



The Epistle to the Galatians

Paul's Epistle to the Galatians



The story so far...

- Paul had planted churches in Galatia
- They had received him joyfully
- But then legalists had started to ‘infiltrate’
- *“Have you ever noticed that church strife—in fact, even split-ups—have their roots in some form of legalism?”*
 - Chuck Missler
- Note: Paul’s letter to the Galatians is actually an instruction manual for us today!
- It was this book that sparked the reformation

The story so far...

- Paul then writes this letter to challenge the Galatians believers
 - 1. How could you so quickly turn away
 - 2. You once trusted me, what has changed?
 - 3. The Law cannot save, it only condemns
 - 4. No system of man will make you righteous
 - 5. If you adopt any part of the Law, Christ will profit you nothing
 - 6. If you adopt any part of the Law, you are a debtor to the whole Law!
 - 7. Christ has done it ALL. Rejoice in this liberty!

The story so far...

- However we now have an important question to settle:
- If Christ has paid for all our sin, past present and future...
- ...and if we have now been adopted as Son's
- What's to stop us living however we please?
 - This is a stumbling block to legalists!
 - This is the offense of the gospel

‘Restrained Liberty’

- Liberty is the power of choosing, thinking, and acting for oneself; freedom from control or restriction

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Galatians 5:13

- So our \$Million dollar question is...
- When is restraint not restraint?

'Restrained Liberty'

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For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

Galatians 5:13

- So our \$Million dollar question is...
- When is restraint not restraint?
- **Answer: When it's by choice!**

Love and The Law

*Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore
love is the fulfilling of the law.*

Romans 13:10

Love and The Law

He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.

Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

1 John 2:6-7

Love and The Law

And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

1 John 3:23

- But the Law had always taught us to 'love thy neighbor'
- So what is different now?

The Difference

Again, **a new commandment** I write unto you,
which thing is true in him and in you: because
the darkness is past, and the true light now
shineth.

1 John 2:8

- There was a time when we (the world) was in darkness...
- ...but now the Light of the glorious gospel of Christ has come

Love and Grace

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

John 13:34-35

- Christ's love for us is the most powerful and wonderful demonstration of Grace!

Love and Grace

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:10

- Grace flows from God to us...
- ...and from us to each other.
- Grace is undeserved favour

Love and Grace

We love him, because he first loved us.

1 John 4:19

Love and Grace

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

1 John 3:16

- Do we have a sacrificial love for each other yet?

Love and Grace

He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

1 John 2:10-11

- Love for each other keeps us in the Light
- If we are in the Light we will not stumble

The background of the slide is a historical map of the Roman Empire, showing various provinces and geographical features. The map is rendered in a dark, muted color palette with some highlights. Overlaid on this map is the title 'The Epistle to the Galatians' in a large, bold, yellow font. The word 'Galatians' is significantly larger than 'The Epistle to the'.

The Epistle to the Galatians

Chapter 5

Verse 15-26

*But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed
that ye be not consumed one of another.*

Galatians 5:15

- The followers of the legalists and those who remained steadfast were biting and devouring each other.
- Is there ever anything big enough to divide us?
- The only thing that divides is Pride!
- Where was the love in their actions?
 - Remember that we are not here to make converts to our point of view!

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**.

As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be **accursed**.

Galatians 1:8,9

- *This is the ONLY cause for division*
- Paul is clear regarding anyone who proclaims a gospel contrary to the Gospel of Grace
- Any 'gospel' that relies on works of the flesh (i.e. 'you have to do something') is an affront to God

Four Contrasts

Chapters 5 & 6

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------|
| 1) Liberty | Not Bondage | 5:1–15 |
| 2) The Spirit | Not the Flesh | 5:16–26 |
| 3) Others, | Not Self | 6:1–10 |
| 4) God's Glory, | Not Man's Approval | 6:11–18 |

(The words “flesh” and “Spirit” are each found ten times in **Chapters 5–6.**)

The Battle

“For we naturally love to do evil things that are just the opposite from the things that the Holy Spirit tells us to do; and the good things we want to do when the Spirit has his way with us are just the opposite of our natural desires. These two forces within us are constantly fighting each other to win control over us, and our wishes are never free from their pressures”.

J B Phillips: The Living Bible

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16

- The life of Grace is maintained by our constant fellowship with the Holy Spirit
- Remember the Greatest commandment:
 - Love the LORD your God... **Matt 22:37**
- The verb '*peripateite*' *present imperative active*:
- Literally, "keep on walking."

*This I say then, **Walk** in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

Galatians 5:16

- We should depend on the indwelling Holy Spirit for guidance and power.
- But notice that the instruction intends for us to be pro-active
- The Spirit does not operate automatically in a our hearts. He waits to be depended on.
- This is the because the basis of this relationship is love.
- He will not force us to walk with Him

*This I say then, **Walk** in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

Galatians 5:16

- If the Holy Spirit 'forced' or 'coerced' us into walking with Him, we would not be counted as free moral agents.
- But we now have this liberty. And with that liberty we have to want to choose to walk with the Spirit
- Love is never a result of compulsion...
- But the fruit of a heart that has been won!

*This I say then, **Walk** in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

Galatians 5:16

- There is no mention in Scripture of the sanctification of the old nature.
- Our heart is never cleansed: it is replaced with a new one. (see Psalm 51)
- So while a believer will never be entirely free in this life from the evil desires that stem from the fallen human nature, we need not *capitulate* to them, but may experience victory by the Spirit's help.

The Life of Grace

*Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;
for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin,
because he is born of God.*

1 John 3:9

- When we are born again a new life begins in us...
- But we must nurture and feed that life
- It is that life that loves God and loves the things of God
- It loves fellowship with the people of God!

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16

- When a Christian willingly yields to the Spirit's control, we have the promise that we will not in gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

Our Great Ally

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Isaiah 40:29-30

Our Great Ally

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.

James 4:7-8

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Galatians 5:17

- People in the world think they are free, but they are simply slaves to the flesh, and are powerless to break free
- Children of God have been liberated and we now have the freedom to choose!
- We can choose the flesh – and be miserable!
- Or walk in the Spirit and know the abundant life that Jesus promised His own

No Middle Ground!

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

Romans 6:16

- Why did Jesus establish two ordinances?
 - Baptism & Communion
- Baptism: to remind us that we have died to the old life and are now risen with Christ
- Communion: to remind us that it is the love of Christ that constrains us,

Baptism

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:1-3

Communion

Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

1 Corinthians 10:21-23

But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

Galatians 5:18

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which
are *these*, Adultery, fornication, uncleanness,
lasciviousness,
Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations,
wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and
such like: of the which I tell you before, as I
have also told *you* in time past, that they which
do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of
God.

Galatians 5:19-21

The Works of the Flesh

- Adultery Unfaithfulness in marriage
 - Fornication 'porneia' = sexual sin
 - Uncleanliness Immoral behaviour/thought
 - Lasciviousness Shamelessness
-
- Why are these sexual sins listed first?
 - Because we are told:

The Works of the Flesh

Every sin that a man doeth is without the body;
but he that commiteth fornication sinneth
against his own body.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple
of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye
have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify
God in your body, and in your spirit, which are
God's.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

The Works of the Flesh

- Idolatry Worship of false gods
 - Witchcraft 'Pharmakeia' (Altered states)
 - Hatred Hostility (toward God)
 - Variance Dissention (an act of will)
-
- This is our second group, and all have to do with defiance against God.
 - All of these will be seen in abundance during the Tribulation as men recognise that the judgment coming upon them is from God, but will choose to rebel against Him

The Works of the Flesh

- Emulations Jealousy (aimed at another)
- Wrath Outbursts of temper
- Strife Seeking to put others down
- Seditions Sowing intentional discord
- Heresies Factions ('clicks')
- Our third group all have to do with unseen attitudes toward others, and all come from within
- Jeremiah tells us the heart is deceitful above all things and incurably wicked (17:9)

The Works of the Flesh

- Envyings Spiteful intent to another
- Murder Devaluing of life
- Drunkenness Abuse of the flesh and mind
- Revellings Wantonness (no control)
- The forth and final group speak of the total depravity of man – this is how low humanity – created in the image & likeness of God – can sink as a result of sin
- This was the state of the world before the flood, and will be again “as it was in the days of Noah...”

and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:21

- This implies that the list is only representative and not exhaustive...

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and
such like: of the which I tell you before, as I
have also told you in time past, that they which
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Galatians 5:21

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Galatians 5:21

- Of course this applies to the world who live like this...
- But what is the implication to a believer who choses to live like this?

Eternal Consequences

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for
whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also
reap.

For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh
reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit
shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Galatians 6:7-8

Eternal Consequences

- ‘Entrance to the kingdom’ and ‘Inheriting the kingdom’ are not the same thing.
- Inheritance in both the OT & NT is a reward for faithfulness
 - OT: Esau; Reuben; et al lost their inheritance
 - NT: Prodigal Son lost his inheritance
 - But never lost his sonship
- This is not an issue of Salvation
 - You cannot earn or therefore forfeit Salvation
- This is an issue of Rewards
 - 2 Cor 5:10 / 1 Cor 3:11-15 / Matt 6:20

Eternal Consequences

Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

2 John 8

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- Notice the contrast: the “works” of the flesh **Gal 5:19** vs. the “fruit” of the spirit **Gal 5:22**
- The word “fruit” is singular, indicating that these qualities constitute a unity, all of which should be found in a believer who lives walking with the Spirit.

cf. 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 1:21

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
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law.*

Galatians 5:22,23

- It is important to observe that the fruit here described is not produced by the believer, but by the Holy Spirit working through a Christian who is in vital union with Christ

cf. John 15:1-8

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- Three groups:
 - 1) **Personal fruit:** love, joy, peace
 - 2) **Outreaching fruit:** longsuffering, gentleness, goodness;
 - 3) **Up-reaching fruit:** faith, meekness, temperance.

But the fruit of the Spirit is **love**, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
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Galatians 5:22,23

- **Love** (*agape*) is listed first because it is the foundation

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- Joy (*chara*) is a deep and abiding inner rejoicing which was promised to those who abide in Christ
cf. John 15:11
- It does not depend on circumstances because it rests in God's sovereign control of all things
cf. Rom. 8:28
- "The joy of the Lord is your strength."
Neh 8:10.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- **Peace** (*eirene*) is again a gift of Christ
cf. John 14:27
- It is an inner repose and quietness, even in
the face of adverse circumstances; it defies
human understanding cf. Phil. 4:7

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- The second triad reaches out to others, fortified by love, joy, and peace.
- **Longsuffering** (*makrothymia*) is the quality of forbearance under provocation
2 Cor 6:6; Col 1:11; 3:12
- It entertains no thoughts of retaliation even when wrongfully treated.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- **Gentleness, kindness** (*chrestotes*) is benevolence in action such as God demonstrated toward men.
- Since God is kind toward sinners...
cf. Rom. 2:4; Eph. 2:7
a Christian should display the same virtue
cf. 2 Cor. 6:6; Col. 3:12

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, **goodness**, faith,
Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- **Goodness** (*agathosynei*) may be thought of both as an uprightness of soul and as an action reaching out to others to do good even when it is not deserved.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, **faith,**

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- The final three graces guide the general conduct of a believer who is led by the Spirit.
- **Without Faith** (*pistis*) it is impossible to please God!
- Faith is not wishful thinking!
- It is the assurance in our hearts put there by the indwelling Holy Spirit
 - And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us (Romans 5:5).

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- **Meekness** (*prautes*) marks a person who is
submissive to God's Word
and who is considerate of others when
discipline is needed

James 1:21

– “gently”

Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim. 2:25

– “gentle”

1 Cor. 4:21; Eph. 4:2

– “gentleness”

Col. 3:12; 1 Peter 3:16

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
Meekness, **temperance**: against such there is no
law.

Galatians 5:22,23

- **Temperance, self-control** (*enkrateia*) denotes 'self-mastery' (surrender of self) and primarily relates to curbing the fleshly impulses just described.
- All of this is the work of the Holy Spirit

The Work of the Spirit

- Not mere moral or legal correctness
 - We are no longer just obeying a set of rules
- The possession and manifestation of the God Grace as seen in the fruit He places within us is summed up in Paul's statement...

The Work of the Spirit

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Galatians 5:24

- It is a settled thing.
 - (lit., “those who are of Christ Jesus”) need not be responsive to the sinful nature because they have crucified it.
- Note: This does not refer to self-crucifixion or self-mortification.
- Rather, it refers to the fact that by means of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Christians are identified with Christ in His death and resurrection.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Galatians 5:24

- So victory over the sinful nature's passions and desires has been provided by Christ in His death.
- Faith must continually lay hold of this truth or a believer will be tempted to try to secure victory by self-effort.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Galatians 5:25

- Works of the old nature must be overcome by
 - Walking in the Spirit **v.16**
 - Led of the Spirit **v.18**
 - Living in the Spirit **v.25**
- We are saved by grace, justified by grace, kept by grace, and in the end, will be transformed forever by grace!
- “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”

Rom 10:4

*Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking
one another, envying one another.*

Galatians 5:26

- The proverbial question: “Is it OK to _____?”
(Fill in the blank with whatever)...
- Rather: Is _____ honoring to God?
What are its fruits?

Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Galatians 5:26

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Titus 2:12,13

In Closing

- Note that Paul uses three pleas as he beseeches these Christians to live lives of holiness by the grace of God:
 - God the Father has called them v.13
 - God the Son has died for them v.4
 - God the Holy Spirit indwells them vv.16–23
- *Each Person of the Trinity is assisting us in our battle against the flesh.*

Next Session

- Read Galatians 6.



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