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Galatians 5

Freedom in Christ

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

Stand fast is a military term meaning that you do not retreat or waiver, nor abandon your post, ever. The issue of course is again the Judaizers were trying to convince the Galatians that they could not be “true” Christians without first becoming Jewish and following the Law. This was of course contrary to the Truth of the Gospel of Christ in that while under the Law people are in bondage to the Law but while under Grace people are free in Christ from the Law and its death penalty.

God cautions the Christians not to be “unequally” yoked. In the context of this verse, it is describing a potential of being yoked with these Judaizes; there by yoking the Law with Grace; God has described that as not a good Spiritual relationship and unequal.

The last thing we as Free Believers would ever want to do is retreat back under the Law and again into bondage. There are many religions that require a great number of things to be considered within the flock of that religion. Legalism can take on many forms, its ultimate goal is to diminish Grace and draw one back into bondage of all sorts.

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

The act of circumcision was from the law; Circumcision means to; cut around. As to salvation it offers no solution, it was a sign within the Law given to the Jews; a covenant sign of belonging to the Jewish nation and to God.

*Genesis 17: 9And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; **Every man child among you shall be circumcised.** 11And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and **my covenant shall be in your flesh** for an everlasting covenant. 14And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.*

The Law was specific as to the day of circumcision and the requirement of any who would be in God's Chosen people Israel. Failure to comply with the Law was covenant breaking. Notice in verse 13; "**my covenant shall be in your flesh**".

Q. Where or in what is the Covenant of Grace stored with man?

Grace is a manifestation of God's Love; it is conveyed in both Mercy and Grace and that permeates the Spirit of man, not his flesh. It becomes a "heart" or Spiritual condition between man and God. The conflict is of course the dispute between the Spirit and the flesh. It is as has been said a circumcision of the heart this relationship with Jesus.

Romans 2:29 29But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Grace replaced the Law including the law of circumcision of the flesh. Paul is pointing out that under Grace if you chose to have circumcision of the flesh to comply with the law then Jesus was of no use to you. You have chosen the Law over the Spirit of Grace; the flesh was preferred over the Spirit.

Paul in his letter to the believers in Rome demonstrates the change from a fleshly covenant to a spiritual covenant; both using circumcision as a signpost. The Law = flesh, the Spirit = heart.

This Spiritual Covenant is a fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant in several ways.

*Genesis 12: 1 Now the ^aLORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 ^bAnd I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: ^cand **in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.***

All the families of the earth are blessed by Abraham's progeny; Jesus Christ.

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

Just like leaven a small amount leaven, leavens the whole loaf so it is with the Law when Grace is offered. If you chose any part of the Law, then you must accept the whole Law. If you chose Grace, then you are free from the Law and live under God's Mercy and Grace.

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

The threat here seems to be that if you were saved by Grace through Faith in Jesus Christ and then you believed that you had to carry out some act like Circumcision in order to be "really" saved then you would fall from Grace. The question then becomes when Paul says you have fallen from Grace; is that

equal to losing one's salvation? Consider this very carefully as you study to find the answer.

<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/clarke/galatians/5.htm>

Clarke's Commentary

Christ is become of no effect unto you - It is vain for you to attempt to unite the two systems. You must have the law and no Christ, or Christ and no law, for your justification.

Ye are fallen from grace - From the Gospel. They had been brought into the grace of the Gospel; and now, by readopting the Mosaic ordinances, they had apostatized from the Gospel as a system of religion, and had lost the grace communicated to their peace and love of God, received by Jesus Christ, could not remain in the hearts of those who had rejected Christ. They had, therefore, in every sense of the word, fallen from grace; and whether some of them ever rose again is more than we can tell.

Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

The whom is of course "Jesus". By His Blood and our faith in that blood we then have access into this "Grace" which allows us to stand and rejoice in God's presence. It is a condition of "righteousness" that can only be attained by and through the Blood of Christ. For anyone to let alone think but then to actually act on a legal remedy through the law to attain a "righteous" standing in God's presence would be a lie.

It is Jesus plus nothing that gains us Righteousness a right standing before God the Father. It is Sanctification; already not yet declaration.

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

As believers we have been given faith.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

Whether you understand this verse in Ephesians as Grace being the gift or Faith or both, the idea is that we are saved not ourselves, it is all a gift from God.

The part we probably dislike the most is “waiting”. Patience is a virtue according to the Lord.

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Longsuffering is another word for “patience”.

According to Strong’s Concordance

Transliteration: makrothumia

Phonetic Spelling: (mak-roth-oo-mee'-ah)

Definition: patience, long-suffering

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

As Americans and part of the “free world” we are those who reside under man’s law as opposed to lawlessness; we are well acquainted with law in general. So were the Jewish people, it was a part of their life and to step outside the law intentionally could be met with stoning to death at the worst or shunning at the least. Paul is trying to help the Galatians understand that even though sinners they were free of the bondage of the Law when they accepted Christ. They had never lived under the Law of Moses and there was no need to start now.

*Romans 4: **13For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15Because the law worketh wrath: for **where no law is, there is no transgression.*****

The lie of the Judaizers had placed them under bondage and it was breaking Paul’s heart. Paul was pointing to Faith and that Faith was brought about by the Love God showed us and gave us the very Faith that we all needed to Believe in the first place.

7Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? 8This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you. 9A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. 10I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will

be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

Paul points out that the Galatians had run well; they heard the truth; took it and ran with it. Then all of a sudden, some other folks showed up and tainted the truth with a lie. And a little lie can make the whole idea a lie. Truth is sacred, it is perfect, it is God and to allow any distortion into the truth is as leaven in a loaf of bread.

Paul points out that the lie bringer will be judged by God for the lie that he has brought, regardless of who they are, including other Christians.

11And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. 12I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

Early in Paul's ministry he was faced with a problem of one of his fellow teachers; Timothy. Timothy had a Jewish mother and a Greek Father. Under Jewish Law the very thing Paul is exhorting these Galatians to flee from, that very law caused Paul to circumcise Timothy. The Jews whom Paul was reaching out to would not allow him to even speak to them if they knew Timothy being half Jew by birth was not circumcised; he would be unclean and by association Paul would be unclean and unable to speak to

any Jew of the Law. Therefore, to expedite their ability to teach the Jews about Christ Timothy willingly was circumcised. Not for the Law's sake but for the sake of bringing God's Mercy and Grace to the Jews through faith in the Blood of Jesus.

Q. So did Timothy surrender his salvation by being circumcised to comply with the law?

No, Timothy did not get circumcised in order to be saved, he knew his salvation came by belief and faith in Jesus Christ and he would never abandon that for any act of the Law. He allowed himself to be circumcised to open a door to people he loved and wanted to share the truth with.

Paul said to the Corinthian Church:

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

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.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

²³ And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

In verse 11 and 12 Paul was denouncing the Law of the Jews to the Galatians. Paul could do this because his audience was made up wholly of gentiles. He was explain to them that the law had no meaning to these gentiles until the Judaizers showed up and tried to convince them otherwise. Again the Judaizers tried with some success that for them to be circumcised fulfilled the Jewish Law, then they too could fall under the Law of Israel. Oh yeah!

As American Christians, we are faced with picking sides; America or God. For some it may not be an easy to choice because we have been so blessed by living in America, most of us came to the Lord due to the very freedom of Religion specified in our Constitution. For some in the near future they will have to choose between the two; for many it will not be an easy choice, but that very thing is coming. The next few verses places the issue at hand; love of fight? I look at it this way, you may chose another path; I am a Christian that happens to be an American, therefore my allegiance is to Christ and God the Father. Some will say they are American's than happen to be christians. My personal sense

is that is the opposite of sound doctrine and a dangerous place to dwell, we cannot serve two masters as we all know.

Matthew 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

13For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

This liberty that Paul speaks about he addressed in more depth. The idea that our liberty bought with a great price at the Cross and by the Blood; meaning that if the Blood covers our sin then why not continue to sin or even sin more bring about even more Grace? Flawed thinking or a lie inserted by Satan? My sense is that Satan has tried to convince people that sin is not really that bad. That is how he started by questioning what Eve said.

Genesis 3: 1Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, **Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?** 2And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, **neither shall ye touch it,** lest ye die. 4And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

The question that formed mankind for the existence of this earth.

Genesis 2: 15And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16And

the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: [17](#)But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Satan first misquoted God saying that God had said they could not eat of any of the trees in the Garden. That was a lie and Satan knew it, but it got the creative juices flowing in Eve. She could now respond with her own paraphrasing just as Satan had done, but she knew he was incorrect and wanted to straighten him out perhaps with a little pride of knowing the answer to his question.

The mistake Eve made was that she added to what God had said. Now in her defense she was not present when God gave the command to Adam, so either Adam misrepresented what God said or Eve added to it. We do not know which it was, but we do know the result.

Q. Can you see the difference between what God said and what Eve told Satan what God said?

God's statement:

Genesis 2:[17](#)But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it

Eve's statement:

Genesis 3:[3](#)But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, **neither shall ye touch it**

So how important is it that we correctly quote God when making a case for some issue? It appears it is pretty important based on the minor addition shown by what Eve said, verses what God said. Satan took that opportunity to assault the idea of death by questioning;

***Genesis 3:4* And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:**

Satan was trying to put doubt in Eve's mind about what God says as Truth. Satan questions whether or not God really meant that she would really "die". Satan knew exactly what God said and what He meant. Satan knew that God had made man separated from a sin nature and that as long as man walked in obedience to God that man would forever be pure. If Satan could get man to disobey God, then Satan knew that he, Satan, could affect man's life for eternity by separating him from God. Satan is the father of lies and used this manipulation of Eve; doubt was Satan's weapon of choice in this instance.

14For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

The essence of God is Love; He is many more things, but He has a Love for man that caused Him to sacrifice His Only Son so that

man could once again and forever have a Loving relationship with God mankind's Father and Creator. Where there is an absence of Love hatred breeds; where there is an absence of Christs Light and Love to the world; darkness is there.

Living by the Spirit

(Romans 8:9-11)

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

The flesh, the old man constantly wants to please itself. Lust comes in many forms, but the ultimate goal is always the same, selfishness, that leads to hate and hate to murder.

17For 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.

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

This harkens back to the idea that all things are possible yet all things are not profitable.

1 Corinthians 6: All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

God has granted us unlimited action in all matters. In a way it is a test, a method of helping our Spirit overcome our flesh through various tests. The flesh demands all kinds of evil;

Genesis 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Psalms 14: The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. [2](#)The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. [3](#)They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

When wisdom from the Spirit that resides in all believers prevails then each of us will set aside our fleshly desires and walk rightly with God; that is the process of sanctification.

To give us a clear picture of those things that have trapped mankind since the fall of man, God is going to give us a fairly inclusive list of sins common to mankind.

[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.

Even though not a complete list of possible sins this list covers many that are prevalent. Anyone who practices these sins is not a believer. It does not say anyone who has committed these sins is not a believer because that would include us all. We have

forgiveness for our sins through the Blood of the Lamb if we believe in Him.

But here lies the problem with all things being lawful for the Christian. Can you name one of these things that is profitable for the Christian; what gain, or progress do any of these bring in “Sanctification”. The answer is obviously ZERO, NADA, NONE.

If you commit one of these sins as a Christian are you then an unbeliever? No not necessarily, but if you proclaim to be a Christian and you persist in any sin then your salvation may be in question; in other words, were you ever really saved to begin with.

If we have Christ in our hearts the idea of sinning should repulse us, if it does not, the Holy Spirit is right there to convict us immediately. He is there to help us reject the sin and seek righteousness. The real issue is how do we respond to the Holy Spirit when He convicts us before we commit the sin. Do we turn around and run away from the sin or do we just lower our shoulder and forge ahead knowing what we are doing is wrong?

So how do we know if we are really saved?

1 John 5: [9](#)If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

God is loudly saying that the testimony of God is superior to the testimony of men. In other words, God's Word is the real source of Truth about your salvation, not what you do or say about it.

Those are important as we witness to other people but the words we speak and the deeds we do, do not assure us or anyone else of ours or their salvation.

It is God's testimony, what He says saves us not what we think or do.

Continuing 1 John 5: [10](#)He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

There is a "record" a "testimony" directly from God as to His Son Jesus Christ. It is that record, not our own story of how we were saved that assures people of salvation.

[11](#)And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

This verse sets the stage for the very Truth that establishes forever our salvation; there is nothing to add to it.

[12](#)He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

It is that simple, that thorough, that complete, that decisiv, that conclusive, that determination, that finality that God has declared it and that is the end of it.

Purpose and Concluding Remarks

13These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

Jesus plus nothing guarantees us eternal life.

Back to Galatians, God gave us the partial bad list those things that are so obviously wrong now He will give us a list that causes life, not death.

22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Crucifixion of the flesh in my experience is a lifelong process, it is hand in hand with the Sanctification process. Oh, if it were only so simple to crucify the flesh with words and be done with it, who among us would not jump at that. But we all know the power of the flesh, the unrelenting pressure to do those things we know does not present Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Gentleness and that are not profitable.

**25If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.
26Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.**

The goal here is to walk in the Spirit of God every minute of every day. The more we practice that walk the easier it becomes to sense sin knocking at the door of our heart and run. God gave us a simple command and formula;

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

My problem lies in the first word; Submit. I am a rebellious man filled with evil thoughts, just like Paul said;

Romans 7: 14For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 15For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. 17Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Even though Paul explains his wrestling with the flesh just like all of us do; he will come back to the very place we all need to standfast, not moving from, not surrendering our thoughts of being saved by the Blood of the Lamb.

1 John 5: [12](#)He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

Jesus plus nothing!

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