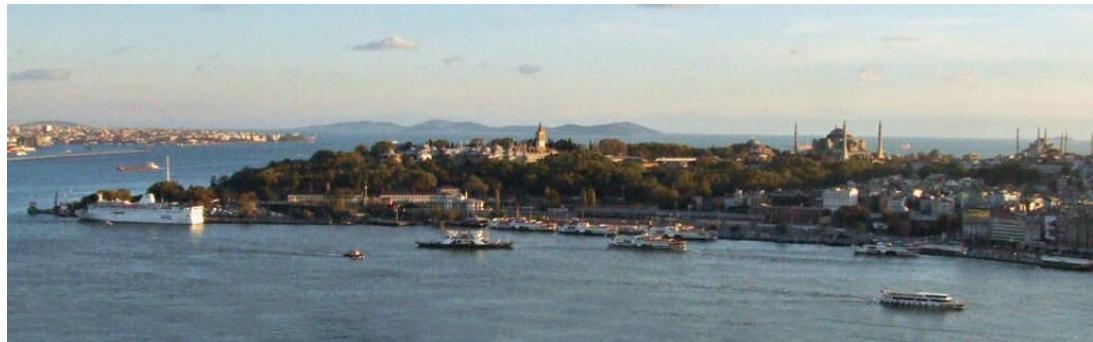


CONCISE BIBLE NOTES

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE GALATIANS

Dr. Stanford E. Murrell



**The Golden Horn and Sultanahmet
Modern Istanbul, Turkey**

CONCISE BIBLE NOTES

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE GALATIANS

Dr. Stanford E. Murrell



Galatia in Turkey

Paul visited several cities in Galatia on each of his three missionary journeys. On his first journey the apostle went through Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, and then reversed his steps; on his second journey he went by land from Antioch of Syria through the four cities in Galatia; on his third journey he also went through those cities on the main route to Ephesus.



THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE GALATIANS

Written AD 54

Divine Author:

God the Holy Spirit

Human Author:

Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ

Date of Writing:

AD 48/49

Theme:

To refute the erroneous teaching of the Judaizers

Outline

I. Paul Defends His Apostleship	Galatians 1-2
II. The Doctrines of Grace Set Forth	Galatians 3-4
III. The Ethical Implications of Grace	Galatians 5-6

GALATIANS 1

The Great Emancipation from the Law

The Magna Carta (Great Charter) of Spiritual Liberty

1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead ;)

2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

1:1. Paul. The apostle gives a defense of himself in order to establish his authority. An apostle was one sent forth for a specific duty. Paul was an apostle because he had a unique status. He had seen the risen Lord. *1 Corinthians 9:1 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord?* Barnabas and other were apostles of the church, sent forth by them for missionary work, but Paul was an apostle, not of men, but of Jesus Christ.

1:1. by. Greek, *dia, though*. The preposition is used only once, thereby linking Jesus Christ, and God the Father, in an intimate way of equality.

1:1. raised him from the dead. The resurrection established the divinity and dignity of Christ, while establishing the authenticity of God the Father. There is no other.

1:2. and all the brethren. The brethren recognized Paul's authority.

1:2. Galatia, the place where the Gauls lived, which was in the central region of the peninsula of Asia Minor, GALATIA with the provinces of Asia on the W, Cappadocia on the E, Pamphylia and Cilicia on the S, and Bithynia and Pontus on the N (Acts 16:6; 18:23; 1 Corinthians 16:1; Galatians 1:2; etc. *New Unger's Bible Dictionary*).



The First Missionary Journey of Paul
Acts 13:4 – 14:27

3 Grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

1:3. Grace. Grace always precedes peace. The apostle begins this letter without flattery or artificial expressions of love. Paul loves the brethren, but the situation in Galatia is tense. Something difficult must be said, not only by Paul, but by the brethren that are with him.

1:3. *from*. Literally, “*from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ*”. There is only one source.

Nevertheless, the matter to be discussed in this epistle regarding a departure from pure gospel principles and practices will be discussed among those for whom Christ died, as verse 4 indicates.

4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

1:4. Who gave himself. This is reference to the voluntary penal act of Christ at Calvary by which Jesus satisfied the Father. Here is the Doctrine of the Atonement. Oh Christian, we now have an infinite debt for so great a wondrous work.

1:4. deliver us. It was a successful deliverance from the power of this present evil age which Christ achieved. Jesus is an accomplished Deliverer. So here is a blow to Conditionalism. Jesus saves. Here also is an affirmation for the Doctrine of Definite Redemption, for the intention of Christ was not frustrated. Jesus gave himself *our sins* so that *we* are delivered. Not all men are delivered, for not all men have had Christ die for them.

1:4. God and our Father. Here is a precious insight into the heart of God, for it is the Father's will to deliver us.

1:4. for our sins. In very specific and limited language, those for whom Christ died are identified. Paul immediately turns to the Cross and what Christ accomplished for His own.

1:4. world. Greek, age.

5 To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1:5. glory. The glory is for ever and ever because the salvation is for ever and ever.

In Summary

There is the Apostolic Authority Affirmed
There is the Atoning Rescue of Jesus Christ
There is the Application of Grace and Peace

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

1:6. I marvel. The Christians were subject to legalism. Is a person saved by legalism? No. Is a person saved by ritualism? No. Is a person saved by baptism? No. Is a person saved by sitting at the Lord's Table? No. Is a person saved by good works? No. Are we saved by culture? No. Is a person saved by education? Are we saved by going to church? No. Are we saved by philanthropy? No.

“My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly trust in Jesus’ Name.

On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand;
All other ground is sinking sand.”

Edward Mote, 1834

1:6. removed. The idea is that of a renegade turncoat.

1:6. from Him. To turn to another gospel is to turn from Christ.

1:6. to another gospel. Greek, *heteron*, another of a different kind. It is possible for people to embrace Christianity, but to be turned to another gospel. One well known modern example of such a renegade was Charles Bradley Templeton (October 7, 1915–June 7, 2001), a Canadian. In 1936, Templeton converted to Christianity and became a successful evangelist. In 1941, Templeton founded the Avenue Road Church of the Nazarene, in Toronto, in a building that formerly housed a Presbyterian congregation, where he served as senior pastor despite his lack of formal theological training. In 1945 Templeton and Torrey Johnson of Chicago, Illinois met with a number of youth leaders from around the United States at Winona Lake, Indiana. Their agenda was to form a working group that would become an organization known as Youth for Christ International which was born in 1946. The years passed and something happened to Charles Templeton. He lost faith. In 1957, after a long struggle with doubt, Templeton declared himself an agnostic. He turned from Christ.

7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert [corrupt] the gospel of Christ.

No Other Gospel

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.

1:8. accursed (Greek, *αὐτὸν θεμα* anathema). The word refers to something devoted to destruction because it was hateful to God.

What Happens When Another Gospel is Preached?

First, grace is invalidated. It is no longer grace.

Second, the work of Christ is insulted.

Third, the Holy Spirit says, “Go to hell. Let such a person be accursed.”

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.

1:9. any other gospel.

Two Different Gospels
Dr. S. Lewis Johnson

- In one of them, man stands before God on the basis of human merit. In the other, he stands before God on the merits of Jesus Christ.
- In the one, he stands before God in the righteousness of his own human doing. In the other, he stands before God recognizing he cannot do anything to satisfy God but Christ has done something that does satisfy him.
- In the one, the initial movement comes from man, from a decision of his own free will. In the other, the initial movement comes from the effectual grace of the Holy Spirit who makes the unwilling, willing and brings us to Christ.
- In the one, we are taught, "This do and thou shalt live." In the other, "It is live by the grace of God and then do this."
- In the one, the law commands us and makes demands upon us in order that we may obtain life. In the other grace offers us eternal life, confers it upon us through the instrumentality of faith.
- In the one, the doctrine tends to inflate our human pride because it suggests to us that we can do something that is acceptable to God. In the other, our boasting shrinks to boasting only in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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.

1:8. Paul was accused of expediency. It was said he sought to curry favor. Whatever people wished, that is what he preached. Paul answers that charge in v. 10.

1:10. the servant of Christ. In the OT, the highest honor was to be a servant of the Lord. God speaks of the prophets as "my servants", so they were honored. Paul considered it the highest honor to be "the servant of Christ" (Jeremiah 29:19; 35:15; 44:4).

Paul and His Gospel
Galatians 1:11-24

11 But I certify [assure] you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

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

1:12. For I. In this verse, Paul emphasizes his personal relationship to Christ and his own journey into Christ. No man's Christianity can be lived by another. It must be personal.

1:12. neither received it of man. Paul did not receive his knowledge of the gospel from Peter or any other apostle, nor was he taught, like Timothy, from his mother or grandmother. He was taught by Christ and about Jesus Christ. Paul had to make these strong statements because he was being accused by the people of Galatia as having received his gospel from some other source than Christ. Many theologians and skeptics of the Bible, including Thomas Jefferson, continue to question the origin of Paul's theology.

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:

1:13. For. Paul will prove his gospel came from Christ by reminding his critics to look at his behavior prior to his conversion, after his conversion, and his present presentation. Such a life can only be explained by a life transformed by the Lord Jesus Christ apart from human persuasion and influence.

1:13. conversation. A reference to Paul's manner of life.

14 And profited in the Jews religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

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

1:15 It pleased God. Those who are the heirs of God's special electing love receive divine grace apart from human merit. Here, Paul refers to his own conversion to Christ as a clear illustration of unconditional electing love. It is God who separated Paul from other men. It is God who called Paul. It is God who showed His grace. God does not separate souls unto salvation because they believe. Rather, individuals believe because they have been separated unto salvation, sanctification, and service. Despite initial resistance and hostility to the gospel, the Holy Spirit effectually called Paul to Christ.

1:15. my mother's womb. Like Jacob and like Jeremiah, Paul claims he was separated from his mother's womb (Genesis 25:23-25; Jeremiah 1:5). It was electing love that caused God to love Jacob (Romans 9:12-15). It is important to know the Doctrine of God's Electing love lest He be robbed of His glory and free grace.

1:15. called me. There is an external call of the gospel which is universal. *Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* There is an internal call to the elect. *John 10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.*

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

1:16 Although Paul was with a number of other people in the hour of his conversion, it was he alone who was converted, thereby becoming a demonstration of Love's election (cf. Acts 9:1-9; Acts 26:8-14). The effectual salvation of Paul was immediately manifested in his public confession of Christ and proclamation of the gospel which he once opposed.

1:16. To reveal his Son in me. The Christian's life is one of mutual abiding. Our Lord said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," as an illustration of this truth (John 15:5). We see the concept of mutual abiding in the elements. Put a poker in the fire, and soon the fire is in the poker. A bird flies in the air, but air is in the bird. A fish swims in water but water is in the fish. A plant is rooted in the soil but the properties of the soil are in the plant. For Paul, the language of union was of the closest character for God intended, he said, "to reveal his Son in me."

Mutual Abiding

Jesus	The Believer
“I in you”	The believer’s state
“Ye in me”	The believer’s standing (position)
“I in you”	The believer’s power
“Ye in me”	The basis for the believer’s justification
“I in you”	The basis for the believer’s sanctification
“Ye in me”	The basis for the believer’s glorification

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

1:17. I went into Arabia. Paul had much to think about as a Christian. He had to harmonize what he had been taught about the Old Testament with its fulfillment in Christ and application to the church. He needed time to be alone and to think. President James Garfield was formerly the president of Hiram College. On one occasion he was advising a young man on his course of study at that small college which consisted of a very demanding schedule. The young man asked, "Well, can't you set out something easier. That's going to be hard, and that's going to take a long time." President Garfield immediately reminded the student that it took a long time for something like an oak tree to grow. But he said, "In six weeks you can make a squash."

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

1:18. see Peter. To see Peter means to visit with him.

1:18. I went up to Jerusalem. The people in Jerusalem were astonished to see Paul in their midst, “*and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?*” (Acts 9:21). How else could this have happened if his message were not from God?

The Background Passage
Acts 9:18-31

Acts 9:18. The pattern for a person was to come to faith, be baptized, and then meet with local disciples for ministry of the Word and the Lord’s Supper.

Acts 9:21-22. Between these verses Saul went to Arabia and then returned to preach Christ.

Acts 9:26-31. Harmonizes with Galatians 1:18.

19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother.

20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:

23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24 And they glorified God in me.

GALATIANS 2

The Immutable Truth of the Gospel

1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also.

2:1. I went up again to Jerusalem. What is recorded in Acts 11:27-30 may have been what Paul had in mind for a time period. The visit has been called, The Famine Relief Journey.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated [imparted] unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

2:2. I went up by revelation. Paul declares that the Lord's will was manifested to him and he obeyed.

2:2. that gospel which I preached. With these words Paul establishes his apostolic authority. He was not seeking permission to communicate the gospel which he preached but was informing the brethren.

2:2. the gospel. Moreover, Paul laid stress on the content of the gospel, which was a gospel of grace and apart from the works of the Law, by which no man shall be saved. Often today, stress is laid upon the results of preaching the gospel, but Paul spoke about the gospel itself. The works of God are important, but the Word of God is pre-eminent. The reason why this is important is because it is possible to change the ground on which the gospel rests.

Good works is emphasized by some in the gospel they preach, such as the Jehovah Witnesses. Their error is refuted by Ephesians 2:8-9. *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Repentance is emphasized by others in the gospel they preach. To repent, biblically, is to change one's mind resulting in a changed life. But for some the term means to regret or be sorry. There must be brokenness, weeping, and crying over sin.

Repentance and confession is emphasized by still others. There are some who are converted, but do not know how to confess their sin in a public gathering. Herein is the danger of turning the gospel of grace into a gospel of works. The person who has come to faith in Christ will confess Christ. *Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Making Christ the Lord of One's Life is emphasized by some. While a person must acknowledge the Lordship of Christ and bow their heart and will to Him, and it is the gospel of grace that must be proclaimed. Beyond that comes sanctification.

Easy Believism is also a problem. This practice invites a person to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ without any consideration of the cross that is to be borne. Jesus told His disciples to tell others to count the cost. *Matthew 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* Of course, Jesus Himself emphasized how easy it is to believe in Him and follow Him compared to all other alternatives. *Matthew 11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* But the communicator of the gospel must not go beyond the Lord and invite sinners to build upon something less than a firm foundation.

2:2. were of reputation. Later, Paul identifies them as James, Cephas, and John.

3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

2:3. Titus. If circumcision was necessary for salvation, in addition to believing in Christ, as the Judaizers insisted, then there was a problem, for Titus was not compelled to be circumcised. Titus was a test case. In the end, Paul's position prevailed. The church recognized that circumcision was no longer necessary for salvation, or as a sign for a covenant relationship.

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

2:4. false brethren. A reference to the Judaizers, the legalist, who wormed their way into the congregation to raise the issue of circumcision and challenge the liberty that is to be found in Christ. The purpose of the spiritual spies was to bring the saints back into bondage.

2:4. bring us into bondage. The bondage that concerned Paul was the teaching of the Judaizers that salvation consisted of Christ plus the keeping of the Law of Moses. The concerning of adding something to the saving work of Christ is still an issue within Christendom today. There are those who add something to faith in Christ in order to be saved.

The Catholic Church adds the Mass. Listen to the pronouncements of the council at Trent (opened on 13 December, 1545, and closed there on 4 December, 1563), which say, "Let him be accursed who saith that sins are not removed by the non-bloody sacrifice of the mass. Venial sins are removed by that aural of extreme unction, and other sins are removed by purgatory."

The Church of Christ adds Water Baptism. It is true that in Acts 2:38 Peter does say, "*Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.*" He added, "*And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" Later on, in Acts 10:43, the same apostle testified to the saving work of Christ. "*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*"

And then we read in Acts 10:44 how “the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word.” Then Peter said, “Who can forbid these being baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?” So the 10th chapter of Acts explains what Peter meant when he said, “Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost.” The important word is repent. Baptism is the visible expression of profession of what happened through regeneration of the Holy Spirit and the justification by faith.

Many Baptist add Decisional Regeneration. This is a subtle form of adding something to the work of Christ, because the stress in Decisional Regeneration is not upon the gospel, but upon the subjective feelings and actions of the individual. A person must raise their hand for prayer, walk an aisle, “open the door” of their heart, or “commit” themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In contrast, the biblical message is, *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved”* (Acts 16:31). True belief will bring authentic repentance and that in turn will produce by the Holy Spirit a new commitment. But it is belief, not good works, not baptism, not self, that is the stress of the New Testament. *John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

2:5. we gave place by subjection. The gospel must be pure. Concerning the necessity of defending a pure gospel, Martin Luther had something personal to say. “God assisting me, my forehead shall be more hard than all men's foreheads. And I take upon me this title, according to the proverb *cedo nulli, 'I give place to none.'* Yea, I am glad even with all my heart, in this point, the point of the gospel, to seem rebellious and obstinate. And here I confess that I am ever and ever will be stout and stern and will not one inch give place to any creature.” Then he adds, “Charity giveth place for it bears all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, but faith giveth no place.” What Luther meant was the faith which is grounded in the Lord Jesus Christ cannot, yea, will not tolerate error, no matter how well meaning it is.

2:5. that the truth of the gospel might continue. As the Judaizers had a purpose, to bring people back into bondage, so Paul had a stated purpose, even that the gospel might continue.

The Gospel that Must Continue

Man is a helpless, defiled, and condemned sinner.

Jesus Christ has died for sinners.

Good works and moral reformation will not save.

Jesus Christ is the sufficient Savior.

The heart must abandon anything which relies upon self.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Church, this is the gospel that must be preached, for it is the gospel that God wants us to believe. Do you believe God? He wants you to. God wants you to trust Him. Only believe, and be saved.

“Only believe, only believe;
 All things are possible, only believe,
 Only believe, only believe;
 All things are possible, only believe.”

6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no mans person :) for they who seemed *to be somewhat* in conference added nothing to me:

2:6. in conference. Paul pointed out that at the conclusion of the conference and Paul's report, Peter, James, and John confirmed the gospel that was being proclaimed.

7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter;

8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles :)

9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

10 Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward [zealous] to do.

Paul Confronts Peter

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

2:11. he was to be blamed. Peter was fallible after all. Paul knew nothing about the primacy of the papacy or the infallibility of the pope for he did not hesitate to challenge Peter's authority (assuming Peter was the first pope, which he was not).

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision [Jews].

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation [deceit].

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

Justification by Faith
Galatians 2:51-21

"If the death of Christ is our redemption, then we were captives. If it is payment, then we are debtors. If it is atonement, then we were guilty. If it is cleansing, we were unclean." All of these things are true. It is true that we were captives, we were debtors, we were guilty, we were unclean, but the death of Christ is our redemption. It is a payment that was made for us. It is therefore atonement and from it we have cleansing" (John Calvin).

Paul's Message to Peter at Antioch
The Great Confrontation

15 We *who* are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

2:15. A background passage for this section is Romans 7:7-12. In the context of Romans 6-7, Paul has said that Christians have died to sin and have died to the Law. The question then arose, "*Is the Law sin?*" The answer, "*God forbid!*" (Romans 7:7-12).

2:15. by nature. A reference to one's birth.

2:15. Gentiles. The Gentiles were considered sinners, or heathen, because they did not have the Law to guide them in their behavior and religion.

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.

2:16. justified. If this is Paul's first epistle, then this is the first time the word "justify" is used by him. Job asked, "*I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?*" (Job 9:2). Paul would answer by saying, "*A man can be just with God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.*"

2:16. justified. In a legal sense, justification means that God has pronounced a verdict of righteousness on behalf of a sinner based on the merits of Christ and the imputation of the same to those who are the heirs of salvation. The Biblical concept that justification is a legal justification can be seen by turning to other passages by Paul.

Romans 2:13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. They are pronounced righteous, they are not made righteous.

Romans 3:4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. Since God is righteous already, the meaning here is that God is pronounced righteous in what He does.

Justification is not on the basis of a man's good works, but righteousness will issue forth from a man who has been justified or declared righteous in the sight of God. Three times in Galatians 2:16 Paul declares that a person is not justified by the principle of law-works.

2:16. Paul's proposition, as stated in chapter 2, in verse 16 is simply that, "justification is by Christ alone. He's the external cause of our justification. It is by the gospel alone as the instrumental cause from the divine side, because we do learn of Christ through the word of God, and through grace alone as the internal inciting cause, because it is God's grace that works in our hearts, enabling us to see our need and to see our Lord Jesus Christ as that or as the one who meets our needs; so that salvation is, as Shuler put it a long time ago, "of the Lord," by Christ, by grace alone, by faith alone" (S. Lewis Johnson).

2:16. the faith of Jesus Christ. Paul is not saying that we are justified by the faith that belongs to Jesus Christ. Rather, the apostle is saying that the faith that justifies is the faith that is *in* Jesus Christ.

2:16. Paul appeals to Psalms 143:2 to establish his doctrinal position. "*And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.*" No man is justified in the sight of God in and of himself, or by a legal principle. Only by grace through faith in Christ can a man be justified.

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.

2:17. sinners. God forbid that a person is found to be a sinner, which refers to someone trying to be justified in the sight of God on the basis of what a person does. Men keep on believing they can be justified by God through baptism, or church attendance, by being a philanthropist, by having culture, by being educated, by joining a church. But Paul says such sinners, for all of this is sin in the sight of God, shall not be justified.

2:17. minister. Paul is not asking if Christ is the *doulos*, or slave, of sin. Rather, he is asking if Christ is the promoter of sin. The answer, "*God forbid!*"

18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

2:18. I make myself a transgressor. For Peter to go back under the Law and refuse to eat with the Gentiles in order to keep the Law, he was making himself a transgressor for he was putting himself back under a system of law works.

19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

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

2:20. I am crucified. Greek, “*I have been* crucified.” Here is the Doctrine of Positional Truth: the sinner who is found to be in Christ has been crucified with him so that the old life, the fleshly life, is dead.

2:20. Gave himself for me. Here is the Doctrine of Substitution. Here also is the Doctrine of Limited Atonement or Definite Redemption. He gave Himself for me.

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

2:21. I do not. Paul answers one other objection. He might be accused of not appreciating the Law and ignoring the righteousness of the Law. But the truth is that if a man is justified by good works, by keeping the Law, then what is the point of the Cross? The Cross is made needless by the Law. Moreover, God has been foolish and His plan of grace is a blunder.

GALATIANS 3

The Foolishness of the Galatians Galatians 3:1-4

1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

3:1. O foolish Galatians. The Galatians were foolish because they were abandoning the gospel of justification by faith alone. Men are in love with their good works which is why many wish the apostle Paul would go away. Pardon me in Sir David Lindsay's "Three Estates," exclaims at one point, "By him that bore the crown of thorns, I would St. Paul had never been born." This is the feeling of many people who hate the doctrines of grace and God's sovereignty.

3:1. foolish. The word for foolish here is the same word our Lord used to describe the disciples on the Emmaus Road. *Luke 24:25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:* The word means to be spiritually dull, spiritually blind.

3:1. bewitched you. The Greeks had a great fear of the "evil eye", or being exposed to magical powers. The Galatians had a spiritual eye problem. They had taken their eyes off the Lord and returned to a legal law work for salvation.

A Backward Look

The First Question: Regarding the Holy Spirit

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3:2. This only. Paul was willing to hang his whole argument on this one point.

The Second Question: Regarding Wisdom

3 Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

The Third Question: Regarding Righteous Suffering

4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If *it be* yet in vain.

3:3. Suffered. Literally, "experienced." Salvation requires two parents. The two parents are the Spirit of God and the Word of God. Nothing more is necessary. From the new birth, the child grows in grace and knowledge, and moves toward maturity.

The Fourth Question: Regarding How the Spirit Works

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?

3:5. doeth he it. Literally, “did he it”. Read Acts 14 for an account of how the apostles came to Iconium with “signs and wonders.” In Lystra he healed the impotent man. All of this was the ministration of the Spirit.

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

3:6. Even as Abraham believed God. As an embodied example of what Paul was trying to teach, he turned to Abraham. In Genesis 17 Abraham is circumcised, but in Genesis 15 Abraham is pronounced righteous. Paul’s point is established. Abraham was a man of faith. Righteousness is by faith, not by legal works.

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

3:7 children of Abraham. The church consists of both Jews and Gentiles, who have received by faith, Christ as the Messiah. *Ephesians 2: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye [Gentiles] who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he [Christ] is our [converted Jew and confessing Gentile]peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*

Seven Synonyms for the Church in the Bible

• A wild olive tree	Romans 11:17
• The Israel of God	Galatians 6:16
• Seed of Abraham	Romans 9:7
• Children of promise	Romans 9:8
• Children of Abraham	Galatians 3:7
• Partakers of the commonwealth of Israel	Ephesians 2:12
• A Holy Nation	1 Peter 2:9

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.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

An Argument from the Contrary

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: 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 [Deuteronomy 27:26].

3:10. cursed. Every system of salvation that has no assurance of salvation is based on legalism and law-works. Such a system is cursed. The Law says, “Do and live.” Christianity teaches we live by faith in Christ, and then we do good works because of the outworking of saving faith.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH [Habakkuk 2:4].

12 And the law is not of faith: but, THE MAN THAT DOETH THEM SHALL LIVE IN THEM [Leviticus 18:5].

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

3:13 redeemed us. Christ has imputed His righteousness, and provided a pardon for the elect. Jesus has born the penal judgment of sin. The Father made Christ to be sin for us that “*we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*”

The Blessing of Abraham

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.

3:14. the blessing of Abraham. What is the blessing of Abraham? The answer is “Christ!” Christ is the blessing of Abraham, for in Christ men are saved, and by Him the soul is justified.

3:14. A question arises. “How did the Galatians move so far away from justification by grace?” Part of the answer is that they were “bewitched.” They were bewitched by human pride, for legalism appeals to the flesh. Man loves to boast,

“I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.”

Moses and Abraham

Law vs. Promise

Galatians 3:14-29

15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a mans covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

3:15. confirmed. Literally, ratified.

3:15. A covenant cannot be changed unless both sides agree to the changes.

3:15. addeth. The word “addeth” used here was a word often used of the adding of a codicil to a will.

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.

3:16. While verse 16 forms a parenthetical thought, every word of God is important. The main thought is that Christ is the real inheritor of the unconditional promise of God to Abraham.

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.

The Intercalary of the Law

18 For if the inheritance be of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

3:18. There is a System of Theology that teaches the church is an intercalation. It has nothing to do with the past and it has nothing to do with the future. That is not true. It is the Law which is an intercalary entity. The Law was added to the promises of God to Abraham. This is why the Law could be set aside with the coming of Christ. Christ fulfilled the Law, and then He destroyed the Law as a basis of righteousness and replaced it with a new reigning principle, the principle of grace, mercy, and truth.

The Purpose of the Law of Moses

19 Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

3:19. Wherefore then *serveth* the law?

The Law as a Hangman

Martin Luther believed the Law had a civil purpose. The Law was an instrument of civil government for the preservation and perpetuation of civil order. Said Luther, “*It is the hangman that keeps me from sinning, like chains, ropes, and strong bands hinder bears, lions, and other wild beasts from tearing and wending in pieces all that come in their way.*”

The Law as a Warning

The Law also served as a statue of warning whereby individuals are warned of judgment to come.

The Law as a Teacher

In this way the Law was pedagogical, it was a teacher of the righteousness of God. The Law is a mirror of the soul so that “sin might become exceedingly sinful. Only when a person sees themselves from God’s perspective will there be any hope for authentic repentance. Paul says that the Law was put, or placed, by the side of grace because of transgressions.

The Law as a Revealer of Sin

The Law revealed sin as transgression. In the Heidelberg Catechism there is a question, “*Whence do you know your misery?*” And the proper answer is, “*Out of the Law of God.*”

3:19. added. The word used here is a word that means, “*to add in addition*”, or, “*to add alongside of*”, to bring in as a complementary thing. The Law was added because of transgressions. The Law came in alongside the promised covenant blessings in order to manifest sin as transgression.

3:19. transgression. The meaning is that of rebellion, rebellion against an order, rebellion against law such as the law of the Ten Commandments. By the giving of the Law sin is vitalized, sin is actualized, sin is agitated, sin is inflamed. An example of what the Law does is revealed when the Lord gave the Law to Israel. *Exodus 20:19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.*

20 Now a mediator is not a *mediator* of one, but God is one.

The Helplessness of the Law to Save

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.

3:21. have given life. Neither life nor righteousness can come through the law (Galatians 2:21; 3:21). If the gospel is not salvation by works of the law, then what is it? The answer lies in the “five onlies”, as it has been put.

Five Doctrines of Divine Grace

- *Sola scriptura*, by the Scripture alone. Only the Scripture contains the truth of the Word of God.
- *Sola gratia*, by grace alone. The Scripture teaches we are saved by grace alone. Salvation is the free gift of God.
- *Sola fidei*, by faith alone. Faith is the instrumentality by which the Christian receives the benefits of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Baptism, taking communion, or joining a church are not the chosen instruments of God for salvation. Only through faith is the soul saved.
- *Solo Christo*, by Christ alone. The ground of salvation is Christ. At Calvary Jesus became the sin offering for all who are the heirs of eternal life. Christ is the foundation of salvation.
- *Soli Deo Gloria*, to God be the glory. Because salvation is on the basis of free grace, only God receives the glory. Human pride is eliminated, human works are excluded, and human efforts are to no avail. For time and for all eternity let it be said, “*To God be the glory.*”

“To God be the glory, great things He has done;
 So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
 Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
 And opened the life gate that all may go in.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
 Let the earth hear His voice!
 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
 Let the people rejoice!
 O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
 And give Him the glory, great things He has done.”

22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

3:22. Jesus Christ.

Three Spiritual Mountain Peaks

- The Mountain Peak of Abraham and the Promise
- The Mountain Peak of Moses and the Law
- The Mountain Peak of Mount Calvary where Jesus Christ Offered the Sin Sacrifice

From the Jail to Jesus Galatians 3:23-29

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

3:23. In context, Paul is trying to show that the fundamental covenant is the covenant of grace with unconditional promises made. Over time, the Jews began to view the Second Covenant, the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai, as the more important covenant as it became the basis for salvation. But the Jews were wrong. The true covenant is the covenant of grace. The Law was given to magnify the need for grace by emphasizing sin. In The Pilgrim's Progress, when Christian came near to Mount Sinai, he became afraid. *"Here, therefore, he sweat and did quake for fear".*

3:23. before faith came. Literally, “before this faith came”, meaning faith in the incarnate Christ.

3:23. kept under. Here is the figure of a jailer.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified [declared righteous] by faith.

3:24. our schoolmaster. The word here should be translated as “tutor.” Here is the figure of a trusted slave guardian. The Romans admired the Greeks, so Paul probably had in mind a Greek (Παιδαγωγος, paidagogos) slave, a servant, whose office it was to take the children to school.

3:24. unto Christ. The sense of the text should read, “*unto the age of Christ.*” The words, “*to bring us*”, have been inserted and should not be there.

Freedom by Faith

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster [tutor].

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

3:26. the children of God. Literally, “the sons of God.”

3:26. The teaching is clear. A person becomes the child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. This truth refutes the Doctrine of the Sonship of All Humanity. It is true that all men are the children of God by creation. We read of Adam that he was the son of God by creation (Luke 3:38). But then there are those who are the sons of God by the new creation. Only those who are of the Seed of Abraham are the sons of God by a recreation for they alone have faith in Christ Jesus. Paul's teaching also refutes the Doctrine of Universalism. Not all people will have faith in Christ Jesus. Not all men will be the sons of God. Jesus said of some, *John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* Again Jesus said, *John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.* There is the Fatherhood of God and there is the Fatherhood of Satan. The question must be answered, "Who is your father?"

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

3:27. have been baptized into Christ. i.e., have been identified with Him.

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.

3:28. All one in Christ Jesus. This text is often used to justify the ordination of women preachers. But the context is not dealing with ordination for it is addressing the gospel truth that those who have faith are "all one in Christ Jesus."

Four Standings

- The believer stands before God as an individual, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.
- The believer stands before God as a member of a family. There are relationships within the family for which we must give an account.
- The believer stands before God as a member of the church. Submission is to be given to the Elders, and in the church one's spiritual gift is to be exercised.
- The believer stands before God as a citizen, a member of a nation, and subject to the state.

When a person is in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female in Christ, they have equal privileges. But now, in the church, that is something different. The apostle says, with reference to the church, that he suffers not a woman to teach. He says that the women should keep silent in the churches. The things that pertain to the individual in one relationship do not necessarily pertain in another place. We have different functions in each sphere, according to the will of God.

There is something else. Submission does not mean inequality for Christ is submissive to the Father. And yet He is very God of very God. He was in submission to the Father, but He was equal to the Father. *1 Corinthians 11:3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*

29 And if ye be Christs, then are ye Abrahams seed, and heirs according to the promise.

3:29. and heirs. Only a person who is properly related can be an heir. Others can be given a benefit, but only an heir can receive the inheritance. These are the blessings of relationship.

**Six Blessings of being Heirs
According to the Promise**

- Justification
- Eternal Life
- The Law of the Lord
- The Privileges of Sonship
- The Right to Approach God in Prayer
- The Forgiveness of Sins

3:29. Abraham's seed. Christians are Abraham's seed, not Moses' seed.

GALATIANS 4

Five Important Doctrines in Galatians 4

- Doctrine of the Divinity of Christ
- Doctrine of the Humanity of Christ
- Doctrine of Redemption
- Doctrine of Adoption
- Doctrine of the Indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit.

1 Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant [slave], though he be Lord of all;

4:1. as long as he is a child. The Greek word for child (*vn̄πιος* nepios; nay'-pee-os), refers to one that does not speak. There was a time in American culture when it was common for a parent to say, “"Children should be seen, but not heard."

4:1. Lord of all. The illustration comes from a lord of a vast estate. To be an heir of Abraham is to have extreme spiritual wealth, such as life, justification, an imputed righteousness, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and His indwelling presence.

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

4:2. tutors. A reference to an overseer.

4:2. governors. A reference to a keeper of one's possessions

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4:3. Even so we. With these words a transition is made from doctrinal illustration to application.

4:3. elements. Greek, *στοιχεῖον* (stoicheion; stoy-khi'-on); something orderly in arrangement, i.e. (by implication) a serial (basal, fundamental, initial) constituent (literally), proposition (figuratively). The word came to refer to the alphabet. The meaning is that the Jews, who should have known better, began to emulate the Gentiles by seeking a righteousness based on good works in order to please God and be saved. The Jews took the Law, which was designed to condemn and show the need for a Savior, and turned it into a legal works salvation, so great did sin pervert their thinking. A person must move from the ABC's of human thinking to the divine Alpha and Omega of the Christian faith.

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

4:4. fullness of the time was come. That is, “*when the Law had discharged its duty as a pedagogue to bring souls to the Savior*”, God sent forth His Son.

Eight Preparations for the Coming of Christ

- The world was prepared politically. Rome had united the east and the west.
- The world was prepared socially, manifested in the *Pax Romana*, or Roman people.
- The world was prepared linguistically, for Greek, and Latin, were universal languages. As a result of the conquests of Alexander, Greek became the *lingua franca*, the working language or the unifying language, of the people.
- The world was prepared hygienically, for the Romans were clean people. They built baths everywhere. (Study John 9:7; John 13:6-8)
- The world was prepared economically for there was widespread trade and prosperity based on a wonderful transportation system. Five main highways led from Rome to the different points of the ancient world.
- The world was prepared intellectually. There was a hunger for knowledge, and openness to new ideas, reflected in Paul’s preaching to the Athenians.
- The world was prepared as far as timing. A hundred years earlier, and Rome would not have been in control of Jerusalem. A hundred years later, and the Jews would not have had control of their city.
- The world was prepared spiritually. Judaism was legalistic and oppressive. Paganism was morally bankrupt. The homes of Rome were decadent, as men had a wife for bearing children, and kept a mistress for sexual pleasure. Millions of slaves longed to be free. There was a spiritual hunger.

Everything was prepared for the coming of the Messianic king, our Lord Jesus Christ.

4:4. God sent. The Plan of Redemption is God’s sovereign plan. If there is any question about the love of God, or His care to save souls, one needs look no further than the Cross. Our Father God sent forth His Son to redeem sinful men.

4:4. God sent forth His Son. God did not send forth His child, He sent forth His Son. In His human nature, Christ was born a child, but as to His divine Sonship is concerned, He was not born, except in the sense of eternal generation. He was given as a Son. He already existed, but He came forth from His Father in fulfillment of the divine commission.

Special Note.

Only once in the New Testament did the Lord Jesus say He was born. He said to the Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate, “*To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice*” (John 18:37). When Jesus was born, He also came. The point is that Jesus is the eternal Son of God. The importance is that only God can speak for God. If Jesus is not very God of very God, then mankind does not have a true voice of God.

4:4. made of a woman. Christ had true humanity. He “*came to be of a woman.*” He was of Mary, according to the flesh.

4:4. made under law. Jesus came to do the will of God. *Psalm 40:7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, 8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*

Why Jesus Came

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

4:5. To redeem. Jesus did not come to make men redeemable. Christ did not come to make men savable. Christ came to redeem. Did the Lord accomplish what He came to accomplish? Praise be unto God, He did. *Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:* It is the Father who elects. It is the Spirit who regenerates. It is the Son who redeems.

4:5. under the law. The law was oppressive. It regulated every facet of one’s life. Peter spoke of the law as being a yolk which even the fathers were not able to bear (Acts 15:10).

4:5. adoption. Greek, *huióthesia*, a reference to a full sonship conferred with all legal rights.

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

4:6. Abba. This Aramaic term is one of domestic tenderness much like the word, papa. Dr. Thomas Guthrie (1803–1873), was a great Scottish preacher. When he was dying he whispered, “*Sing me a hymn.*” Then he said, “*Sing me one of the bairn’s (children’s) hymns. Sing one of those like,*

‘*Jesus loves me this I know,
for the Bible tells me so.*’”

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

4:7. through Christ. Greek, “through God.”

Persevere in Grace
Galatians 4:8-20

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

4:8. ye knew not God. The reason men know not God is because of sin. Sin affects our wills, our emotions, and our mind. Paul testifies to what theologians call the Adamic effects of sin. *Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:* When men know not God, they naturally serve those who are no gods. The number of these, “no gods”, is innumerable. The Hindu Pantheon of “no gods” consists of 330 million. And there are other “no gods” in other religions. The “no gods” of the cults such as the god of the Mormons, the god of the Jehovah Witnesses, the god of Christian Science are included. All of these “no gods” are worshipped because the minds of men are darkened by sin.

Characteristics of the Hindu “No gods”

- They do not offer any guarantees of hope or any unconditional covenant of grace.
- They do not ever communicate personal love.
- They do not care about sin. Redemption comes by a person paying for their own sins by dying and being reborn to a different sphere of existence.
- They all believe in reincarnation.
- They all believe in liberation of the soul so that there can be the uniting of your soul with the supreme God of your choice.
- Only two of the gods believe they are supreme, Krishna and Durga.

4:8. ye knew not God. The sense of this verse is, “You did not know God as He really is.” God is a triune God. God is a God of grace. God is a God of love.

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?

4:9. or rather are known of God. Paul modifies his own thought by referring to the Doctrine of Election. God knows of all men, but there is a special saving sense that individuals are known of God.

Those who Are Known of God

- The Lord knows those that are His. *2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*
- The Sheep are known by the Shepherd. *John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*
- Of Abraham, the LORD said, “*I know him.*” *Genesis 18:17 And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

4:9. are known. The passive voice stresses the fact that the knowledge of which Paul speaks is not traceable to self, but to God. Here is not just experiential knowledge, here is saving knowledge. We have been made by God to come to know the Lord. The story is told of the little boy who was asked, "Have you found Jesus?" He said, "No I didn't know he was lost. But I was lost and he found me."

4:9. weak. The Law has no power to save.

4:10. beggarly. Under the Reign of Grace the believer is an heir of God and has many gospel privileges. Those under the Reign of Law are poverty stricken, for there is no spiritual life, no eternal life, no relationship with God, no indwelling Holy Spirit, no promise, and no hope. There is only judgment and condemnation.

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

4:9-10. These Judaizers were destroying the pure gospel by adding legalistic requirements for salvation. Paul would have no one add anything to Christ as the means of salvation.

Should Christians Today Observe the Sabbath?

- Christians meet on the first day of the week based on apostolic example and in honor of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2).
- Those who insist on worshipping on Saturday are not consistent for in the Old Testament the Israelites observed not only the weekly Sabbath, but they had a yearly Sabbath to be observed every seventh year. We ask the Sabbatarians, “Do you observe the annual Sabbath year?”

- The apostle Paul was afraid of those who appealed to the Law for their rule of life (v. 11), and forbade being judgmental on this issue. *Colossians 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all.

4:12. Dr. S. Lewis Johnson translates this verse a little differently. “"Brethren, I beseech you become as I am (or, 'as I have become'). For I have become as ye are."

13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh [bodily illness] I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

4:13. infirmity of the flesh. This bodily illness is unknown. It has been suggested that Paul caught malaria because in his journeys he pass through the malaria infested swamps of southern Pamphylia. Some have suggested Paul suffered from epilepsy for it profoundly affects the body. Paul said that his trial was in his flesh (v. 13). A popular interpretation is that Paul suffered from some sort of chronic ophthalmic condition, or eye disease. The belief for this position is primarily based on Galatians 6:11. “*Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.*”

14 And my temptation [infirmity] which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

Losing One's Former Happy State

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.

4:15. blessedness. Literally, gratefulness; joy.

4:15. Paul asked an important question: “Where is your former happy state?” Legalism always destroys the joy of the Lord. Legalism promotes pride. Legalism makes the Cross unnecessary. Right doctrine brings happiness and joy in the Lord. When we think right, it is expressed right, and joy is a natural by-product. One of the sources of depression is unbelief. Another is false doctrine. It all leads to a loss of happiness.

False Forms of Spirituality

- Spirituality by taboos. There is a personal imitation of dress. There is an imitation of verbal expressions such as, “Hallelujah Lord” or, comments such as, “I am better than I deserve to be”. Facial expressions are modeled such as maintaining a look of seriousness or piety. The Christian is told not to smoke or chew or go with the girls that do. The believer is not to go to movies, or the bowling alley. The Christian must not grow a beard, or wear shorts, or play pool.
- Spirituality by relativism. In the name of love, Christianity is reduced to just one religion among many, but all religions are of equal value. A sense of moral superiority is enjoyed by being “broadminded” and “nonjudgmental.”
- Spirituality by asceticism. Some people believe if they hurt themselves, or give up something for Lent, or for some other occasion, or for a practical reason, they are spiritual.
- Spirituality by being a sacramentalist. Some believe that if they attend Mass on a regular basis, or take communion, or cite the Apostles Creed, or join a church, or perform certain religious duties, they are spiritual.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

4:16. The wisdom of Solomon should be remembered. *Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.*

17 They zealously affect you but not well; yea, they would exclude you [from us], that ye might affect them.

4:17. zealously affect. Literally, “have warm feelings for.”

4:17. exclude. Literally, “shut out.”

18 But *it is* good to be zealously affected always in *a good thing*, and not only when I am present with you.

Paul, the Pastoral Mother

19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

4:19. Christ be formed in you. In the matter of discipleship, the objective is not to build ourselves into anyone. "If ministers wish to do any good, let them labor to form Christ, not to form themselves in their hearers" (John Calvin).

20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

Throw out the Legalist
Galatians 4:21-31

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

4:21. Tell me. When Paul threw down this intellectual and theological challenge to the Galatians, it may be because the apostle knew the Judaizers were schooled in a rabbinical type of interpretation where fine, narrow points of interpretation were often made on very slender evidence. This could be done because of the way the Alexandrian scholars came to understand the Scriptures. It was believed that every text of Scripture had more than one meaning.

Four Types of Meaning in a Passage

- Historical (literal).
- Allegorical. In an allegory, one thing signifies another.
- Tropological (moral). The word “tropological” means “turned about” so as to apply a text to the moral life of the Church or an individual member of it.
- Anagogical. This form of interpretation is designed to raise the thought and interests towards the last things: heaven, hell, the last judgment, and the state of glory.

22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

4:22. two sons. A reference to Ishmael and Isaac.

4:22. the one. A reference to Ishmael. Conceived when Abraham was 85.

4:22. a bondmaid. A reference to a female slave, i.e., Hagar.

4:22. the other. A reference to Isaac. Conceived when Abraham was 99 despite the deadness of his body. *Romans 4:19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:*

4:22. a freewoman. A reference to Sara, Abraham's wife.

Genesis 16:15 And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

Genesis 21:1 And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

The text of v. 22 would read this way: "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one [Ishmael] by a bondmaid [a female slave, i.e., Hagar], the other [Isaac] by a freewoman [Sarah, Abraham's wife, (Gen. 16:15; 21:2)].

23 But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman *was* by promise.

4:23. after the flesh. This is a reference to human effort to accomplish the will of God, and it was unworthy. It did not please God. The schemes of men are an abomination to the LORD.
 4:23. by promise. God is pleased when men believe His word and act accordingly.

24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth [leads] to bondage, which is Agar.

4:24. an allegory. Greek "*alla*," meaning "other," and "*agoreuo*," meaning "proclaim." An allegory is a historical narrative with a deeper meaning. What Paul actually gives here is a typical illustration.

4:24. for these are the two covenants. Hagar represents the Old Mosaic Covenant. Sarah represents the Abrahamic Covenant.

Hagar

Bears a child of the flesh
 Representative of Mt. Sinai
 Representative of the Mosaic Law
 Representative of the bondage under Law
 Representative of the Law which persecutes

Sarah

Bears a child of promise
 Representative of the heavenly Jerusalem
 Representative of the Abrahamic promise
 Representative of the freedom of grace
 Representative of those being persecuted

(Legalism persecutes the person who believes in grace)

Representative of the one being cast out

Representative of the one being received

25 For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

4:25. answereth. Literally, corresponds.

26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27 For it is written, REJOICE, THOU BARREN THAT BEAREST NOT; BREAK FORTH AND CRY, THOU THAT TRAVAILEST NOT: FOR THE DESOLATE HATH MANY MORE CHILDREN THAN SHE WHICH HATH AN HUSBAND.

4:27 Judaism; Christianity will have many more children than Judaism.

4:27. Rejoice, thou barren. The apostle quotes the prophet. *Isaiah 54:1 Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.*

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

1:28 Isaac was chosen by God over Ishmael in order to establish the Sovereign's right to choose whom He wills. God establishes His promises and purpose in the affairs of men.

29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now.

4:29. persecuted. The persecution of Isaac came from his half-brother, Ishmael. The persecution of the Christian will come from those who should be close. Peter turned on the Galatians because he was influenced by the Judaizers. Peter was wrong. The Judaizers were wrong to turn again to the works of the Law. The legalist will always try to hurt those who enjoy the freedom of grace. The Catholic Church tried to kill Luther. John Calvin was driven out of Geneva before being invited to return. Today, if a person says they do not believe in free will but the bondage of the will, there will be persecution. The same is true when faith is expressed in predestination and election. Men hate the doctrines of grace.

30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON: FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREEWOMAN.

4:30. cast out the bondwoman. What Paul is teaching here by way of analogy is that God's verdict is the legalist is to be cast out. *Genesis 21:10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. 11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. 12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.*

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

4:31 children...of the free. The true Church of the New Testament is born of the same free woman (Sarah) as Isaac was born in the Old Testament. Israel and the Church are of one family, the family of God. If Israel of old is not of the same mother as the Church, then she was never in Christ and never saved.

4:31. The quotation is from Genesis 21:10-12. “*Wherfore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. 11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. 12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.*

Distinguishing Marks of Legalism

- Legalism promotes a Doctrine of Redemption by human merit. The Biblical response is Ephesians 2:8-9. “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*”
- Legalism imports a mercenary spirit. Many rules and regulations are mandated. Then, the expectation arises that salvation will come to those who do something. When this happens, man makes God his debtor. Suddenly, man is owed something by God.

But man is not owed anything of God. Rather, it is God who gives in grace, that which is able to make man saved and sanctified. Augustine came to understand this truth by reading *I Corinthians 4:7.* “*For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?*”

- Legalism has a fondness for that which is negative such as the Ten Commandments. In the New Testament error taboos are embraced in the name of having “standards.” *Colossians 2: 20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.* While some negatives are important and form part of the Christian life, a fondness for the negative must not be excessive.

Self-Test

Are You a Legalist?

1. Do you believe salvation is obtained by your good works?
 Yes No

2. Do you believe salvation is obtained by joining a church?
 Yes No

3. Do you believe salvation is through your religious culture?
 Yes No

If you answered “Yes” to these three questions, you are Ishmael, you are a legalist.

4. Do you think salvation comes through the cross-work of the Lord Jesus Christ?
 Yes No

5. Do you believe salvation comes through the regenerating work of God the Holy Spirit in bringing men to the knowledge of their own personal sin and need of Christ?
 Yes No

6. Do you believe that salvation is by grace through faith, and apart from human merit?
 Yes No

If you answered “Yes” to these three questions than you are Isaac, the child of promise.

GALATIANS 5

Finding Freedom in Christ
Galatians 5:1-12

1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

5:1. Stand fast. Dr. S. Lewis Johnson translates this verse a little differently. "*For freedom Christ has set us free, stand therefore and be not entangled again in a yolk, of bondage.*"

5:1. free. Freedom is a topic of interest to all, but means different things.

Five Types of Freedom

- The African Nationalist seeks colonial freedom from European control.
- The capitalist seeks economic freedom in trade, and the lifting of tariffs.
- The Communist claims to set the proletariat free from capitalist exploitation.
- President Roosevelt, in 1941, spoke of four freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.
- The Christian longs for spiritual freedom from the legalism of men like the Judaizers, freedom from the Law of Moses as a form of salvation, freedom from the Law as a rule of life, and freedom from the power of indwelling sin.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

**Falling from the
Grace Method of Salvation**

4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

5:4. are justified. The verb in the original text is a present tense. The passage should be rendered, "*Christ has become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are trying to be justified by the law.*"

5:4. are fallen from grace. This phrase has nothing to do with falling from salvation. Many religious bodies teach that a person can lose one's salvation. Jesus said this would not happen. Eternal life cannot be lost. *John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

The true believer will persevere in the faith because of the preservation work of the tri-holy trinity. With that being said, a person can fall from grace. A person falls from grace when they

turn from a theology of grace to a theology of legalism. Commenting on this passage, the British theologian John Stott (27 April 1921 – 27 July 2011) has said, "It's impossible to receive Christ thereby acknowledging that you cannot save yourself, that's why you received Christ, and then receive circumcision thereby claiming that you can because when you are circumcised you're saying, 'This is necessary for salvation and I can do it.' But when you turn to Christ and receive him you're saying, 'I cannot be saved. I need somebody else.'"

Men Believe in Three Ways of Salvation

- A person can be saved by God.
- A person can be saved by man, that is by himself.
- A person can be saved by some combination of God and man.

The second method of salvation cannot be true for the Bible teaches the utter helplessness and hopeless of the natural man to do anything in the flesh to please God.

The third method of salvation cannot be true for it is impossible to determine what God would have a person do, and then what He is willing to do, by way of a combined effort, in order for a person to be saved.

The Bible says that God will not give or share His glory with anyone. God will never allow a person to boast and say, "I appreciate what God has done for me, but I am also very proud of what I have done to achieve salvation." Such a testimonial would diminish the glory of God. That cannot happen. Therefore, as Jonah has stated, "*salvation is of the Lord*" (Jonah 2:9).

5:4. grace. What is this grace? It is a reference to the principle of salvation. It is the method of salvation, but it is not salvation. *Galatians 1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.* In Galatians 2:21 Paul speaks again about grace as the principle of salvation, the method of salvation. He says, "*I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*"

If a person is trying to be saved, or justified, by any other principle or method other than grace, then "*Christ is dead in vain.*" Paul says nothing about falling from salvation, but he is concerned that individuals might "*fall from*", or turn from, the grace method of salvation to a works method of legalism, believing that is salvation. How can we fall from grace? We fall from grace when we fall into Law, or legalism. Then, when a person sins, a person falls into grace. *1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Moses fell into grace after he murdered the Egyptian. David fell into grace despite his many transgressions. *Romans 4:8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

5:5. wait. This is a word of patience. It is a word of faith.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

5:6. which worketh. Faith works. Faith works not for salvation, or in order to get salvation, but because there is salvation.

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.

5:10. I have confidence in you. Of all the people whom Paul ministered to, the Galatians were among the most fickle. Paul's real confidence was in the Galatians "through the Lord."

11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offense of the cross ceased.

12 I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

5:12. cut off. This is very strong language. Paul is saying, "*I would they were even castrated who trouble you.*"

Spiritual Life by the Holy Spirit Galatians 5:13-26

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.

5:13. liberty. The liberty which the believer enjoys is not an antinomian liberty. Some Antinomians reject any place for the Law, even the Moral Law, in the believer's life. The Puritans were accused of engaging in the "whippings of the law" to control the daily life of the believer. The Puritan, John Bunyan, had Christian answer this charge in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Speaking of the Antinomians, Christian said, "I walk by the rule of my master, you walk by the rude workings of your fancies." There is a place for the Moral Law in the life of the believer. The Christian has liberty, but the believer is not lawless. Liberty is not to be a code word for licentiousness for that would make a mockery of redemption. One cynic has quipped:

"Free from the Law, O happy condition;
Sin as you please, for there is redemption."

The believer's true position is reflected by Paul. He is under law to Christ. *1 Corinthians 9:19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.*

The believer's life is not life under the Law. The believer's life is not life without Law and so is Antinomian. The believer's life is a life grounded in love to Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit.

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF.

5:14. fulfilled. Literally, “obeyed.”

5:14. one word. Literally, “one statement.”

5:14. in this. The reference is to Leviticus 19:18. *“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.”*

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

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

5:16. Walk in. Literally, “live by.”

5:16. Ye shall not fulfil. Literally, “ye shall not perform, accomplish”.

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.

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

5:18. led of the Spirit. Every Christian is led by the Holy Spirit. *Romans 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

5:18. ye are not under the Law. From the creation of Adam to Mt. Sinai there was a period of 2500 years, and no Law. Then came Mt. Sinai and the Law. But Christ fulfilled the Law and abolished it at Calvary. From Calvary to the present hour the Christian is again, no longer under the Law. So history past, and history present, demonstrates that believers can exist apart from the Mosaic Law.

How a Person can Know if they are Led by the Spirit

The Works of the Flesh

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

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.

4:19-21. Men are far richer in vices than they are rich in virtues. “The human race is very prolific in its expression of the sins of the flesh” (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

Those Who Will Not Inherit the Kingdom of God

- Adultery
- Fornication
- Uncleanliness (sexual impurity)
- Lasciviousness (sexual excess)
- Idolatry (misplaced affections from God)
- Witchcraft (sorcery; occult practices)
- Hatred
- Variance
- Emulations (jealousies)
- Wrath
- Strife (selfish ambition)
- Seditions (factions, quarrelling)
- Heresies (sects)
- Envyings
- Murders
- Drunkenness
- Revellings (gluttony)

5:21. which do. Literally, which practice.

The Fruit of the Spirit

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering [patience with others], gentleness, goodness, faith,

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

5:23 These verses are not so much a code of behavior, but as a spirit, attitude, and accompaniment of spiritual behavior. As we walk in the Spirit, the very springs of our lives will be transformed.

The Fruit of the Spirit

A Perfect Expression of the Life of Christ

- Love

- Joy
- Peace (mental tranquility)
- Longsuffering (patience with others)
- Gentleness (kindness)
- Goodness (a generous spirit)
- Faith (faithfulness, dependability)
- Meekness
- Temperance

24 And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

5:24. affections. A reference to emotions.

5:24. lusts. A reference to inordinate desires.

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

5:25. walk in the Spirit. We learn to walk by the Spirit, by walking. We wake up in the morning and ask the Lord for guidance. Then, we obey. Step by step, and moment by moment.

“Day by day, and with each passing moment,
Strength I find to meet my trials here;
Trusting in my Father’s wise bestowment,
I’ve no cause for worry or for fear.

He, whose heart is kind beyond all measure,
Gives unto each day what He deems best,
Lovingly its part of pain and pleasure,
Mingling toil with peace and rest.

Every day the Lord Himself is near me,
With a special mercy for each hour;
All my cares He fain would bear and cheer me,
He whose name is Counselor and Pow’r.

The protection of His child and treasure
Is a charge that on Himself He laid;
'As thy days, thy strength shall be in measure,'

This the pledge to me He made.

Help me then, in every tribulation,
So to trust Thy promises, O Lord,
That I lose not faith's sweet consolation,
Offered me within Thy holy Word.

Help me, Lord, when toil and trouble meeting,
E'er to take, as from a father's hand,
One by one, the days, the moments fleeting,
Till with Christ the Lord I stand."

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

Eight Marks of the Spiritual Person Walking in the Spirit

- The person who walks in the Spirit is humble and not rude.
- The person who walks in the Spirit is not jealous of others.
- The person who walks in the Spirit promotes others instead of self.
- The person who walks in the Spirit bears the burdens of others.
- The person who walks in the Spirit restores those who have fallen morally or doctrinally.
- The person who walks in the Spirit shares with those who communicate the gospel.
- The person who walks in the Spirit sows to the Spirit and not to the flesh.
- The person who walks in the Spirit does good to all men, especially to those who are the household of faith.

GALATIANS 6

Lifting up the Fallen

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.

6:1, 18. Brethren. The chapter begins and ends with the word, “brethren.” In the Christian economy, the physical relationship is rejected as being of preeminent importance in favor of the spiritual relationship. *Matthew 12:48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? 49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! 50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.*

6:1. a fault. Literally, a “transgression”. “A misstep.” To the question, “Are we our brother’s keeper?”, the answer is, “Yes, we are our brother’s keeper.” We are free from the Law as a means of salvation for that work is of the Lord. We are free from the Law as a means of sanctification. The believer is to live by the Holy Spirit who will guide the person that trusts in Christ. While we are free from the Law we are bound to love others. There is a lovely cartoon by Charles Schulz. Lucy asks Charlie Brown, “What are we here for?”, or, “Why are we here on the earth?” And Charlie Brown answers, “We are here to make others happy.” And then Lucy, thinking for a little while, adds, “Well why then are the others here?” The others are here for the same reason we are here. We are to love “one another.”

6:1. overtaken. The idea is “to be taken by surprise.”

6:1. in the spirit of meekness. Meekness, or gentleness, is a Christian virtue.

6:1. restore. This word is used the disciples mending their nets. The word is also used of a doctor who sets dislocated limbs. Knowledge and gentleness are needed. Martin Luther said that when a brother falls into sin we should run to him, comfort him, and embrace him with motherly arms.

A Restorative Ministry to the Weak

2 Bear ye one anothers burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

6:2. one anothers. A restorative ministry is a reciprocal ministry within the household of faith.

6:2. burdens. Literally, “moral faults”. The saints have lots of burdens.

6:2. the law of Christ. The law of Christ is to love one another. *John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* Thirteen times this expression is used in the Bible (John 13:34; 15:12; 15:17; Romans 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11; 3:23; 4:7; 4:11,12; 2 John 5).

God’s One Another Plan

- Christians are to love one another. *John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*
- Christians are to prefer one another. *Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.*
- Christians are to have the same mind, one toward another. *Romans 12:16 Be of the same mind one toward another.*
- Christians are not to judge one another. *Romans 14:13 “Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.*
- Christians are to receive one another. *Romans 15:7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.*
- Christians are to admonish one another. *Romans 15:14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to ADMONISH ONE ANOTHER.*
- Christians are to salute one another. *Romans 16:16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.*
- Christians are to be courteous. *1 Corinthians 11:33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.*
- Christians are not to promote divisions in the body of Christ. *1 Corinthians 12:25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.*
- Christians are to serve one another. *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.*
- Christians are not to be consumed with one another. *Galatians 5:15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*
- Christians are to bear each others burdens. *Galatians 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*
- Christians are not to provoke one another. *Galatians 5:26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

- Christians are to forbear one another. *Ephesians 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.*

- Christians are to forgive one another. *Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*
- Christians are to submit to one another. *Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*
- Christians are to admonish one another. *Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*
- Christians are to comfort one another. *1 Thessalonians 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*
- Christians are to edify one another. *1 Thessalonians 5:11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.*
- Christians are to exhort one another daily. *Hebrews 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*
- Christians are to be considerate of one another. *Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*
- Christians are not to speak evil of one another. *James 4:11 Speak no evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.*
- Christians are not to complain about each other. *James 5:9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.*
- Christians are to openly confess their faults to one another. *James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another.*
- Christians are to pray for one another. *James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*
- Christians are to show hospitality to one another. *1 Peter 4:9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.*
- Christians are to use their spiritual gift for one another. *1 Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, EVEN SO MINISTER the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

- Christians are to show humility to one another. *1 Peter 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*
- Christians are to show affection to one another. *1 Peter 5:14 Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.*
- Christians are to walk in the light in order to have fellowship with one another. *1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

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

6:3. The believer is not to have an exalted opinion of himself. Nor is the Christian to compare himself with someone else.

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

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6:5. shall bear his own burden. The word burden is in the singular and refers to the fact that in the day of ultimate judgment, every believer must bear his own life's work. While in daily life we can help others, there will come a day when we must stand before the Lord bearing our own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

6:6. communicate. In context, the reference may be a reference to the importance of giving financially to the one who teaches the Word. It may also be that Paul is not speaking of money, but of wanting the Galatians to take what has been communicated to them and communicate to others the good things of grace. Reject the teachings of the Judaizers.

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

6:7. that shall he also reap. It is not what a person thought he sowed, or hoped he sowed, or planned to sow, but that which he did sow he reaps. In context Paul is referring to sowing the principles of grace, and not sowing to the flesh.

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

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

6:9-10. There are two opportunities to do good. First, we can do good to all men in general. Second, we can seek to especially help those in the household of faith. While charity begins at home, it does not stop there.

Galatians 6:11-17
Three Crosses

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

6:11. letter. In the Greek, this word is in the plural, “letters”.

Two Evil Motives Exposed

The First Evil Motive
A Desire to Avoid Persecution

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

The Second Evil Motive
The Exaltation of the Flesh

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

6:13. that they may glory. Paul exposes the driving motive of the Judaizers in having individuals circumcised. Their desire was not to promote the glory of God but to glory in persuading others to follow them.

Three Crosses

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

6:14. the cross. The place of abomination.

Three Crosses of Death

- The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- The cross on which the world died to Paul.
- The cross on which Paul died to the world.

Reasons to Glory in the Cross of Christ

- At the cross the justice of God was magnified.
- At the cross sin was punished.
- At the cross the love of God was displayed.
- At the cross the penalty for sin was paid.
- At the cross the love of Jesus was crystalized.
- At the cross souls are saved.
- At the cross the world is condemned.

“Jesus keep me near the cross,
 There a precious fountain,
 Free to all, a healing stream,
 Flows from Calvary's mountain.

In the cross! In the cross!
 Be my glory ever,
 Till my raptured soul shall find,
 Rest beyond the river.”

“We fail to see anything in the doctrine of the atonement that we should not glory in. We've heard a great many dogs bark against it. But dogs will bay the moon in her brightness. And therefore, we don't mind their howlings” (Charles H. Spurgeon).

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

6:15. availeth. Literally, “profits”.

6:15. a new creation. This was not the first time God made a new creature, for He called the Gentile, Abraham, to be a Jew. Any Gentile, at any time in history who received Christ, was given the right to be called the child of God as per John 1:12.

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

6:16. the Israel of God. This may be a reference to the Jewish Christians who have not fallen prey to the Judaizers and thus not fallen into legalism. They are the true Israel of God.

6:16 and upon the Israel of God. The Greek word “*kai*” , translated “*and*”, can be, and should be, properly translated, “*namely*” or “*even*”, as an explanation of those who, “*walk according to this rule*”, and on whom Paul gives his blessing.

17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

6:17. the marks. This is a reference to the scars which Paul bore for his witness for Christ. Christian, do you have any scars for Christ?

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Doctrine of Worldliness

1. The Bible does teach the concept of worldliness.
2. To embrace worldliness is to embrace false doctrine.
3. If Christians are not careful, worldliness will be found in the church and among those who name the name of Jesus Christ.
4. Worldliness will come into the church because a primary characteristic of worldliness is friendliness, which is very appealing, especially to those who have been taught to love others.
5. However, worldliness produces spiritual adultery and brings loss of fellowship with God.
 - *James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*
6. The Christian is commanded not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world, for to love the world is not to love God.
 - *1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*
7. If biblical worldliness means, in part, to embrace false doctrine, manifested by the Judaizes in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, than a twofold motive can be discerned.
 - Worldliness, in context a reference to Judaism, was promoted in an attempt to avoid persecution for the cross of Christ. *Galatians 6:12. As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.*
 - Worldliness, in context a reference to Judaism, was promoted in an attempt to exalt the flesh. *Galatians 6:13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.*
8. The reason why the Christian can never be a friend of the world is because it was the world that crucified Jesus Christ. It was the false doctrine of the Rabbi's, the Scribes, and the Pharisees that hated Christ so much, He was put to death.

Are you a Worldly Person?

1. Do you believe that a person can stand before God on the basis of their own human merit?
Yes ____ No ____
2. Do you believe that a person can stand before God only on the merits of Jesus Christ?
Yes ____ No ____
3. Do you believe that a person can stand before God in the righteousness of their own human doing?
Yes ____ No ____
4. Do you believe that a person can stand before God only after recognizing that an individual cannot do anything to satisfy God but Christ has done something that does satisfy him?
Yes ____ No ____
5. Do you believe that the initial movement for salvation comes from man, and from a decision of his own free will?
Yes ____ No ____
6. Do you believe the initial movement for salvation comes from the effectual grace of the Holy Spirit who makes the unwilling, willing, and brings every soul to Christ?
Yes ____ No ____
7. Do you believe in auto-salvation which says, "This do and thou shalt live"?
Yes ____ No ____
8. Do you believe that a person lives by the grace of God and then because of grace performs good works?
Yes ____ No ____
9. Do you seek to avoid persecution for the cross of Christ?
Yes ____ No ____
10. Do you like to exalt the flesh in acts of religious works?
Yes ____ No ____
11. Are you impressed with ecclesiastical statistics, such as how many have been baptized in your church last year, or how much money has been given?
Yes ____ No ____
12. Are you willing to embrace doctrinal differences in others, to go along to get along?
Yes ____ No ____

2:16. Justify.

London Baptist Confession of 1689

Chapter 11: Of Justification

1. Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing Christ's active obedience unto the whole law, and passive obedience in his death for their whole and sole righteousness by faith, which faith they have not of themselves; it is the gift of God.

Romans 3:24; Romans 8:30; Romans 4:5-8; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:30, 31; Romans 5:17-19; Philippians 3:8, 9; Ephesians 2:8-10; John 1:12; Romans 5:17

2. Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification; yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.

Romans 3:28; Galatians 5:6; James 2:17, 22, 26

3. Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are justified; and did, by the sacrifice of himself in the blood of his cross, undergoing in their stead the penalty due unto them, make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in their behalf; yet, inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them, and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for anything in them, their justification is only of free grace, that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.

Hebrews 10:14; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Isaiah 53:5, 6; Romans 8:32; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:26; Ephesians 1:6, 7; Ephesians 2:7

4. God did from all eternity decree to justify all the elect, and Christ did in the fullness of time die for their sins, and rise again for their justification; nevertheless, they are not justified personally, until the Holy Spirit doth in time due actually apply Christ unto them.

Galatians 3:8; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Timothy 2:6; Romans 4:25; Colossians 1:21,22; Titus 3:4-7

5. God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified, and although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure; and in that condition they have not usually the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.

Matthew 6:12; 1 John 1:7, 9; John 10:28; Psalms 89:31-33; Psalms 32:5; Psalms 51; Matthew 26:75

6. The justification of believers under the Old Testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament.

Galatians 3:9; Romans 4:22-24