or in Christ. Those that are in Adam are in their sins and therefore condemned before God. There is nothing they can do in themselves to please God or gain His favor. They have no claim on God, and if they receive what they deserve, they would perish eternally. When a person is converted God no longer looks upon them as a condemned child of Adam. Rather God sees them as being in Christ, and He accepts them on that basis. It is important to see this. The sinner who simply and truly believes is not 'accepted because of what he or she is in themselves, but 'because they are in Christ. When a person is in Christ they stand before God in all the acceptability of Christ Himself; and they enjoy God's love, favor and acceptance as long as Jesus Christ does, namely forever. The believer's standing or position then is what they are in Christ, but there is another side to the picture – the believer's practice, daily life or walk in this world. This is what the believer is in themselves. The believer's standing is perfect but their practice is imperfect. God's will is that our practice or earthly life should increasingly correspond to our position as seated with Christ in heaven (Eph 2: 4-6). The believer will never do so perfectly until he or she is in heaven. But the process of sanctification, growth and increasing Christlikeness should be going on continually while we are here on earth. When we understand the difference between the believers standing (being in Christ in heaven) and his or her state or practice (lifestyle) it enables us to understand God's plan and harmonizes seemingly opposing verses. The following is a chart of the two:

CHRISTIAN'S STANDING/POSITION - STATE /PRACTICE

- * Believers are perfect (Heb 10:14) - Should be perfect (Mt 5:28)
- *Believers are dead to sin (Rm 6:2) -Should reckon themselves dead to sin (Rom 6:11)
- *Believers are a Holy Nation (1 Pet2:9)-Should be Holy (1 Pet 1:15)

The "Standing" is what we are in Christ-The "State" is what we
Is what we should be
In ourselves.

Someone has said that the first part of the picture pictures the believer in heaven and the second views the believer in the kitchen.

GALATIANS 5: 19-24' THE WORKS (SINS) OF THE FLESH

Walking by the Holy Spirit means avoiding certain things, things that characterize the flesh i.e., our "old nature". Paul provides a representative list:

- *Adultery - unfaithful in marriage
 - * Fornication - unlawful sexual intercourse
 - *Uncleanness - moral evil, sensuality
 - *Idolatry - Witchcraft, the Greek word used is related to drugs (Pharmakeia) because drugs are used in socery.
 - *Hatred - string feeling of malice towards individuals
 - *Contentions - discord, variance, quarrels
 - *Jealousies - distrust, suspicions
 - *Wrath - outbursts of hot anger or passions
 - *Selfish ambitions - self-centered strivings to be "number one"
 - *Dissentions - separations caused by disagreements
 - *Heresies - Sects formed by men with self-willed opinions
 - *Envy - Sinful desire for what others have or obtained
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- *Murder – Unlawful killing of others
- *Drunkenness – intoxication caused by strong drink
- *Revelries – Riotous gatherings for entertainment accompanied by drunkenness.

Paul warns that those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God (v 21:6). Paul says elsewhere (1 Tim 8,9) that law is needed to regulate the ungodly life. The virtuous go above the requirements of the Law and are not obligated to live by it for Justification nor Sanctification.

GALATIANS 5:22,23 – CHRISTIAN CHARACTER IS PRODUCED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT NOT 'BY SELF-EFFORT – IT IS THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

Fruit is grown as a branch abides in the vine (Jn.15:5). The Holy Spirit produces one kind of fruit that is Christlikeness. It is often noted that “fruit” is singular, not plural. Dr. C.I. Scofield points out that everyone of them is foreign to the human heart. The fruit of the Spirit is listed as:

- *Love – What God is.
- *Joy – Contentment and satisfaction with God and His gracious dealings with us.
- *Peace – With God and with fellow believers
- *Long-Suffering – Patient in afflictions, annoyances and persecution.
- *Kindness–Gentleness, goodness.
- *Goodness – Kindness shown to others.
- *Faithfulness – Trust in God, fidelity and reliability.
- *Gentleness – Taking the lowly place.
- *Self-Control – Holding oneself in especially regarding sex.

Scofield further says: “Christian character is not merely ‘moral or legal correctness but the possession of these nine graces.”

The nine grace are oft classified thusly:

Love, Joy, Peace – Character as an inward state

Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness – Character in expression
toward man.

Faith, Meekness, Self-Control – Character as expressed toward
God.

Taken together these nine graces represent a moral picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. This character is possible for the believer because of the vital union with Christ (Jn 15:5; 1 Cor 12:12,13; and is wholly the fruit of the Spirit in believers who are yielded to Him (Gal 5:22,23)

GALATIANS 6:1-10 –FULFILLING THE LAW OF CHRIST (HIS TEACHING

*Helping a fellow believer who sins and an overburdened 'believer all without feelings of superiority but 'humbly without conceit.

*One will reap what one sows.

*One needs to examine oneself as to their practice

GALATIANS 6: 18 – THE CONCLUSION-SUMMARY AND FAREWELL

6: 11 – Big Letters

6:12,13- The Legalists motives

6: 14,15 –The meaning of the Cross

6:15 – A New Creation

6: 16-18 – A blessing

Paul started his letter with Grace and he concludes it with Grace.

Blessings!
