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GALATIANS

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INTRODUCTION:

Paul writes these letter to the churches in southern Galatia. The churches in southern Galatia were founded on Paul's First Missionary Journey. There were false teachers (called Judaizers) teaching a double error— (1) that a person was saved partly by faith and partly by works, and (2) that a person grew in Christ partly by faith and partly by his own effort. These legalists had vigorously discredited and denounced Paul and his gospel and had persuaded many to turn away from Christianity to Judaism. Paul sets forth grace as opposed to law, faith as opposed to works, and spirit as opposed to flesh.

1:1-5 There were those in the church who questioned Paul's call and ministry; questioned if he had really been called by God to be a minister. Paul answered his critics in no uncertain terms by letting them know in his greeting to them that he is an apostle—not of men and neither by man, but it was by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Jesus from the dead. Paul and all the brethren with him send greetings to the Galatian church in his letter, speaking grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He reminds them that Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world. It was the Will of God and our Father to whom glory is due for ever and ever. In this greeting Paul proclaims the work of Christ:

1. The Message—Christ gave Himself for our sins.
2. The Purpose—To deliver us from this present evil world.
3. The Reason—God so willed it.
4. The Result—God is praised; glory for ever and ever.

1:6 **I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:**—Some of the Galatians were following false teachers (non believers of the gospel) and as a result the believers began to turn to false gospel. Thereby, Paul says that he was amazed that some had so quickly turned away from Christ who called them by the grace of Christ and then they turned to a different; another gospel. If you turn away from something so quickly you believed in, did you really believe? There are people today that have been in the church all their lives knowing Jesus saved them, and turn to something that they think they have to do works to be saved. It is not so unusual because it's still happening.

1:7 **Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.** This is not to say that there is another gospel, because there is only one true gospel by which man can be saved. Paul knew that there were some that troubled them and that perverted the gospel of Christ. Paul lets the Galatians know that there is an enemy out there that would want to and is perverting the true gospel of Christ. Don't be threatened by the false teachers. There is not a different gospel that presents Jesus or His grace or a way to be saved or a picture of God's love that would be acceptable to God for them to turn to.

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1:8 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. This is a strong statement because the gospel is the means by which men are saved. Therefore, Paul tells them that if they or even an angel from heaven preach any other gospel that contradicts the gospel Paul and his associates preached, then let him be accursed (under a curse).

1:9 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. Paul repeats what he has said before. So, if anyone is preaching a different gospel; contradicts the good news they've already received, then let there be a curse upon him. This would be an appeal to their very souls for no one would want to have a curse placed upon them.

1:10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. Critics of Paul and false teachers had arisen in the churches of Galatia. They were saying that Paul's call and the gospel he preached was false. Also saying, he was not a true minister of God; he was a self-made minister who was only using the ministry for a livelihood and other greedy purposes. Remember, when there is a call upon your life men will say all kinds of things to deter you away from what God told you, to frustrate you. Remember, this is only a test! They said that he was not a true apostle of the Lord Jesus because he had not been a follower of the Lord when the Lord was upon the earth. Note the word **"now."** Paul was saying that there was a time when he was a man-pleaser, a time when he sought the favor and approval of men instead of God. But, no more, was he still pleasing men. He was now seeking to please God and God alone. Also note the words **"yet"** and **"still"** if he yet pleases men, then he should not be the servant of Christ. Therefore, if he was lying, then he was not a true minister of the gospel.

1:11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. Paul continues to tell; informs them; makes known to them with a strong declaration to the brethren that...

- The gospel he preaches was not a man-made gospel or created by man.

1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- The gospel Paul preached he did not receive it of man. It was not a taught message, not a message which he had learned from any man. It was not handed down to him by tradition.
- The gospel Paul preached was given to him by a direct revelation from Jesus Christ. **"Revelation"** means a truth that is shared by God to man, a truth that man never knew.

1:13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:— Paul deals with what they had heard about him; what kept turning up about his custom, conduct, or manner of life. Paul tells them yes you've heard of his conversation in time past; his former life when he followed the Jewish religion; how he went after the Christians mercilessly, hunting them down and doing his best to get rid of them.

1. Paul had been the first arch-persecutor of the church. This meant that he continually, persistently, and violently kept on ravaging the church. He had been an inflamed man who struck more than anyone else against the early believers by persecuting the church of God and trying to wash it out; bring havoc to it; destroy it, and root it out.

1:14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more

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exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

2. Paul had been the supreme example of being exceedingly zealous; being the most religious Jews of his own age. He declared that he had profited (surpassed) in the Jewish religion above and beyond what others had done. Profiting in this term meant advancing, pushing forward, and outstripping all others in power and prestige. His focus and fanatic extremism (fanaticism) had been placed upon religion and its traditions of the religious leaders; rituals, and ceremonies and not upon God. Before his conversion he had been even more zealous for the law than the Judaizers were. He was sincere in his zeal—but wrong.

1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,—

Paul says it pleased God to call him into His grace. When he was separated from his mother's womb, no matter what his past life was, God had a call upon his life. **The point is:** God had Paul in mind even before Paul's birth. Paul's call and ministry were not due to Paul, but to God and His grace. God had his eyes on Paul throughout all he had done. And He knew Paul would answer the right call for God's grace would separate him.

1. God called Paul by grace.

1:16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:— God called Paul to be the vessel to reveal His Son, Jesus Christ.

2. God called Paul to reveal His Son (Jesus) in him. We are chosen to fellowship and commune with the Lord more and more and to let Him be seen in us more and more. The believer is a mere vessel in and through whom Jesus Christ lives.
3. God called Paul to preach Him (Christ) to the heathen (Gentiles). This is to say that believers are not only called to know Christ, but also to make Christ known to others. We must preach and bear witness of Christ.
4. God called Paul to seek His gospel from God alone. This does not mean, of course, that ministers are not to learn from others; it means that ministers are not to proclaim the gospel of men. God has given us the gospel to study and preach. It is His message; it comes from Him, not man's message that the world needs.

Upon being called, Paul said he did not immediately confer with flesh and blood; human beings on how to do this. Paul received his commission from God, and there was no need to consult man. He had no need of man's advice. Paul is establishing his dependence upon God and his independence from man. Flesh and blood suggests human weakness and ignorance and represents human as opposed to divine wisdom, Man could not add anything to God's revelation.

1:17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia,—

Paul had just been converted, and his conversion was a most dramatic experience on the "Damascus Road." And after being called, Paul said that he neither went to Jerusalem to see the apostles who were (came) before him. He **first** he went into Arabia, a wilderness desert that stretched E. of Damascus down to the Sinai Peninsula. Since all of this was new to him, he had a dire need to get alone with God. He did not need the counsel and help of men. He needed the presence and help of God and His Spirit. He already knew the Scriptures. He had studied them at the feet of the greatest religious teachers of his day, but he had not known God nor Christ, not in a personal way. What he had known about God had been twisted and corrupted, misapplied, and misled. He desperately needed...

- time to learn how to fellowship with Christ in daily worship (devotions, quiet time).

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- time to learn how to walk in the presence and communion and fellowship of Christ all day,
- time to learn the commandments and Will of Christ.
- time to learn how to live with Christ day by day, drawing confidence and strength from Him.
- time to accurately handle the Word of Truth (the Scriptures).
- time to think through how to go about making Christ known to a world steeped in dire need and sin and darkness.

Paul went in the direction Jesus led him to go.

1:17b ...and returned again unto Damascus. After being prepared for ministry by the Lord, he later returned to minister in Damascus. Remember this is where the Lord confronted "**Saul**" on "**The Road to Damascus**." So, Saul having dual names: *The Hebrew name is Saul* and *the Roman name is Paul*. Hearing the name Saul caused many to flee for their lives. It was his intent to go back to Damascus to correct the wrong he had previously done to the believers in Damascus; and for them to see him in a different light. So, using his Roman name Paul was one way to connect with him, because he wanted to assure them that he had been saved and to share Christ among the very people he had been so bent on destroying. There is nowhere in the bible that God changed his name from Saul to Paul.

1:18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. Apparently Paul spent about three years in Arabia, then returned to Damascus, and third he goes up to Jerusalem to see Peter, spending 15 days there with him. The last time Saul was in Jerusalem was to get papers from the high priest to go slaughter the disciples of the Lord; the Christians (Acts 9:1) in Damascus. Now, Saul/ Paul finds himself back in Jerusalem now as a Christian. He went to see the apostle Peter. We also have to see that Paul went back to Jerusalem to face his past. He was well known there, and he had friends in Jerusalem, and he knew that some of his former friends would consider him a betrayer to their religion and cause. By seeing Peter, Paul felt that many of the believers would know that he had been truly converted and thereby be ready to accept him and his ministry. Imagine the sharing that must have taken place between Paul and Peter.

- Paul had to have shared his past, his conversion, and his experiences with the Lord in Arabia.
- And Peter had to have shared the life of Christ while on earth.

Paul wanted to show that he had not learned the gospel from men. He had received it from the Lord Himself. He was a true apostle and minister of the Lord

1:19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Paul saw no other Christian except James, the Lord's brother who was pastor of the great Jerusalem church.

1:20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Paul's enemies had accused him of being a slick talker. Therefore as Paul is relating his journeys to the Galatians, he writes as if he is in the very presence of God, saying "**behold, before God, I lie not.**" God was His true witness.

1:21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;— Fourth Paul went to Syria and Cilicia, that is, Tarsus (the capital in Asia Minor) to face his hometown. Tarsus was where Paul's family lived and where his childhood friends were. His desire now would be to share Christ with as many of his family and friends as he could.

1:22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:— Paul lets them know

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that he was personally unknown to the Christian churches of Judea. They hadn't seen him preach; didn't know how he looked.

1:23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. All they knew about him was what people were saying, that their former enemy which in times past had persecuted them, and now he is preaching the faith he tried to wreck.

1:24 And they glorified God in me. Although the churches of Judea had never seen Paul, they glorified the God in him because of the strong testimony about which they had heard.

SUMMARY:

Paul says that he was amazed that some had so quickly turned away from Christ who called them by the grace of Christ and then they turned to a different; another gospel. There is not a different gospel that presents Jesus or His grace or a way to be saved or a picture of God's love that would be acceptable to God for them to turn to. Therefore, Paul tells them that if they or even an angel from heaven preach any other gospel that contradicts the gospel Paul and his associates preached, then let him be accursed (under a curse). Paul repeats what he has said before. So, if anyone is preaching a different gospel; contradicts the good news they've already received, then let there be a curse upon him (**Galatians 1:6-9**).

Paul begins with a question in his defense concerning of now persuading men or God?, or do he seek to please men?, for if he pleased men, he should not be the servant of Christ. But he certifies to the, brethren, that the gospel which he preached was not after man, neither received from man, neither was he taught it by man, but it was given to him by a direct revelation from Jesus Christ. Now, Paul deals with what they had heard about him; his former life, in past times when he followed the Jewish religion; how he went after the Christians mercilessly, hunting them down and doing his best to get rid of them; how he profited (surpassed) in the Jewish religion above and beyond what others had done, and exceedingly zealously following all the old traditional rules of the fathers. Paul says it pleased God to call him into His grace. God was the One who separated Paul from his mother's womb and called him to reveal His Son in him, that he might preach Christ among the Gentiles and immediately Paul did not confer with flesh and blood (**1:10-16**).

Paul didn't collaborate with the other apostles who were before him. He has worked independently from them. In fact, his contact with them has been minimal. He did not visit them until three years after his conversion; and then he spent only 15 days with Peter in Jerusalem in order to get acquainted with him. On that trip to Jerusalem, the only other apostle he saw was James. After that time he remained unknown by face to the churches in Judea. But they kept hearing, "*He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy.*" However, they glorified the God in Paul. It was a long time before Paul met again with the apostles in Jerusalem (**1:17-24**).

[TOP](#)

**SYNOPSIS:**

2:1-10 —¹Fourteen years after Paul's conversion he goes to Jerusalem to meet with the church leaders seeking to get their endorsement of his ministry to the Gentiles (**2:1-6**). The men who evaluated Paul's ministry were James (the half brother of Jesus), Cephas (Peter) and John who were the main pillars of the Church. After listening to his presentation they recognized that God had given different areas of ministry to different men. In this case there is only one Gospel but two different areas of ministry. James, Peter, and John would go to the Jews of the circumcision (**2:7**) and Paul along with Barnabas would go to the Gentiles of the uncircumcision or heathen (**2:7-9**). Only one stipulation was made, and that was that they were to remember the poor, which was the very thing they were eager to do anyway (**2:10**).

Compromise is an important element in getting along with others but we should never compromise the truth of God's Word. As a Christian we need to understand that:

- I. Every member in God's family is important.
- II. Everyone is gifted and prompted by the Lord to reach different kinds of people.
- III. Everyone who knows the Lord needs our acceptance.

2:11-14 —Apparently, sometime after the meeting described in the previous verses, Peter came from Jerusalem to Antioch (**2:11**). At first he mingled freely with the Gentiles, enjoying their fellowship. Then some men from Jerusalem arrived who were following strict Jewish traditions. They considered those who did not comply with Jewish ceremonial cleanliness and circumcision to be unclean. Peter was an impulsive man. He could show amazing faith and courage one minute, and fail completely the next. Peter who was not afraid to preach the Gospel before unbelievers suddenly becomes fearful of this peer pressure and withdrew from his Gentile friends (**2:12**). Not only did he exhibit a hypocritical attitude but he led Barnabas and others astray with him (**2:13**). Paul sees this as a threat to Christian freedom, so he confronts Peter about this inconsistency before everyone (*publicly*) (**2:14**). By Peter's actions, he was displaying that Christ was not sufficient.

Paul's words must have stung Peter as he said, *"you are a Jew, yet you have been living like a Gentile. The law cannot save us; but after we have become Christians, it can guide us to live as God requires. Now you want the Gentiles to live like Jews. What kind of inconsistency is that?"* Three Biblical principles we can glean from this are:

- I. We are to be accountable to one another.
- II. What we do has an effect on others.
- III. Our commitment to truth cannot be merely intellectual but must be lived.

2:15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, — Paul continues by saying, **"We"**, meaning, Paul, Peter and Barnabas, and the rest of the Jews at Antioch were Jews by birth, were descended of

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/galatians-21/>
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Jewish parents, and from their infancy were brought up in the Jewish religion, and under the law of Moses, and in the observance of it, with special privileges and prerogatives. **"We"** were the ones brought up as law-keeping Jews, not as law-neglecting Gentiles. The Gentile sinners did not attempt to follow the Old Testament laws. Paul goes on to let Peter know that, **"We"** know better; we weren't guilty of the flagrant and constant neglect of the Jewish dietary laws; the Gentiles neither knew nor kept the rigorous legal requirements of Jewish life, so they were all automatically in the category of "sinners."

2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. Paul is reminding Peter and the others, that even though they had been Jews, they had to come to Christ through faith, not works. The Judaizers did not believe this. They proclaimed that salvation is done by hard work. That means they observe the law justifying them over Christ justifying them. Why is it that a man can never be justified, nor secure righteousness by works and law?—Why is it that a man can never approach God by works and law? Some need to know this. There are two ways that a man can secure righteousness and approach God. He can **try on his works of the law** or he can **believe in Jesus Christ**.

1. A man can do this only if he can keep the law perfectly, never breaking it once, and never violating it a single time. Only if he can make sure that every single thing he ever does or thinks is perfectly good and righteous and pure. Only if he can please God in every act, word and thought, never displeasing God in anything. Only if a man can do this, can he secure righteousness, works, and law. However, this is very impossible to do. A person may try, but he can never achieve this kind of perfection! However...
2. A man can do this **by believing that Jesus Christ is God's gift of righteousness to the world**; that God so loved the world, that
 - a. He gave His Son to live a perfect life upon earth in order to secure the Perfect and Ideal Righteousness for man; that
 - b. He gave His Son to take the unrighteousness of man upon Himself and to die for man, that is, to bear the judgment of unrighteousness for man; that he gave His Son to arise from the dead for man in order to conquer death, hell, and the grave, and to give man a new and perfect life that is eternal.
 - i. A man can believe that God loves him and takes his faith in Christ and counts it as righteousness.
 - ii. A man can believe that God loves him and accepts him because he honors His Son Jesus Christ.
 - iii. And lastly: A man can believe that God loves His Son so much that He will take any man who honors His Son and do anything for him. (*"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast"* Eph.2:8-9).

"Justification" is the judicial act of God whereby He declares righteous those who trust in Christ. It is the reversal of His attitude toward the sinner because of the sinner's new relationship to Christ. This means that all the guilt and penalty of the believer is removed forever (*Rom.8:1—"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"*). The perfect righteousness of Christ is imputed (credited) to US! It's No longer from the works of the law. Jesus is our perfect righteousness! It's not on man's fleshly deeds of obedience to the law— **It's all by faith we have In Jesus Christ!**

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NOTE: Faith is not the ground of justification—grace is! It is not faith in our faith but faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is wholly by divine mercy (Tit.3:5) and not by human merit. **...even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law:** Even the Jews with all their privileges are no better than the Gentiles. Their law was inadequate and insufficient to bring them into a right relationship with God. Therefore, it was necessary for Jews to believe in Christ in order to be justified. **...for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.** Since no flesh, Jews or Gentile could ever be justified by the works of the law, how ridiculous it is to bind the burden of law/works on the Gentiles who were already justified by faith in Christ. The order is: knowing, believing, justified.

2:17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. ²It was an admission on the part of Jewish Christians that justification by works proves that they are sinners. Their failure in keeping the law forces them to admit their sinful condition. So, they did not find righteousness in keeping the law. Here's Paul's brilliant answer: **First, "yes, we seek to be justified by Christ, and not by Jesus plus our own works."**

³It is utterly crucial that you see what Paul is admitting, and what he is denying. He is admitting first that he and Peter and other Jewish Christians are seeking justification not in works of law but only in Christ (*in what Christ did at the cross*). And he is admitting secondly, that in doing this they become "*sinners*." -*Because we cannot keep God's laws perfectly*. Yes, we are found to be "*sinners*" in this sense. That's what he admits.

But he denies emphatically that this makes Christ an agent/minister of sin. Yes, we ourselves also are found sinners, that is, we acknowledge that we still sin even though we stand justified by Christ. But no, this certainly does not make Jesus the author or approver of sin in our lives. If God declares a person right in His eyes by faith, does this make Christians lawless? Legalists argued, "*If Christ does away with the law for salvation and sanctification then that would make Christ lawless.*" But Paul denies emphatically that this makes Christ an agent of sin. Why? - Because Christ dealt with the sin issue on the cross. Christ is not the agent of sin. He is the agent/minister of freedom; Freedom for God and freedom for love. That's Paul's answer to the Judaizers: Christ is the Only One who freed us from the works of law!

2:18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. Paul's answer is that if he were to build again those things which he had torn down, then he would prove himself a transgressor." What had Paul torn down? He had torn down the law as a means of justification. Therefore, if he now builds a way to God through keeping the Law of Moses, then he would make himself a transgressor.

Essentially, Paul says "*There is more sin in trying to find acceptance before God by our law-keeping than there is sin in everyday life as a Christian.*" A "*transgressor*" is someone who crosses over a line or standard. Paul would violate the standard of grace if he reverted to the law.

- i. ⁴These certain men from James thought they had to hang on to the Law — for themselves and for Gentiles — so there wouldn't be so much sin. What Paul shows is that by putting themselves under the law again, they are sinning worse than ever!
- ii. How is it a sin to build again a way to God through the Law of Moses? Well, in many ways, but

² <http://versebyversecommentary.com/galatians/galatians-217/>

³ <http://www.soundofgrace.com/piper83/030683.htm>

⁴ <http://new.studyight.org/com/guz/view.cgi?bk=47&ch=2&vs=undefined>

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perhaps the greatest is that it looks at Jesus, hanging on the cross, taking the punishment we deserved, bearing the wrath of God for us, and says to Him, *"That's all very nice, but it isn't enough. Your work on the cross won't be good enough before God until I'm circumcised and eat kosher."* **What an Insult to the Son of God!**

- ii. Of course, this is the great tragedy of legalism. In trying to be more right with God, they end up being less right with God. This was exactly the situation of the Pharisees that opposed Jesus so much during His years of earthly ministry. Paul knew this thinking well, having been a Pharisee himself (Acts 23:6).

2:19 For I through the law am dead to the law, —Paul makes a bold statement, by using himself, saying that *"I have died to the law."* If he is dead to the law, then it is impossible for the law to be the way he stands accepted by God. It was the law that demanded Christ's death for our sin because God cannot tolerate sin of any kind.

⁵If ever a man tried to be saved by keeping the law, it was Paul. Philippians 3 tells us how hard he worked to earn God's favor. He was a *"Hebrew of the Hebrews,"* a trained Pharisee, a learned doctor of the law, and a man zealous to keep every commandment so that he might earn God's favor. He was far beyond his contemporaries in terms of outward obedience. If salvation came by keeping the rules, Paul had it made. He was going to heaven for sure. Then he met Christ and everything changed. Once Christ transformed his life, he looked back at his self-righteous law keeping and concluded that it was dung compared with the joy of knowing Christ personally. All those things he tried to do to commend himself to God utterly failed. They failed not because they were bad but because they could not change his heart. Outward obedience can never change human nature. Paul needed something the law could not provide—he needed a new heart. The law put him to death in the sense that it left him utterly condemned and guilty in the eyes of God. It proved him to be a sinner but it could not provide new life.

Not only are we dead through the law, we are dead to the law. *"To die to the law is to renounce it and to be freed from its dominion, so that we have no confidence in it and it does not hold us captive under the yoke of slavery."* (Calvin).

2:19b ...that I might live unto God —What the law could not do, Christ has done for us. Rule keeping produces guilt and leaves us dead in the road. But when Christ enters, we find new life. To be alive unto God means that we no longer live for self, but instead we live for God's glory. Once you come to Christ, you're a brand-new person. You can never go back to the old person you used to be. You can try, but you won't like it. You won't be happy. You won't be satisfied.

A believer is justified by living for God. He lives for God by doing four things.

1. **The believer lives for God by dying to the law.** The law shows a man that he is a sinner and that he comes ever so short of perfection and righteousness.

Paul thought God would accept him because of his law-keeping. But he came to the point where he really understood the law — understanding it in the way Jesus explained it in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) — and Paul realized that the law made him guilty before God, not justified before God. The law has no remedy for sin, Jesus does. The law cannot bring life because no one ever lived up to the law except Jesus Christ.

⁶When Paul died to the law, then he could live to God because the law lost all its claims on him. As long as he

⁵ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/2001-06-10-How-God-Saves-Sinners-Coming-to-Grips-with-Justification-by-Faith/>

⁶ http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?AuthorID=2&contentID=8028&commInfo=31&topic=Galatians&ar=Gal_2_17
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still tried to justify himself before God, by all his law-keeping, he was dead. But when he died to the law, then he could live to God and you can't arrest a dead man. We can live to God because we have new life in Christ.

2:20 I am crucified with Christ— This is not a literal crucifixion on the cross. This is the symbolism of Crucifixion. "**Crucifixion**" was death by torture; Painful (excruciating, "*on the cross*"). Paul speaks of a real death that can be excruciating as we put our "*old man; our old nature*" to death for the sake of Christ. Christ is Lord over the Law, because He was crucified unto the Law. Death was Paul's one chance of escape from the penalty of the law. The only way to be acceptable to God is to die to the law. By my faith in Christ I am crucified with Christ. I have been delivered from the Law. I am crucified and dead unto the Law. God takes that; my faith and...

- counts my faith as me having died in Christ.
- counts my faith as identification with Christ in death.
- counts my faith as me having already been punished for sin through Christ's Crucifixion.

2:20b But ...nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me— He's saying that he's not literally dead but spiritually alive because Christ is in charge of his life. It is Christ living by means of the Holy Spirit in him. It is crucial to understand this point. Christ does not live His life through us but we live His life when we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us. Believers see themselves living in a state of dependence on Christ; no longer to the law.

2:20c ...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. So, Paul living in the flesh does not live after the flesh anymore. Why? Because God gave His life for him/ for us, therefore, it's no longer I who's living inside, but it's really Christ living inside by the power of the Holy Spirit. How? It was something that God did for him/for us. Paul cannot take credit for his crucifixion. ⁷Paul placed his faith in the Son of God, that is, in His divine Sonship. Paul's new life is faith-based, not flesh-based. Faith is the link that binds Paul to Christ. Instead of attempting to measure up to the law, Paul lives his new life in Christ by faith. The Lord's love and sacrifice motivates us to live for Him.

2. **The believer lives for God by being crucified with Christ.**
3. **The believer lives for God by allowing Christ to live His life through his body.**

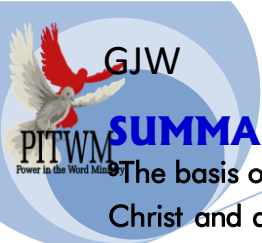
2:21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. The word "**frustrate**" (*atheto*) means to set aside, void, invalidate, make ineffective, or nullify. Therefore, if we go back to the law, we cancel out the work of the cross. ⁸To nullify grace would be to put one's trust, not in salvation of God's free gift, but in one's own efforts. To do this is to reject grace altogether; relying on one's puny effort means that one nullifies that grace. (*Morris*)

4. **The believer lives for God by trusting the grace of God, that is, trusting Jesus Christ who is God's righteousness.**

The Judaizers wanted to mix law and grace, but Paul told us that this is impossible. To go back to the law means to set aside the grace of God. If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. The law was our schoolmaster to reveal to us how badly we needed a Saviour. Christ gave His body on the cross that we might live. He purchased our salvation with His precious blood. He quickens our spirit to eternal life in Him. Returning to the law nullifies the cross. Law says do; Grace says done! It is finished! Therefore, Christ did not die in vain.

⁷ <http://versebyversecommentary.com/galatians/galatians-220e/>

⁸ <http://new.studyight.org/com/guz/view.cgi?bk=47&ch=2&vs=undefined>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

**SUMMARY:**

The basis of salvation is the issue in this passage. Is salvation through Christ alone or does it come through Christ and adherence to the law? If observing the Jewish laws cannot justify us, why should we still obey the Ten Commandments and other Old Testament laws? Paul says we are Jews by birth and are not like Gentiles. But we know that God accepts only those who have faith in Jesus Christ, whether we are Jews or Gentiles. No one can please God by simply obeying the law. So, we put our faith in Christ Jesus, and God accepted us because of our faith (2:15-16). As Paul will explain later in this letter, the law was given to reveal sin and not to redeem from sin (Rom. 3:20). Christ does not make us sinners (2:17). Paul's argument to Peter was that we did not find salvation through the law; we found it through faith in Christ. Furthermore, by going back into legalism, you are building up what you tore down (2:18). Paul is saying, *"It was the law itself that killed me and faith freed me from its power, so that I could live for God (2:19). I have been nailed to the cross with Christ. I have died, but Christ lives in me (2:20). And I now live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave his life for me. I don't turn my back on God's undeserved kindness (2: 21). If we can be acceptable to God by obeying the Law, it was useless for Christ to die."* Believers today may still be in danger of acting as if Christ died for nothing (2:15-21)

APPLICATION:

God has provided a way of salvation that depends upon Jesus Christ and not my own efforts. Even though I know this truth, I must guard against the temptation of using service, good deeds, charitable giving, or any other effort as a substitute for faith.

When we believe in the death of Jesus Christ to forgive our sins, we in effect destroy the law as a system of salvation. If we revert to the law, we rebuild it as a system of salvation. If we choose both the law and grace as systems of salvation, we restrict both of them.

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⁹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/salvation-is-not-of-the-law/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



Paul addresses his readers directly with a series of piercing questions. These questions are asked in a tone of rebuke as he gives them real answers! The next passage will answer questions.

3:1 O foolish Galatians, — ¹⁰Why does Paul call those to whom he writes, "*Foolish*"? -Because they were acting in error.

1. **Error makes a person foolish.** The Galatians were listening to false teaching and were not thinking through what was being taught.

Does he not know that if he insults those to whom he writes, they will pay no attention to his message? How is it that he violates the accepted principles of dealing with people? Wasn't Paul afraid that he would offend them? The word that our translators chose to translate "*foolish*" is the Greek word "*anoetos*," when originally coined for use, meant: "*to act as though the mind was inoperative, or worse, non-existent*." This is a word that means to know the truth and to just simply act unreasonably or irrationally - basically to be an idiot. They were truly misunderstanding, thoughtless, and unthinking.

3:1b ...who hath bewitched you?

2. **Error deceives a person.** "*Bewitched*" is an odd word to the New Testament. It is used only this one time in all of the writings of the authors of the New Testament. *Barclay* translates bewitched as: "*put the evil eye on*." The "*evil eye*" was thought to work in the way a serpent could hypnotize its prey with its eyes. Once the victim looked into the "*evil eye*," a spell could be cast. By using the term "*bewitched*," Paul gives the idea that the Galatians are under some type of spell being that the false teachers were very capable, fluent, and persuasive speakers. It seems that the false the teaching sounded reasonable and logical.

3:1c ...that ye should not obey the truth,—

3. **Error shows disobedience.** The Galatians simply were not obeying the truth. They were trying to become acceptable to God...
 - a. by undergoing the ritual of religion (**circumcision, baptism, etc.**) instead of trusting the death of Jesus Christ.
 - b. by subjecting themselves and focusing their lives upon the law instead of Christ.

3:1d ...before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

4. **Error leads a believer away from Christ.** The Galatians had clearly seen the death of Christ through the preaching of Paul. Paul's preaching had plainly pointed out and explained the death of Christ. Therefore, they knew...
 - a. that He had sent His Son into the world to die for them.
 - b. that God expected all men to believe in the death of His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - c. that God took their faith and love in His dear Son and accepted them because they believed and loved His Son.

How could they be so foolish and bewitched and not obey the truth—especially when they had clearly seen and understood the death of Jesus Christ? That is the question!

3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or

¹⁰ http://www.bereanbiblechurch.org/transcripts/galatians/3_1-5.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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by the hearing of faith? — He's saying, I want to ascertain from your personal testimony, not from hearsay; it's always good to get a clear understanding. *"Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"* When you received the Holy Spirit, was it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Did God give the Spirit and work miracles in their midst because they observed the law? Paul is stirring the Galatians to think! No, it was the result of their hearing the gospel and believing it. The present question strikes at the very heart of the gospel: How did you begin your Christian life? This is one thing every believer should know. Every person must hear the glorious message of faith. The message of faith is the gospel of salvation. The hearing of faith is the only way a person can ever become acceptable to God. A person must hear and believe the report in faith. All believers receive the Holy Spirit at the time of salvation. *"Receive the Spirit"* refers to the new covenant work of the Holy Spirit that comes after saving faith, at the beginning of the Christian life, to sanctify and to empower the believer in life, and various kinds of ministry. Some people think that we need to work for the gift of the Holy Spirit, or earn this gift from God. But Jesus made it plain that all we have to do is receive by faith.

3:3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?— Again, Paul asks, *"Are you so foolish?"* Is God so low that corruptible and dying men can achieve so much? Is man so exalted that he has so little to achieve in order to be perfected? **Note the question:** *"having begun your Christian life in the Spirit, are you now maturing and being made perfect by the flesh?"* A believer does not become spiritually mature by focusing on...

- his efforts • his works • his goodness • his discipline • his morality • his just behavior

No! No matter how strong and disciplined one's flesh is, it does not make him grow spiritually. It only causes him to focus upon himself. Spiritual growth only happens because God perfects him. It may be through the Word of God; trials; your testimony; in your meditation time and God speaking to you.

- A man begins his journey to God when he truly believes in Jesus Christ and is born again (spiritually).
- A man continues his journey as he is daily renewed by the Holy Spirit (spiritually).

The word **"perfect"** (*Gr epiteleō*) most certainly does not mean sinless, but complete, spiritual maturity. It happens moment by moment while God is continually drawing our mind to spiritual things. Remember, the Spirit of God lives within the believer. He is there to work within the believer, and to help him grow and mature in Christ. *"Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith"* (Heb.12:2). What God begins, He finishes (Phil.1:6). Flesh is neither the Author nor Finisher.

3:4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain. Because of their identification with Christ, they experienced many hardships. The point is this: if the Galatians now turned away from Christ to some false teaching, then the suffering they had borne for Christ would be in vain. They would have suffered for nothing. In fact, they would now appear foolish if they turned away from Christ when they had suffered so much in order to embrace Him.

- Every believer who truly turns to Christ has some suffering to bear. It may be sufferings of...
 - separating from the world.
 - denying self.
 - taking up the cross—dying to one's own will and way every day.
 - giving everything that one has to Christ and His cause (money, time, energy, effort).

The list can go on and on, but the point is clearly seen. **If Christ is worth suffering for**, why then forsake him and turn to some false teaching? Remember your old life, remember how Christ has changed you, and remember his forgiveness. Then stay true to Christ!

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



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3:5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?— This is a rhetorical question; and a repetition of the argument in verse 2. By the word "**HE**," would certainly mean God who had furnished or imparted to them the remarkable influences of the Holy Spirit. The Galatians knew they received the Holy Spirit when they believed, not when they obeyed the law. People are still insecure in their faith because faith alone seems too easy; people still try to become close to God by following rules. By asking these questions, Paul hoped to get the Galatians to focus again on Christ as the center of their faith. What had occurred was that the Galatians had quickly turned from Paul's Good News to the teachings of the newest teachers in town. Often the Holy Spirit's greatest work in us is teaching us to persist, to keep on doing what is right even when it no longer seems new and interesting. If we get bored with the Christian life, we may not need the Spirit to stir us up—we may need him to settle us down and get us to see the challenges of the ordinary. Paul has made his appeal or argument to the Galatians by showing them the error of their ways through their experiences:

- how the deception of error can cause them to react foolishly;
- how much their error deceives a person;
- how disobedient they were to the truth they already knew about being acceptable to God; and
- how their error led them far away from Christ.

He brought back to their remembrance of what it took to be acceptable to God—it was not by the works of the law or perfect flesh, but by the Spirit of God working in them by faith. His appeal was to point them to get them back on track but he hadn't quit yet!

3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and... — Paul issues a second appeal to the Galatians. It is not just their own experience of receiving the gospel by faith that should teach them that salvation is not by the law but of grace. Old Testament example of Abraham is used to illustrate the truth that justification is through genuine faith and faith alone. Abraham followed and trusted God unquestionably! His faith was not a meritorious action that deserved reward. It was not Abraham's keeping of the Law that pleased God. That would have made it to be salvation by works. In fact the law had not yet been given. ¹¹The chronology is important because Abraham was circumcised in Genesis 17 and the Law was given to Moses 430 years later. What pleased God and what caused God to justify Abraham was Abraham doing as God had said. **...it was accounted to him for righteousness.** — meaning, to reckon, put down on the ledger, credit to one's account. The moment Abraham believed, he was justified. His faith preceded his obedience. Abraham simply believed the promise of God that God would give him a new life—in a new nation—with a new people. He had nothing to add, and God required nothing. Abraham committed himself completely and unreservedly to God. It was only a promise given to Abraham; no other information whatsoever was given. And he was judged righteous! When the sinner trusts Christ, God's righteousness is put to his account. More than this, the believer's sins are no longer put to his account (Rom.4:1-8). This means that the record is always clean before God, and therefore, the believer can never be brought into judgment for his sins. **"Righteousness"** means, being in right standing with God. The Righteousness of God is imputed to a person only on the basis of faith in Christ, and what Christ has done at the cross. The Christians are righteous, because they have placed their faith in Jesus Christ and are washed in the blood of the Lamb.

3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. The Jewish people were very proud of their relationship with Abraham. The trouble was they thought that this relationship

¹¹ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/2001-06-17-Two-Ways-to-Go-to-Heaven-Make-Sure-You-Choose-the-Right-One/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



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guaranteed them eternal salvation. Jesus made a clear distinction between Abraham's seed physically and Abraham's children spiritually (Jh.8:33-47). Some people today still imagine that salvation is inherited. Because mother and father were godly people, the children are automatically saved. But this is not true. **The point is:** ¹²If we are truly the children of Abraham, then we must believe the same thing he believed. We are like Abraham in the fact that we have faith in God, and faith that what God promised He will do.

3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. The word "*Scripture*" refers to the Old Testament. The Scripture is said to foresee, because the Holy Spirit that incited the Scripture did foresee. Paul believed that when the Scriptures speak, God speaks. The word "*heathen*" simply means Gentiles and it proves that from the beginning that the blessing of salvation was promised to all the nations of the world only through faith, not by the works of the law. It showed that the Gentiles would be blessed — not by becoming Jews virtually; but made right through faith. God announced the "*good news*" beforehand, before the blessing came to the Gentiles in Abraham's day, when God said, "*In thee shall all nations be blessed.*" This gospel preaching took the form of the basic promise made to Abraham. The point is: This verse teaches that the reason the Scripture promises blessing to the nations through Abraham is that the Messiah was to be descended from him. Since the Scripture saw God justifying the Gentiles, therefore, the Scripture promised blessings to the Gentiles through Abraham. So the promised blessing of Abraham was intended to justify people from every nation.

3:9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. There he closes that part of the subject, proving that the blessing depends upon faith, and not upon the works of the law or circumcision. Abraham receives from God the promise of blessing, and of blessings for others

3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse:— Those still attached to law observance (works) are in exactly this position. ¹³The Christians from a Jewish background who believed we should still live under the Law of Moses thought that it was a path to blessings. Paul boldly declares that instead of blessings, living under the works of the law puts them under the curse. ¹⁴He doesn't mean that the law is bad or the Word of God is wrong. He simply means that God never intended the law to be the way we find our approval before Him. The word "*curse*" (*kataran*) means to be condemned and doomed to punishment by the righteous judgment of God. That means they have failed to obey the law, so they stand under the curse. The wrath of God is hanging over them.

3:10b ...for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. Paul quotes from *Deuteronomy 27:26* – "*Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of the law to do them...*" The important words are "*all*" and "*do*." Law demands obedience and this means obedience to do all things. **First**, the law demands performance: You must do what the law commands. **Second**, the law demands complete performance: You must do all that the law commands. **Third**, the law demands continual performance: You must continue to do all that the law commands. Paul uses a strong word to describe the situation of those who try to achieve salvation by keeping the law. They are "*cursed*."

3:11 But that no man is justified by them—

- ¹⁵The law cannot make the guilty guiltless because the individual has committed sin already.

¹² <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/galatians/05.html>

¹³ <http://www.studyLight.org/com/guz/view.cgi?book=ga&chapter=003>

¹⁴ http://www.bereanbiblechurch.org/transcripts/galatians/3_10-14.htm

¹⁵ <http://versebyversecommentary.com/galatians/galatians-311/>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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- The law cannot undo what is done. The law can reveal sin but it cannot relieve it.
- The law exposes sin but it does not save us from its penalty.

3:11b ...in the sight of God, it is evident: for, — The place of justification is "*in the sight of God.*" The judgment of our neighbors is incidental when it comes to salvation. We stand before God alone. And God is the only one who can let us into His presence. **...it is evident: for, —** The word "*evident*" conveys the idea of clear or manifest. It is plain to everyone who reads the Bible that no one can go to heaven by works. We must look at salvation how God looks at it. **The just shall live by faith.** This phrase is a quote from *Habakkuk 2:4* — "*...but the just shall live by his faith.*" The "*just*" here are those who stand legally right in God's eyes. God's chosen way to approach Him is to "*live by faith.*"

3:12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. The law is completely opposite of faith as to living a life pleasing to God. Therefore, in this argument Paul is saying whichever one you live by, you must do it. And that's the one you follow—law or faith. According to *Leviticus 18:5* — "*Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.*" If you choose to live under the law, then you must live by their perfect norms. This expresses the principle of the law. Men are not commanded to believe the Old Testament law, but to do it. Failure to render absolute obedience is fatal! However, the Judaizers had distorted the law into legalism.

3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: — What the law could not do, Christ did (Rom.8:3-4). Man has broken the law of God unquestionably, therefore, man stood guilty before God and must be judged and condemned to bear the curse and punishment of the law. But, this is the glorious news: Jesus Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law.

What is redeemed? "*Redeemed*" (*Gr exagorazō*) means "*to buy out from*" the slave market so that the liberated slave shall never be put on sale again. Also to ransom: Christ became the ransom; the sum of the payoff from which released us from the curse of the law. Can you get that, we are no longer under the curse of the law; we can never be perfect under such a law. We are released! Our debt is paid in full! We are redeemed!!!!!!!!!!!! HALLELUJAH!

How? Jesus took our condemnation, doom, death, and punishment upon Himself and bore them all for us on the cross. He took our place as the lawbreaker and guilty party.

How could He do this? - Because Jesus Christ had obeyed and kept the law of God perfectly. He had never broken the law, not even once. He was sinless and perfect. He had secured the Ideal Righteousness and Perfection before God. Therefore, He bore no guilt and no penalty and no mark of death. He had the right to stand before God and claim eternal life; the right to be accepted by God and to never experience death. He was perfect. He had secured incorruptible righteousness. — Because God is love. He was determined to swap (substitute) His Ideal Righteousness for man's unrighteousness; to swap (substitute) his Ideal obedient Life for man's sinful disobedient life! MY, MY!

3:13b ...for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:— In verse 10, it said, "*Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.*" Now we're dealing with "*Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*" I know everyone wants to deal with this understanding, I know I do. Everything Paul quotes is from the Book of the Law to bring an astonishing truth of faith in what Christ has done for us. ¹⁶This is a quotation from Deuteronomy 21:23.

¹⁶ <http://versebyversecommentary.com/galatians/galatians-313/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



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If a man guilty of a capital offense is put to death and his body is hung on a tree: you must not leave his body on the tree overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day, because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse. You must not desecrate the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. Deuteronomy 21:22-23 NIV.

In the Old Testament, they had the custom of taking the dead body of a criminal stoned to death and hanging them on a tree. That was in that day, that every one that hanged on the tree was cursed; looked upon with shame. When Christ died, he took upon Himself the curse intended for us.

- ¹⁷He took the pain.
- He took the shame.
- He drank the cup of God's wrath.
- He bore the punishment meant for us.
- He stood in our place.
- He suffered for our sin.
- He paid a debt he did not owe.

At the climax of His sufferings, he cried out, *"My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?"* Those words meant that in that terrible moment, the humanity of the Son felt the Father had turned away from Him—the Father became Sonless and the Son became Fatherless because of our sin. This was the cost of our salvation. He set us free from the curse by taking the curse upon Himself.

- He was rejected that we might never be rejected.
- He was forsaken that we might never be forsaken.
- He was punished that we might never be punished.
- He took the curse that the curse might be lifted from us.
- The Cesspool of Sin.

This is a picture of a cursed individual. Jesus' death on the cross represents a public death of a cursed person. *"...who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed"* (1 Peter 2:24). Christ did not remain a curse in God's eyes. He was a curse only while He died on the cross. The cross was where He showed His love and the cross was where He bore His love. This is our way out from the curse of the law, by accepting God's curse on Jesus Christ through the cross. God demands righteousness from us that is equivalent to His own righteousness. None of us can live up to that standard. Jesus paid for every sin that we ever committed on the cross and gave us His righteousness.

3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Why did he purchase us? – **First**, to set us free from the bondage of sin and the law into the liberty of God's grace through Jesus Christ! The Judaizers wanted to lead the Christians into slavery, but Christ died to set them free. Why would any believer deliberately want to choose bondage instead of liberty? Perhaps part of the answer is found in the word bewitched that Paul used in Gal.3:1. The word means *"to cast a spell, to fascinate."* That is what the Judaizers tried to do. **Second**, *"that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ:"* Jesus Christ bearing the curse of the law was to open the door of blessings to all men. That was God's way to give the promises made to Abraham to the world. Any man who believes in Jesus Christ and accepted what He did would receive the blessings of the Promised Land eternally. In summary, the man who believes in Christ receives the promise of God's Holy Spirit that reaches to the promise...

- of the divine nature
- of the new birth
- of being made a new creature
- of being into a new man

It's all through faith!

3:15 Brethren, — Notice that ¹⁸Paul calls them *"brethren,"* which is kind of softening the tone a little bit. He opened Chapter 3 by calling them *"idiots; foolish Galatians."* That was pretty strong. But now he's just trying to

¹⁷ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/2001-06-17-Two-Ways-to-Go-to-Heaven-Make-Sure-You-Choose-the-Right-One/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



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get them to think with him, and he affectionately calls them "*brethren*" regarding them as the sons of Abraham.

3:15b ...I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto — means he's using *a human analogy*, he likens God's promise to Abraham to the "will" that people make; when a man writes his last will and testament. The word "**testament**," in fact, is from the same Greek word that is translated "**covenant**" in this verse. Paul notes here that even in the case of a human "**Will**," once it has been confirmed or validated, the terms therein cannot be altered. The point is that once a covenant has been made and executed, it stands: it cannot be annulled or added to. By law the promises of the covenant are sealed; both parties are bound to keep their word, their promise. They would have concluded that the blessing, which was given to Abraham by God, was received by Abraham by faith as he believed in the promises of God

3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. Notice, the promise was not given to Abraham alone, but it was also given to the seed, the descendants and offspring of Abraham. The word "**seed**" is singular, not plural, therefore, who is meant by the "*seed of Abraham?*" – Scripture declares that God's promise points first to one single person, and that person is Jesus Christ, then the promises of the gospel by Him to those who are by faith engrafted into Christ. ¹⁹Fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant does not depend on the nation of Israel, but on the person of Christ. God's salvation is always through the finished work of Christ on the cross. Legalism is lethal because it will undermine that finished work of Christ, making it unfinished.

3:17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. This verse is saying: "*this is what I mean*," by what I said in Gal. 3:15. ²⁰Paul now brings back this idea of human agreements (from verse 15), and says that just because there was a new agreement with Moses, doesn't mean that God's original contract with Abraham was null and void. The original contract with Abraham was yet to be fulfilled! It would be fulfilled in Jesus.

- When the law was given, the promise to Abraham had not yet been fulfilled; therefore, the law could not void or change the covenant of faith with Abraham. The promises of God to Abraham and his descendent, Jesus Christ, still stood. Since Jesus Christ, who is eternal existed before Abraham, the covenant of faith was given to Christ even before it was given to Abraham (*Devotional Studies in Galatians and Ephesians, p.45*).

3:18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. If the inheritance is based on law, then it is conditional and is not a promise. But, God gave the inheritance to Abraham as a promise - therefore it is unconditional. Notice the "*if*" and "*but*." You see the inheritance was not given to Abraham by law, that is, Abraham could not earn, win, or merit it; but as Scripture declares— "*God gave it [the inheritance] to Abraham as a promise.*" The same promise is given to believers, that is, to all those who walk in the faith of Abraham.

3:19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to

¹⁸ http://www.bereanbiblechurch.org/transcripts/galatians/3_15-18.htm

¹⁹ <http://versebyversecommentary.com/galatians/galatians-316/>

²⁰ <http://www.calvaryfullerton.org/Bstudy/48%20Gal/1995/48GAL03C.htm>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



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whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. What was the object of the law? It was added in order to restrain transgressions of men, and especially among the fleshly race of Abraham, only until the Promised Seed, to whom the promise was made, that is, Christ, should come. This was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. He would mediate between Israel and God; that is, to Moses.

3:20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one. A mediator implies two parties between whom he acts. Because of the transgression of men, the law was the contract to which both parties agreed to the condition. God said *"If ye will obey"*, and Israel said *"We will do"* (Ex.19:5, 8). The law was valid so long as both parties fulfilled the terms of the contract. Israel defaulted and did not live up to her part of the bargain. So then God was no longer obligated to keep His part. And a mediator was needed for there was separation. The conditions were not kept, and the blessings were not received.

3:21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. No, the law is not against the promises of God. The law isn't the promise of God and does not give life at all. If it did, and could impart righteousness, then it might be said to be opposed to the promises of righteousness by faith.

3:22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. None became righteous by the law, therefore, in Scripture, the law placed all under sin (See Rom.11:32), but, the promise based on faith in Christ should be to them only who believe. All hope is in the gospel.

3:23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Before the faith was revealed we were **kept under the law** — meant under its power; confined under the law, as in prison, in a state of preparation for the faith that was to be revealed. The law was **"added"** (3:19) in order to do a work of preparation until the gospel was revealed.

3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. In Roman families a trusted slave, a pedagogue, had charge of children, preserved them from harm, and took them to school. **The law was our schoolmaster**— revised as **"tutor."** The law was like a tutor, a guide to lead us to the school of Christ where we could be **justified by faith**.

3:25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. Once brought to Christ we do not need the tutor any longer. We are no longer under the law being our schoolmaster.

3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Faith makes us children of God. How? Jesus Christ brings us face to face with God. He stirs God to adopt us as children of God by faith.

- Faith comes to us to focus upon God's Son, Jesus Christ. This simply means that God will honor any person who honors His Son by believing and trusting Him.

3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²¹Paul now shows how their faith acted to bring them into Christ. The believer is **baptized into Christ**, and being found in Him has **put on Christ**. The phrase **"put on"** is the picture of putting on clothes, of covering oneself. And because we are clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, God sees us in His Son and accepts us. Being in Christ, a member of

²¹ http://www.ccel.org/ccel/johnson_bw/pnt.pnt0903.html
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His body; a part of the Son, the believer becomes a child of God. Compare Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 10:2, and Matt. 28:19.

- Faith clothes us with Christ, with His righteousness and Sonship. When God looks at the believer, He sees His Son Jesus Christ covering him, therefore, He counts the believer as a son of His.

3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. In Christ the old, worldly lines of separation are all blotted out. Even in the different distinctions, there are no barriers to Christian fellowship. While the law separated our distinctions, Christ united us. All are one. One person, as it were, "*one new man*" (Eph. 2:15), of which Christ is the head of all, without regard to race or gender, blended into one whole.

3:29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. If you have given yourself completely to Christ, then you belong to Him and therefore inherit the promise. And those being in Christ are then part of Abraham's family; Abraham's seed, heirs of the promise to Abraham—What belongs to him belongs to us.

SUMMARY:

²²Paul tackled the tragedy of slipping into legalism. His first argument, recorded in these verses was an argument from experience; he asked them to look back at their own conversion: "*Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?*" They would have had to answer: "*By the hearing of faith.*" Then Paul asks, "*Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?*" In other words, both justification and sanctification (i.e. both salvation and spiritual growth) come by grace through faith, not by works. Every believer who truly turns to Christ has some suffering to bear. If Christ is worth suffering for, why then forsake him and turn to some false teaching? The Galatians knew they received the Holy Spirit when they believed, not when they obeyed the law. Paul has made his appeal to the Galatians by showing them the error of their ways. He brought back to their remembrance of what it took to be acceptable to God—it was not by the works of the law or perfect flesh, but by the Spirit of God working in them by faith (**3:1-5**).

Paul turns to Abraham as an example to prove his point of justification by faith alone. It was not Abraham's keeping of the law that pleased God. What pleased God and what caused God to justify Abraham was Abraham doing as God had said. The moment Abraham believed, he was justified. His faith preceded his obedience. It was only a promise given to Abraham; no other information whatsoever was given. And he was judged righteous! The Jewish people were very proud of their relationship with Abraham. ²³If we are truly the children of Abraham, then we must believe the same thing he believed. We are like Abraham in the fact that we have faith in God, and faith that what God promised He will do. Paul now turns from subjective experience to the objective evidence of the Word of God. We should never judge the Scriptures by our experience, but should always test our experience by the Word of God. God said, "*In thee shall all nations be blessed.*" So the promised blessing of Abraham was intended to justify people from every nation. "*So, they which be of faith are blessed with faithful (believing) Abraham.*" Paul boldly declares that instead of blessings, living under the works of the law puts them under the curse. Abraham received a blessing, not a curse, and it was because of faith and not law. Faith brings me into a blessing and all blessings are through God's grace. No man is justified

²² http://www.bereanbiblechurch.org/transcripts/galatians/3_6-9.htm

²³ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/galatians/05.html>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



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by the law in the sight of God. The apostle proves that since the law, no matter how good in itself, can only bring a curse upon every soul who takes this ground or stand in its dealings with God. If you choose to live under the law, then you must live by their perfect norms. The conclusion of the law, for such, accordingly, was a curse. What the law could not do, Christ did (Rom.8:3-4). Christ became the ransom; the sum of the payoff from which released us from the curse of the law. Jesus Christ bearing the curse of the law was to open the door of blessings to all men. God's purpose is plain: *"that the blessings of Abraham might reach the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith"* (3:6-14).

Paul takes an illustration from everyday life by speaking after the way of men using a human analogy. Even though it's a man covenant, once it's been duly executed, no one can annul or change it. Now the promises were made to Abraham and his offspring. The promises of the gospel, points first to Christ, then by Him to those who are by faith engrafted into Christ. The promises of God to Abraham and his descendent still stood. An agreement already confirmed by God cannot be cancelled by the Law which came four hundred and thirty years later. If the inheritance is based on law, then it is conditional and is not a promise. But God gave the inheritance to Abraham as a promise - therefore it is unconditional. Therefore, if the inheritance is of the law, then it's not of the promise, but we have to remember that God gave it to Abraham by promise (3:15-18). ²⁴What was the purpose of the Law then? Paul answers that it was added because of transgressions of men, until the Seed (Christ) should come. It was not against the promises of God, but because it could not provide life itself, it only served the purpose of confining all under sin until the promise by faith in Jesus could be given to those who believe. All hope is in the gospel (3:19-22).

Before the faith was revealed we were confined under the law, as it were in prison, in a state of preparation for the faith. The law was "added" (3:19) in order to do a work of preparation until the gospel was revealed. Thus, we were "kept under the law" and kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. To put it another way, the law was our schoolmaster, it was like a tutor, a guide to lead to Christ where we could be justified by faith. When once brought to Christ, and faith had arrived, we do not need the tutor; we are no longer under the law of a schoolmaster any longer (3:23-25).

We are children of God only by faith in Christ Jesus. Those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. In Christ, the old worldly lines of separation are all blotted out—no more Jew or Greek, bond or free, nor male or female because we are all one in Christ Jesus. And by being in Christ, then we are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (3:26-29).

APPLICATION:

If you can see the ultimate test Christ went through you can ultimately trust Him with your life. There should never be "should I" or "if I" anymore. It's all been taken care of; already been foreseen; demonstrated, bound, gagged, and tied in a bow for us. The law does not determine our Salvation. It's just simple faith in the grace of God! Just knowing our justification came through Christ; frees us for all the promises and blessings He extends! Accept Christ by faith!

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²⁴ http://executableoutlines.com/ga/ga_03.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

**4:1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;—**

Each society has a time for a young boy to become a man. In Paul's days, it was a very important event. As soon as a boy became a man, he had full legal rights. Until that time, other people had to manage a child's personal and business affairs. Young children could not own property, even if their father gave it to them. Young children had no rights. Slaves could not own property either; so young children and slaves were in the same situation. In Jewish society, a boy became a man soon after he was 12 years of age. In Greek society, a boy became a man at about 18 years of age. In Roman society, the child's father decided when the child was ready to be an adult. So, Paul was probably using Roman society as a model in this verse. He is illustrating the spiritual immaturity of those living under the law and who are being prepared for faith in Christ. Therefore, when a son is a minor and too young to receive his inheritance, he might as well be a slave. And this was the situation of Paul and his fellow Israelites under the Old Covenant.

4:2 But is under tutors and governors— Paul uses two terms that both carry the idea of entrusting someone with something of value: 1) tutors and 2) governors. **"Tutors"** are guardians who have the supervision of the person. **"Governors"** are stewards who have supervision of the property. They are trustees who manage the estate. The minor child, like the slave, is subordinate to other decision-makers and authority-figures **...until the time appointed of the father.** The child cannot speak or act on his own behalf. Therefore, in Roman society, the child's father decided when the child was ready to be an adult. In God's eternal timing, He appointed a time when the believer would operate under grace.

4:3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:— Paul now brings the point home. The Galatians were bound in legalism when they operated by rules. People subject to rules function like children. The law enslaved those under it from Sinai to Christ. The Greek indicates that they were in a permanent state of bondage to the law. **...under the elements of the world** referred to the *"elementary principles"* the Galatians previously followed, which for Jews would be the Mosaic law and for Gentiles, the basic concepts of their pagan religions. But they were enslaved like little children in terms of their mind-set and life situations under a legalistic system. Legalism is not a step toward maturity; it is a step back into childhood. When enslaved by the law, the Jews were children in bondage, not sons enjoying liberty.

4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,— The idea behind the phrase **"the fullness of time"** is **"when the time was right."** Jesus came at just the right time in God's redemptive plan, when the world was perfectly prepared for God's work. There was a fullness of time when God delivered the world— God sent forth His Son, born of a woman— Jesus came not only as God's Son, but also as one born of a woman, born under the law to deliver man from condemnation of the law. Jesus Christ had to live under the law in order to secure the perfect righteousness of law for man. He had to obey the law in every single precept and stand before God as the Perfect and Ideal Man—Ideal Embodiment of Righteousness. God spoke the Word from the beginning to time. The woman conceived miraculously by the Holy Spirit and the power of the Highest (God) overshadowed her (Luke 1:35).

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4:5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Paul has told us **WHO** came; **WHEN** He came, and **HOW** He came. Now he explains **WHY** He came. **Christ came in the fullness of time, made of a woman to redeem them that were under the law.** "**Redeem**" is the same word Paul used earlier (Gal.3:13); it means *"to set free by paying a price."* The reason that all must be redeemed from the law is the fact that by the law, all are condemned to die. The law brings death. Romans 6:23, *"For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Therefore redemption was necessary that He might receive the adoption of sons. The word "**adoption**" (*huiothesia*) means "to place as a son." In the ancient world the family was based on a Roman law called "*patrla potestas*," the father's power. The law gave the father absolute authority over his children as long as the father lived. He could work, enslave, sell, and if he wished, he could pronounce the death penalty. Regardless of the child's adult age, the father held all power over personal and property rights. Therefore adoption was a serious matter. Yet, it was a common practice to ensure that a family would not become extinct by having no male children. And when a child was adopted, three legal steps were taken.

1. The adopted son was adopted permanently. He could not be adopted today and disinherited tomorrow.
2. The adopted son immediately had all the rights of a legitimate son in the new family.
3. The adopted son completely lost all rights in his old family. He was looked upon as a new person, that old debts and obligations connected with his former family were cancelled out and abolished as if they never existed.

Christ's "**adoption of sons**" is bestowed as a gift. We cannot have it, and still be in bondage. We might no longer be accounted and treated as servants, but as sons grown up to maturity, who are allowed greater freedoms, and admitted to larger privileges, than when under tutors and governors.

4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

God the Father sent the Son to die for us, and then He sent the promise of the Spirit to live in us—The contrast here is not between immature children and adult sons, but between servants and sons. Like the prodigal son (Lk.15:18-19), the Galatians wanted their Father to accept them as servants, when they really were sons. So, because they were sons, and having the Holy Spirit of God's Son in their hearts, makes them desire to cry Abba Father.

4:7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. This verse ends a long section that Paul started in 3:1. The Christians in Galatia were no longer slaves. They were part of God's family. They were receiving the good things that God promised to Abraham. They received these good things because they trusted Jesus Christ. The contrasts of son and servant:

- The son has the same nature as the father, but the servant does not. When we trust Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us; and this means we are partakers of the divine nature (2Pt.1:4). The law could never give a person God's nature. So when the believer goes back into the law, he is denying the very divine nature within, and he is giving the old nature (the flesh) opportunity to go to work.
- The son has a father, while the servant has a master. No servant can ever say "*Father*" to his master. When the sinner trusts Christ, he receives the Holy Spirit within, and the Spirit tells him that he is a child of the Father (Rom.8:15-16). It's natural for a baby to cry, but not for a baby to talk to his father. When the Spirit enters the heart, he says Abba Father (Rom.8:15). The word "*Abba*" is an Aramaic word that is the equivalent of our English word "*papa*." This shows the closeness of the child to the Father. No servant has this.
- The son obeys out of love, while the servant obeys out of fear. The Spirit works in the heart of the



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believer to quicken and increase his love for God (Rom.5:5). The Judaizes told the Galatians that they would become better Christians by submitting to the law, but the law can never produce obedience. Only love can do that.

- The son is rich, while the servant is poor. We are both sons and heirs. And since we are adopted—placed as adult sons in the family—we may begin drawing on our inheritance right now. God has made available to us the riches of His grace (Eph.1:7; 2:7), the riches of His glory Phil.4:19) the riches of His goodness (Rom.2:4), and the riches of His wisdom (Rom.11:33)—and all of the riches of God are found in Christ (Col.1:19; 2:3).
- The son has a future while the servant does not. While many kind masters did provide for their slaves in old age, it was not required of them. The father always provides for the son (2Cor.12:14).

4:8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. Paul appeals to the Galatians by speaking a fact: when they didn't know God, they served the so-called gods that were not gods by nature, meaning, they were ignorant of God and lived in spiritual darkness giving service to these things that were not gods. They were pagans worshiping idols before knowing God. Whatever they served; were accustomed to, by nature they were not even gods. These gods were figments of their imagination; not of the true nature of God.

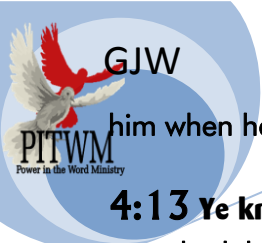
4:9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?— Paul brings up two things: **after knowing God and turning away from the true God.** Paul is saying, now that you have recognized the true God and what it was like, how can you now do the opposite? Why would you turn back to the weak and helpless elements whose slaves you once were? This does not make sense—wanting to go back to religious ceremonies that made them weak and useless, putting them back in bondage. Yes, when you have a privilege in knowing the God that can save you from sin, but still want to go back to those gods that can't save or have any power to do anything. That's a problem. And it's a sin problem. It means you have never really received the Savior by faith, who brings Salvation or you are backslidden from your faith.

4:10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. The elements they observed were days, months, times and years; what religious people did as works, trying to find favor with God. It really kept them in bondage as legalists. Staying on this kind of track made them lifeless instead of fruitful.

4:11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. Paul was afraid concerning the labor he had given to the point of exhaustion; the labor he had spent on them may have been wasted and in vain; to no purpose; without effect. This is a warning: do not exchange pagan religion to legalism, and reject the gospel and Christ. Forms and ceremonies will never replace Christ!

4:12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all. Paul identifies himself with them by referring to them as brethren. He did not treat them as enemies or attack them, and he begs and pleads with them from a heart of a minister of God to become as he is. He wanted them to be liberated from legalism; free from bondage. *"Don't give up grace for law, but get all the way out from under the law, and come all the way under grace because that's what Paul did. He abandoned his own righteousness of the law for the righteousness of God in Christ."* Though the Jews persecuted him when he first went to Galatia, the Galatian believers had not harmed him; did him no wrong or injustice, but received

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him when he preached the gospel to them.

4:13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. When Paul first preached the gospel to the Galatian churches, he was stricken with some kind of infirmity. Just what it was is not known, although the best guess seems to be some serious eye problem (v.15).

4:14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. The outward circumstance of Paul's flesh tested him; however, the Galatians didn't meet him with contempt or dislike. He commended them because they didn't despise him; didn't reject him, but received him; welcomed him; took him in and cared for him as an angel or messenger from God, even as Jesus Christ Himself. It was a high honor for Paul.

4:15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Paul senses the Galatians has lost their joy of salvation; their happy spirit they spoke of. He bears record that since his infirmity might have dealt with his eyes, he believed the Galatians would have plucked out their own eyes and given him a new pair if they could; expressing their love and devotion for him.

4:16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?— Since Paul had not changed and the gospel had not changed, why are they regarding him as an enemy now? - Because he told truth? That's what Paul is asking. Was the church going to treat Paul as an enemy because he had told them the truth?

4:17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. Paul, who is telling the Galatians the truth, lets them know that there are those who are zealous; on fire to do them no good. The legalist accused Paul of not telling the truth and of keeping the Galatians in a retarded spiritual condition by the adamant stand against circumcision as a means of salvation. The legalist and false teachers were zealous in their teaching and were out to secure a large following affecting the Galatians by excluding, separating, and shutting them out from Paul, the minister of God whom the legalist have attacked.

- False teachers seek to focus people upon law, works, effort, ritual, ceremony, observances, sacrifice, rules, and regulations—upon something that requires man to work at being good or doing good in order to become acceptable to God.
- The true minister of God seeks to focus people upon God Himself: His love, honor, and praise—upon the fact that God Himself has provided the way for man to become acceptable to Him, and that way is through His Son Jesus Christ.

4:18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you. Now, Paul encourages the church by letting them know that it's a good thing to give special attention to the right thing, even when he's not there with them. Paul wanted the Galatians to be zealous over Christ; over the salvation Christ has brought. They had not lost the experience of salvation, but they were losing the enjoyment of their salvation and finding satisfaction in their works instead. Their zeal for the right thing should be present at all times.

4:19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,— This shows deep affection calling them little children. It expresses the tenderness of Paul and the immaturity of the Galatians. Paul had <http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



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travailing pangs as a mother would undergo in birth; agonizing with them because he wanted to see Christ formed in them; he wanted Christ to be seen in their lives, and now again he remembers this process.

4:20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you. Paul really desired to be present with them. It would be better face to face, than writing. If only he could speak to them, he could straighten matters out in a shorter time. Literally, he was in doubt of them; perplexed; at his wits' end, not knowing the best way to prevent them from the error into which they were drifting.

SYNOPSIS:

4:21-31 Paul asks why do you still want to be under the law? Haven't you heard it and know what it means? The written Word says Abraham has two sons—one by a bondwoman born of the flesh and one by a freewoman born by way of the promise. The son of the slave girl Hagar was rejected. The son of the free woman Sarah obtained the inheritance. Paul uses these two illustrations for the benefit of the Galatians who were tempted to place themselves under the burdens of the law again. Verse 24 talks about an allegory. An "**allegory**" is an indirect presentation of a meaning, figuratively implied but not expressly stated. The two women symbolize two covenants: law and grace. Hagar represents the Mosaic Covenant of law and bondage and the mother of the child of the flesh. Sarah represents the Abrahamic Covenant of grace and liberty and is the mother of the child of promise. The earthly Jerusalem stands for Judaism. But, the Jerusalem above is the heavenly spiritual city that's free, which is the mother of the New Testament believers who are not slaves under the law, but sons under grace. The next words of the Scripture (v.27) tell the barren to rejoice and those that are not in travail are to shout forth joy because there are many more desolate or deserted wives that have more children than those who live with or have a husband. Paul tells them that they along with him are brethren as Isaac being children of promise. Yet at that time the child born after the flesh persecuted the child born of the Spirit, so also it is now. But the Scripture says to drive out the bondwoman and her son for he will not be heir with the son of the freewoman. Paul closes by affectionately calling them brethren, reiterating that they are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

SUMMARY:

The illustration given about a minor child receiving his inheritance although being lord of all was the same as being a slave, for he couldn't for the reason of being under guardianship and supervision which was like being enslaved and held in bondage to the law. But, when the fullness of the time came, God sends forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that they (we) might receive the adoption of sons. And because we are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father, wherefore we will no more be a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ! (**4:1-7**).

When the Galatians didn't know God, they served the so-called gods that were not gods by nature, meaning they were ignorant of God and lived in spiritual darkness giving service to these things that were not gods. But, now after finding God or rather God finding them, they want to go back to the weak and helpless elements whose slaves they once were— such as observing days, months, times and years which is what religious people do as works, trying to find favor with God. That really kept them in bondage as legalists.

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Paul is afraid he labored in vain (**4:8-11**).

Paul begs and pleads with them to become as he is, free from bondage for they are brethren as he is. They did him no wrong or injustice when he preached to them before. When Paul first preached the gospel to the Galatian churches, he was stricken with some kind of infirmity. He commended them because they didn't despise him; didn't reject him, but received him; welcomed him as an angel or messenger from God, even as Jesus Christ Himself. Paul senses the Galatians has lost their joy. He bears record that since his infirmity might have dealt with his eyes, he believed the Galatians would have plucked out their own eyes and given him a new pair which expresses their love and devotion for him. But because he had told them the truth were they going to treat Paul as an enemy? The legalist and false teachers were zealous in their teaching and were out to secure a large following affecting the Galatians by excluding, separating, and shutting them out from Paul, the minister of God whom they have attacked. Paul encourages the church that, it's a good thing to give special attention to the right thing, even when he's not there with them. Their zeal for the right thing should be present at all times. Paul had agonized as if he were undergoing birth pangs for them again until Christ is formed in them. The last thing Paul writes is that he really desired to be present with them so he could change his tone because he was literally in doubt of them (**4:12-20**).

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5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. God's way for man to be justified was not the way of the law. Once the law had been broken, the penalty had been enacted; it had to be paid, and it was paid through the glorious message of the cross—the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Galatians were to stand fast in the liberty Christ has made; the liberty that made us free. He's freed the believer, but legalism destroys liberty. Christ has made us free, but only if we believe. False teachers had arisen teaching that Jesus Christ had not come to give us a new approach to God. They're saying, he just came to add new teachings to the law. And the Galatians were about to become entangled again with the yoke of bondage. **"Yoke"** is a symbol of slavery. And the yoke of slavery is the bondage of the law which makes the law keepers slaves under a binding yoke. Again, I say, a believer is not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. The purpose of freedom belongs to the children of the free woman.

5:2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. "Physical Circumcision" was the cutting around and off of a small piece of excess skin that covers the tip of the penis. It was usually performed on the eighth day of life (Gen.17:10-14; Rom.4:11-12). A ritual of depending upon religious things to make us acceptable to God did not lead to salvation. The old way of circumcision of the law profited nothing. **"Spiritual Circumcision"** is first of all not of the physical and not of the hands. This circumcision is not of the outward but of the inward being. It is the circumcision of the heart; the spiritual removal of the old fleshy nature where we yield to the Spirit's power. To be circumcised by the Spirit of God (Colo.2:11) is more important than the physical surgery Jer.4:4; Rom.2:25-29). He helps us receive the pure heart and a right relationship needed to be acceptable to God because of what Christ did.

5:3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Paul testifies to every man that's circumcised is a debtor to do the whole law. the Galatians again about circumcision as not being a condition of salvation. To accept circumcision as a condition of salvation binds one's self to the slavery of legalism. A debtor is one who assumes an obligation. Thereby, they laid themselves under the obligation to fulfill the whole law.

5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. Those once exposed to the gracious truth of the gospel, who then turn their backs on Christ, and seek to be justified by the law are separated from Christ and all prospects of God's gracious salvation. Their desertion of Christ and the gospel only proves that their faith was never genuine. There cannot be two grounds of salvation, two means of justification, or two ways of life. To accept the one means to reject the other. It is either law or grace, either works or faith, either self-righteousness, or the righteousness of God, either circumcision or Christ. The Galatians were in danger of substituting law for Christ as a means of salvation. Therefore, if they were trying to be saved by the law, Christ had no effect upon them and would be fallen souls—fallen from grace.

5:5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. Born-again believers, not through

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the flesh, but through the Spirit of God cling to the covenant of grace, and wait (in earnest, constant expectancy) for the hope of righteousness by faith. They were to stand fast because the hope of righteousness is by faith. And by faith we hope in Christ Himself who is the hope of righteousness.

- Their hope for righteousness comes through the Spirit of God who stirs hope and gives absolute assurance that God will take his faith and count it for righteousness.

If we are not careful, good works can start to substitute for our faith in God. It is not our good works that keep us in relationship with God. Wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, and not for the sake of your own works.

5:6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. All true Christians, being taught by the Holy Spirit, learn that...

- their hope for righteousness comes through Jesus Christ alone—not by a ritual (circumcision, law) nor by the lack of a ritual.
 - Neither undergoing a ritual (circumcision) nor being without a ritual brings hope.
 - Neither having and keeping the law nor being without law brings hope.
 - Neither working for righteousness nor not working for righteousness brings hope.

Nothing absolutely nothing can provide the sure hope of righteousness within a person except Jesus Christ: His righteousness and His death alone can offer hope to man.

- And our hope for righteousness comes by faith wrought by the love of God. God sent His Son to secure our righteousness which encounters Him dying for us. When a person really sees this, it breaks him, and he bows and surrenders his own love, faith, life, and loyalty to Christ. We love Jesus because He has loved us.

The one who lives by faith is internally motivated by love for God and Christ.

5:7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?— The Galatians were doing well to begin with. They had been running the Christian race well. Now, Paul wants to know who hindered them, who told them that they should not obey the truth? They had allowed some false teacher to hinder them, and to turn them from the truth. Paul is writing this that they will begin to...

- Obey the truth because the Christian life is a race.

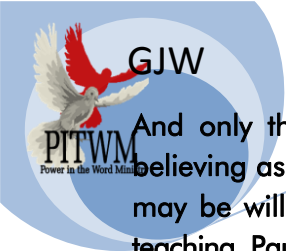
5:8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. It was not God who persuaded and called them into error. Any persuasion, any position, or any teaching that leads away from the truth of Jesus Christ is not of God. Paul is writing this that they will begin to...

- Obey the truth because God called them to freedom.

5:9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. The tiniest doubt of persuasion will come in and affect you from the truth. The word "**little leaven**" was used, meaning "**sin**"; false doctrine appearing to be harmless came in and corrupted the truth of what they had believed. Paul is writing this that they will begin to...

- Obey the truth because a little untruth corrupts the whole lump.

5:10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. Paul is saying that his confidence is in the Lord.



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And only through the Lord he can have confidence in them, that the Lord would bring them back to believing as he believes. But those that troubled (unsettled, agitated, and disturbed) their faith, whoever they may be will bear God's judgment. They were misleading believers and defiling the church of God with false teaching. Paul is writing this that they will begin to...

- Obey the truth because of the confidence others will have in them.
- Obey the truth because false teachers will bear God's judgment.

5:11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. Paul did not preach rituals (circumcision, baptism, church membership, etc.) were necessary for salvation, but the false teachers were saying that he did. Paul asks the question as to why is he persecuted by the Jews? And since he didn't preach circumcision it became the main reason for the Jews to persecute him so much. The point is that if he preached circumcision or legalism he would not be persecuted and thereby all the hostility which the preaching of the cross provokes would disappear. For them, the cross uproots the doctrine of salvation by human merit. Therefore, the legalists are offended that salvation is by grace without circumcision and obedience to the law. And the offense of the cross has become a stumbling block for them.

5:12 I would they were even cut off which trouble you. The Judaizers were so insistent upon the Galatians using circumcision as a means of pleasing God that the apostle Paul wished that the Judaizers would cut off not only their own foreskin, but be cut off from the Galatians altogether. Their way of insisting on circumcision upset and disturbed, and was a threat to the liberty of the Galatians.

5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. Up until now everything has dealt with doctrine, now Paul begins to deal with the practical day to day affairs of the believer. He emphatically lets them know that they were called into liberty not slavery. The believer no longer has to work and work in order to secure God's approval and acceptance. The believer is accepted by God through the work of Jesus Christ. The Christian liberty is not a license to do as a person likes. It's not license to sin. It is being free to overcome the passions and urges of the flesh that unceasingly wage war against the better judgment of man. It is freedom to love and serve one another. This love identifies with a person's need, their concerns, and to serve one another.

5:14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Paul expresses that the whole law is fulfilled (Matt.5:17) and summed up in one word: "*Love*", which also includes toward our neighbor as we love ourselves. That behavior will cause us to serve one another because of Love!

5:15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. Undoubtedly, there was some division that caused "*biting and devouring*" which refers to much more than just feuding and fighting. Men bite and devour each other when they violate each other. Bite is sudden anger and devour is deadly. An example would be of church strife affecting the body of Christ using its "*liberty*" as a platform to promote their own selfishness. Selfish people will eventually be consumed by one another. Paul says "*thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*" (v.14). Love does not bite or devour others. Paul advises all, to love, serve one another, and not use our freedom to sin. ²⁵The law only united Israelites together. The Gospel unites all men and that in relation to God [*GROTIUS*].

²⁵ <http://www.studyight.org/com/jfb/view.cgi?book=ga&chapter=005>
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5:16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. No person has the power to control the lust of his flesh—not within himself. Why? - Because the flesh fights for dominance. It takes the Spirit of God to help us to live, walk, be guided by the power and life of the Spirit. When we have continuous actions in the Spirit, we won't have time to fulfill the hungering passions or desires of the flesh. We have to make it a choice.

5:17 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. Paul describes two forces at work within us: our flesh and the Spirit. These forces are constantly fighting each other to win control over us. The flesh and the Spirit are contrary to each other and this hinders a person to not do the things they wish to do. Therefore, the answer to conquering the lust of the flesh is the Holy Spirit!

5:18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. When you are guided by the Holy Spirit, you will no longer need to force yourself to be subject to the law. The only hope of ever controlling the flesh is to be guided by and walk in the Spirit of God; then you're not under the law. This verse is not telling us to cleanse ourselves from the flesh, but from the desires of the flesh, by being led by the Spirit, meaning walk in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit so that one will not fulfill the lusts (hunger or strong desires) of the flesh. **The point is:** though the flesh will be strong, it fails to keep the law, but it is the Spirit that pleases God.

5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,— Paul describes the problem of how the flesh has different appetites. The "*works of the flesh*" are listed:

- **Sex sins/Sensual sins:** Adultery— sexual unfaithfulness to husband or wife. Fornication— pre-marital sex and adultery. Uncleanness — moral impurity. Lasciviousness — filthiness, indecency, shamelessness.

5:20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,—

- **Religious sins /Superstitious sins:** Idolatry— the worship of idols. Witchcraft— sorcery.
- **Social sins:** Hatred— enmity, hostility, animosity. Variance— strife, discord, contention. Emulations— jealousy. Wrath— bursts of anger. Strife— conflict, struggle.
- **Interpersonal relationship sins/Sins with alcohol and parties:** Seditions— division, rebellion. Heresies— rejecting the fundamental beliefs of God, Christ, the Scriptures, and the church.

5:21 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.

- Envyings— goes beyond jealousy. Murders— to kill. Drunkenness— taking drink or drugs to affect one's senses for lust or pleasure. Revellings— carousing, indulgence.

5:21b ...And such like meant that there are still plenty of things that Paul could list individually. **They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.** You can see the danger and the destiny of those who live in the works of the flesh. Works of the flesh are manifested when we don't walk in the Spirit!

5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is — We've talked about "*the works of the flesh*", and now we contrast to

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the fruit of the Spirit. Paul has showed the Galatians what the flesh produces; now he tells them what the Spirit produces. The Spirit produces fruit/character traits when we learn to walk in the Spirit. The word "**fruit**" is singular, not plural. The Holy Spirit has one fruit. It is broken down into a list of traits in order to help understand His nature. ²⁶The Fruit of the Spirit is described by ALL of these nine qualities, not just one. It's like a piece of fruit that has nine different parts to it - skin, meat, seeds, stem, etc. When the Holy Spirit is allowed to work in your life, He will be producing ALL nine of these qualities in you. The believer does not experience and bear just some of them. The Spirit of God produces them all in the life of the believer. How?

Part of the process of bearing fruit is "pruning". Jesus is describing a vine with branches that are grafted into the main vine. When a branch doesn't bear fruit, you cut it off. Branches that are bearing fruit are pruned back. It's the vinedresser's job to do the pruning. It's getting rid of all the things in your life that drain your strength, and keep you from walking fully in the Lord. We are pruned by God's Word. The Word is how He speaks to us. Prayer is how we speak to Him. As long as you stay connected to Jesus, you WILL bear fruit. As we read and pray, our spiritual life is kept healthy. The fruit is then inspected through tests.

²⁷Fruit has several important characteristics.

- Fruit isn't achieved by working, but is birthed by abiding in the Spirit.
- Fruit is fragile. • Fruit reproduces itself. • Fruit is attractive. • Fruit nourishes.

5:22b ... love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,— These are qualities that express the aspects of the Christian life. The first three qualities begin with love (**5:22**) which express **Godward** qualities. Love and joy together produce peace. All of the other fruit are really an outgrowth of Love. The next three qualities include (longsuffering, kindness and goodness – **5:22**) which express **Manward** qualities. Human nature can never do this on its own, only the *Holy Spirit* can. The final three qualities (faithfulness, meekness and self-control – **5:22-23**) are **Selfward**. When the *Holy Spirit* produces fruit, God gets the glory and the Christian is not even conscious of his spirituality. But, when the flesh is at work, the person is inwardly proud of himself and is pleased when others compliment him.

- **Love** – agape love which is an unconditional giving. ²⁸Love based not in the emotions, but in the will; a love that chooses to place value on another person, regardless of the other person deserving it. Jesus told us to learn to love each other in the same manner that He loves us. If we look at His love for us, it shows us how we are to love.
 1. Love for the unlovable (Rom.5:8).
 2. Love willing to give everything (Jh.3:16).
 3. Love that isn't easily discouraged (Rom.8:35-39).
 4. Love that can be grown (Heb.10:24).
- **Joy**— inner gladness; a depth of assurance and confidence that ignites a cheerful heart.
- **Peace**— that tranquility of the heart that comes from knowing God.
- **Longsuffering** — persistent waiting; bearing and suffering a long time; perseverance; self-restraint which does not hastily retaliate a wrong.
- **Gentleness**— moral goodness, integrity; kindness.
- **Goodness**— full of virtue and excellence; uprightness of heart and life.
- **Faith**— trustworthy; to be loyal and steadfast in devotion; allegiance; enduring.

²⁶ <http://www.calvaryfullerton.org/Bstudy/48%20Gal/1995/48GAL05J.htm>

²⁷ <http://www.studyight.org/com/guz/view.cgi?book=ga&chapter=005>

²⁸ <http://www.calvaryfullerton.org/Bstudy/48%20Gal/1995/48GAL05K.htm>

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5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

- **Meekness**—humble; mild; dies to self and does exactly what God wants done.
- **Temperance**—self-control; the master of desire, appetite and passion, especially sensual urges and cravings.
- **Against such there is no law**—no law can stand against such things. Those who bear these fruits find no law interfering with them. The Spirit, not the law, produces this fruit, which more than fulfills what the law requires.

5:24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. They that belong to Christ by purchase have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. The Spirit and the flesh are in constant conflict which shows that the flesh is very active.

1. **...they that are Christ's** means a person become the property and the possession of Christ when he first trusts Christ as his Savior. He is coming because he wants to be delivered from the enslavement and bondage of sin, death, and judgment. He wants to live forever with God. Therefore, when a person comes to Christ, he is turning away from the flesh to God. He is turning his back upon the mastery of the flesh and all that it stands for. He is turning to Jesus Christ as his new master.
2. **they...have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts**—by dying with Jesus Christ. How? By an act of God. When a person genuinely believes in Jesus Christ, God takes that person's belief and counts it as his death with Jesus Christ. God honors his faith by identifying him with Christ. Then he has died to the flesh; he died to the passions of the flesh; he has died to the lust of the flesh; he is freed from the flesh; he is freed from the passions of the flesh; he is freed from the lusts of the flesh. To be crucified with Christ means that we no longer live in the flesh, in the place and position of the flesh. That's why it is important to die to the flesh.

5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. The statement is "If", meaning since this is the case. If we live in the Spirit; if we are born again by the Spirit of God; if we derive our life from Him; if we live in the Holy Spirit's power, then "**WALK**"—be consistent in your lifestyle by submitting every aspect of your life to His Spirit; move according to His standards; keep in step with the Spirit—not to run ahead and not to lag behind. It involves the Word, Prayer, Worship, Praise, and Fellowship with God. Allow the Word to take root so you bear fruit.

5:26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. We are not to be self-conceited or eager for empty glory which is a sign that one is functioning according to Law. When we live our lives by holding to some kind of strict set of rules and regulations, we can get kind of proud of ourselves for having accomplished the "*impossible*."

- **Let us not be desirous to ...provoking one another**, —challenging one another to combat; to irritate.
- **Let us not be desirous to...envying one another**—pining away with feelings of jealousy over the other's underserved praise; wanting what another person has. What envy does is to sidetrack us by getting the focus back on ourselves, rather than on the other person, where it needs to be. Such actions toward one another are not consistent with a life of faith, lived by one who has been crucified with Christ and who is keeping step with the Holy Spirit.

Our walk is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit that we might display the fruit of the Spirit!

SUMMARY:

The Galatians were to stand fast because Christ had freed the believer. They were not to be entangled again

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with the yoke of bondage. They were to stand fast because the law is not God's way for man to be justified. Paul brings up circumcision. Circumcision was a symbol of having the right background and doing everything required by religion. He lets them know that Christ would not profit them if they were trying to be saved by the law; they would be fallen souls—fallen from grace. Lastly, they were to stand fast because the hope of righteousness is Christ and is by faith (**5:1-6**).

The Galatians were doing well to begin with, but false teachers hindered them and turned them from the truth. God called them to truth, and didn't lead them to error. The tiniest doubt of persuasion came in and affected the whole lump. Paul's confidence is only in the Lord to bring the Galatians back to believing as he believes. And those that troubled them thought they were getting away would find out that His judgment would come upon them. Since Paul didn't preach circumcision, he was persecuted. He preached salvation through faith in the cross of Christ alone. And the cross had become an offense and a stumbling block for others. Paul wished that those troubling the Galatians would themselves cut off altogether (**5:7-12**).

Paul lets them know that they were called into liberty not slavery. They were not to use this liberty to sin, but to love and serve others. The whole law is fulfilled and summed up in one word: "*Love*", even towards their neighbor. But if you bite and devour one another, you will be consumed by one another. The best option is to walk in the Spirit and then the lust of the flesh will not be fulfilled. Because the flesh and the Spirit are contrary to each other it will hinder a person to not do the things they desire to do (**5:13-17**).

When you are guided by the Holy Spirit, you will no longer need to force yourself to be subject to the law. There is a problem when we operate in the works of the flesh. They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul has showed the Galatians what the flesh produces; now he tells them what the Spirit produces. The Spirit and the flesh are in constant conflict which shows that the flesh is very active. That's why it is important to die to the flesh. To be crucified with Christ means that we no longer live in the flesh (**5:18-24**).

If we live in the Spirit; if we are born again by the Spirit of God; if we derive our life from Him; if we live in the Holy Spirit's power, then "**WALK**"—be consistent in your lifestyle by submitting every aspect of your life to His Spirit. We are not to be self-conceited or eager for empty glory, provoking or envying another (**5:25-26**).

[TOP](#)

6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Paul calls these men brethren meaning members of the same spiritual family; an expression of kindness. A hypothetical question comes before them

1. **...if a man be overtaken**— sudden temptation seized him unaware before one can escape; apprehended, taken by surprise.
2. **...in a fault**,— a trespass; a lapse or deviation from the truth and uprightness. He tells them...
3. **...ye which are spiritual**, — those who have learned to walk by, are living by, and are exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit.
4. **...restore such an one**— bring into line; to mend; to strengthen.
5. **...in the spirit of meekness**;— a fruit of the Spirit; it is tender consideration and forbearance.
6. **...considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted**— they are to take care that they themselves are not tempted.

For further explanation: This is a person who is just like the rest of us; that is, he has desires, passions, and urges just like us. He walks and lives in the flesh just like we do; a true Christian brother can be overtaken by sin. When this happens, the point is how do you approach this brother? The brother will be very sensitive and perhaps embarrassed and easily shamed. He could also feel that he would be unwelcomed. Therefore, unless he is approached in the right spirit, he could be lost to the kingdom forever.

1. **First, let the spiritual believers** handle the matter. Spiritual believers are those who walk in the Spirit. How can the church tell if a believer is spiritual?—
 - a. Does the believer bear the fruit of the Spirit? (Gal.5:22-23).
 - b. Does the believer live a crucified life with Christ? — self-denying life?
 - c. Does the believer walk in the Spirit, that is, consistent with his position in Christ? (Gal.5:25).
 - d. Does the believer walk free from envy, pride, jealousy, arrogance, and selfishness? (Gal.5:26).
2. **Second, approach the brother in a spirit of meekness.** Too often what is displayed is a spirit of...
 - a. hardness b. indifference c. harshness d. rejection e. criticism f. rumor etc.
 Scripture is saying, approach the brother in meekness—gentle, tender, warm, loving, and a caring manner.
3. **Third, consider yourself**, for you too, can be tempted and overtaken by sin (1Cor.10:13). The word "**consider**" means to look to oneself, to think about oneself, and to give attention to oneself because you can also become engrossed in that same position. Don't open the door to Satan.

Restoration is not easy because you are trying to mend back what has been broken in a fragile life. When truth comes in, God is the One who delivers. You speak the truth in love; God delivers the truth in love as they receive by faith.

6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

4. **Fourth, bear one another's burden.** We cannot bear the sins of men, but we can bear the burdens of each other. "**Burdens**" are an overload which we can lighten, a weight too heavy for the individual and capable of being shared with others of the fellowship. Lend a helping hand by lifting heavy loads, for we all suffer under the weight of sin. ²⁹ "**The law of Christ**" is Jesus' New Commandment: "**A New Commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love**

²⁹ <http://www.calvaryfullerton.org/Bstudy/48%20Gal/1995/48GAL06A.htm>
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one another"Jh.13:34. **"The law of Christ"** is the law of ministry and love. This is a touchy subject. But sometimes when we find ourselves being the one who has fallen, it's a hard thing to allow others to help. But it's the way of Jesus. As we bear one another's burdens, we are fulfilling the simple law of Christ: be compassionate – encourage – pray – forgive – be warm and tender – all in love.

6:3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

5. **Fifth, confess your *nothingness*.** Christ came to save nothings, that is, sinners whether they know it or not. The point is this: no person is better than any other person, not in righteousness or godliness. All men stand before God as sinners. We all come by Jesus Christ and His righteousness alone. Therefore, there is absolutely no place among God's people for spiritual pride or snobbishness, or super-spirituality. To be proud is to be blind. We all approach Christ just like the erring brother.

6:4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

6. **Sixth, examine *your own work*.** The word "**work**" refers more to conduct and behavior than to employment. Every man is to keep busy examining his own work and life; no man is exempt. The flesh lusts... for acceptance, for recognition, for position, for honor, for compensation, for approval etc. In fact, so much temptation swirls around us, if we lower our guard to examine and judge others, we are immediately overcome by sin ourselves. If a man's work stands the test, then he can rejoice in it alone, not because he is superior to another but that his conduct and behavior remained unsoiled and clean.

6:5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

7. **Seventh, realize *your own responsibility*.** This is to warn every believer that he has his own burdens, his own weight of faults and sins to bear. It is these that he is to be carrying, looking after, examining, and judging. He can never overcome them unless he gets his eyes off the failure of others and concentrate on the burdens of his own failure. He's responsible to the Lord for what he has done.

6:6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Remember, that every believer is a student who sits at the feet of God, whether they are ministers or bible teachers. This verse can show us two things:

1. When you've been blessed with someone's teaching, communicate it by sharing it with others! The learner has a responsibility to the teacher just as the teacher has a responsibility to the learner—spreading it.
2. When you've been blessed with someone's teaching, be a partner with those that teach by sharing and entering into fellowship financially. The Christian community was expected to support these gifted teachers. It is easy to receive the benefit of good bible teaching and take our spiritual teachers for granted, ignoring their financial and physical needs. We should care for them, not grudgingly or reluctantly, but with a generous spirit, showing honor and appreciation for their service (1Tim.5:17-18).

6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Stop being led astray into error. A person can be deceived about facing the judgment of God. The word "**deceived**" (*planasthe*) means to be led astray. Some Galatians were being led astray in this matter. They were failing to share in the ministry of Paul, becoming critics instead of supporters. And note what attacking the teacher of God equals: it equals mocking God. The word "**mocked**" (*mukterizetai*) means to turn one's nose up at God. By rejecting God's minister, the teacher whom God had sent to them, the Galatians were rejecting God. God will not be mocked! This also happens when you substitute something else in the place of the cross! Whatever a

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man sows toward his teacher, he reaps. When you sow in the right way, you reap blessings. It is a principle of cause and effect. The reason is the outcome—flesh vs Spirit.

6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption;— If one does not listen to the teacher's warning about the lusts of the flesh, he shall reap the lusts of the flesh. He will be overtaken by the appeal, the pull, cravings, passion, and lust; and the list could go on and on. Every action has results. Planting to please your own desires reaps a crop of sorrow and evil.

6:8b ...but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. If one listens to the teacher's exhortations about the salvation that is in God's Son and the life God expects him to live, he shall reap the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God will actually enter his life and take up residence there. The Spirit will implant the divine nature of God within the heart of the believer. It is that divine nature shall live now and forever. Planting to please God will reap everlasting life. It is wise to know the cause and effect to actions taken. Think it through!

6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. Stop getting discouraged and tired of doing good, i.e., sowing to the Spirit. The word "*weary*" means to retreat in battle, to give up the fight. The believer or student must be constant, steadfast, and persevering, just as he is taught to be by his teacher. He must not withdraw or slack up in serving the Lord Jesus Christ. The day of reaping is coming. You are on God's timetable. It is unpredictable, but it inevitably comes. We need to continue to plant, sow, and water, not with the idea that we can make it grow but with the sure understanding that what we sow, God can make grow. God will reward the believer who faints not. God knows when there is a time of rest for the body, but the spirit of man is always in tune holding on to God's Spirit.

6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Opportunities come up to serve and therefore we must not miss those times of ministering. ³⁰Every opportunity we have is an appointment arranged by God. The word "*opportunity*" comes from the Greek word *kairos*, which is sometimes translated: "*time*." *Kairos* means: "*a measure of time, a fixed and definite time, opportune or seasonable time, or the right time*." While waiting for our reward, we should be ready to extend our service and faith to all men in Christian love, especially. And always meet the needs (physical, spiritual, or financial) of our Christian family (the household of faith).

SUMMARY:

³¹Paul uses a hypothetical case of a believer who falls into sin. Instead of trying to restore this person, the Legalists will condemn him and try to make himself look good by making this person look bad. He seems to rejoice when this brother falls and often gives the matter wide publicity. The Legalists has an attitude of pride and condemnation and thinks he could never commit such a sin. However, the believer living by grace realizes that no man is immune to falling (6:3). "*Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall*" (1 Cor.10:12). Paul gives the following instructions in helping the person who has fallen:

³⁰ <http://www.bereanbiblechurch.org/studies/galatians.php>

³¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/galatians-61/>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

1. **Who does it?** - "*You who are spiritual*" (6:1). This refers to those who have the characteristics found in this "*book*" and not to an office or a person in authority (Gal.5:22-23).
2. **How is it done?** - "*In a spirit of gentleness*" (6:1). It is a person who is not harsh but considerate and submissive. At the same time he is willing to engage in straight talk in order to help the person caught in the trespass to get back on the right track.
3. **What is the goal?** - "*Restore such a one*"(6:1). To bring the person to where he is submissive to the principle of God's Word and once again living an effective life for Christ.

Be sure to obey God's law yourself (6:2). Don't think you are better than others (6:3). Don't compare yourself with others; examine your work, not another (6:4). Be sure to carry your own load by being responsible (6:5). Very simply, communicate and share in all good things in the ministry of those who teach (6:6). (6:1-6).

By rejecting God's minister, the teacher whom God had sent to them, the Galatians were rejecting God. God will not be mocked! When you sow in the right way, you reap blessings (6:7). If a believer sows corruption to his flesh, he shall reap corruption, but if a believer sow to the Spirit he shall reap life everlasting (6:8). Stop getting discouraged and tired of doing good because in due season we are going to reap good if we don't faint (6:9). Opportunities come up to serve and therefore we must not miss those times of ministering. Loving concern will do more to win a person to Christ than the most carefully articulated argument (6:10). (6:7-10).

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