

Galatians Part 5

Note:

In this teaching, the following terms are used: “new creation”, “new man” or “new self”, “Christ in You”, “holy spirit” and “gift of holy spirit”. All these terms refer to that which is received and born in a person when he or she becomes born again.

Turn to Galatians 5

In this section of Galatians, the believers are urged to stand firm in the freedom which Christ has provided for us. Standing firm in this freedom means that we refuse religious legalism, we refuse to allow false leaders to influence us to submit to a “yoke of bondage”.

These instructions to stand firm in our freedom are especially critical for the visionaries and administrators in the body of Christ to follow. Recall in Galatians chapter 2 that when the apostle Peter failed to stand firm, others followed him into his error.

We are called to freedom, but it is wrong to use our freedom as an opportunity to indulge the desires of the flesh. What desires? The context indicates that these are the desires to submit to and promote religious legalism.

Galatians 5:16

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and **you will not** gratify the desires of the flesh.

17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

The new self of the spirit, the real you, desires to know and to do the will of God. The old self of the flesh desires to do the works of the flesh.

Walking by the spirit does not mean that the desires of the flesh disappear. It means that we overcome those desires and we stand fast in our freedom.

Being led by the spirit means that we are no longer in bondage to the obligations of commandments contained in ordinances. As Romans 3:20 says

20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

We do not need further instruction about the knowledge of sin, we need doctrine, reproof, and instruction in righteousness. These scriptures, these epistles, contain doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. If we fall back into religious legalism we lose sight of what Christ accomplished for us, who we are in Christ, and the works that God ordained for us to do. Walking by the spirit verifies and establishes that we are absolutely, without question, NOT under the law. There is no religious law which binds, inhibits or holds us back as we walk by the new spiritual self and its desires.

There are some important truths here.

Galatians 2:19 and 20 say:

19 For through the law (*the old written scripture*) I died to the law, so that I might live to

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God. (we don't live to any earthly organization)

20 I (the old self of the flesh) have been (it's already happened) crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but **Christ who lives in me**. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 5:16

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and **you will not** gratify the desires of the flesh.

Galatians 5:18

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Turn to Romans 7

The lives we lead, the details of our everyday life, how we walk with God, how we love the fellow believers, how we function within the body of Christ; these things are accomplished by the operation and working of the new self of the spirit, Christ in us! We do not live the details of life by the written scripture! It is the written scripture that introduces us to who we are in Christ, our capabilities and God's will for us to walk by the spirit, to be led by the spirit. It is within this spiritual walk that we know, understand, and accomplish God's will for us, moment by moment and day by day.

Romans 7:4

4 Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.

5 For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.

6 But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

Its very clear that we serve in the new way of the spirit, by way of the new spiritual self. We do not serve in the old way of the written code – that way has been abolished and has been done away with. We live, walk, and are lead by the spirit of Christ in us! I will explain further -

Matthew 4:4

4 But he answered, "It is written,
" 'Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

"Every word" is not contained in the written scripture. If you limit yourself to written scripture, you will not be accessing the "every word" which is needed for life.

John 6:12

(Jesus is teaching his followers)

12 I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to

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you the things that are to come.

14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

In Colossians there is more detail on what belongs to Christ.

Colossians 2:1 (From the Revised English Bible)

1 I want you to know how strenuous are my exertions for you and the Laodiceans, and for all who have never set eyes on me.

2 My aim is to keep them in good heart and united in love, so that they may come to the full wealth of conviction which understanding brings, and grasp God's secret, which is Christ himself,

3 In whom lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

“All that the Father has is mine”, “In whom lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”
- The written scriptures do not contain all these treasures. They include some of them, they point to and reveal the existence of these treasures.

Again, it is within this spiritual walk that we know, understand, and accomplish God's will for us, moment by moment and day by day.

Turn back to Galatians 5

The next verse in Galatians 5 begins to instruct us about the works of the flesh. These are works which take place in the flesh. It does not mean that these works cannot take place under the influence of devil spirit power, nor does it mean that devil spirits cannot cause these works to take place; often times devil spirit influence is present and orchestrating these works, which take place in the physical realm.

While we read these verses, remember that these works are listed particularly in the context of religious legalism and self justification. Religious legalism and self justification rely on the flesh and its works.

Galatians 5:19

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,

20 idolatry (*worshipping anything except the one true God*), sorcery (*attempting to invoke spiritual power by five senses efforts, particularly by drugs*), enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,

21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Turn to Matthew 23

The efforts, the work to live according to religious legalism are works which take place in the flesh, and are involved in the works which we just read.

Religion may look so nice, so sincere and pious, but it is anything but that. Jesus confronted the

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Pharisees about their religiosity in Matthew 23:27, 28

27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness.

28 So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

The Pharisees were the upper echelon of religious society in Judea. They were very zealous of the traditions of the elders and their law. In spite of their outward show of piety, their works in the flesh led to hypocrisy, lawlessness and spiritual uncleanness.

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The end of verse 21 reads,

“...I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do (*practice*) such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

There are enough clear verses which indicate that we are born again and will not lose our inheritance. So who are “those who practice such things”? It is the Gentiles who are not born again. Note that there is no law – Paul is using the behavior of the unbelieving Gentiles as an example of what not to do. Look at the futility of their lives – they have no inheritance; BUT YOU DO have an inheritance!

Instead of continuing on in the works of the flesh, look what we get to cultivate:

Galatians 5:22

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

These benefits, these desirable attributes are NOT CULTIVATED BY THE FLESH! These are cultivated as we live, walk and are led by the spirit of Christ in us, the new spiritual self!

Galatians 5:24

24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

How have we crucified the flesh? It says how in verse 16; we crucified the flesh by becoming born again, and walking by the spirit.

Romans 6:6 says that our old self was crucified with him (Jesus). Galatians 2:20 says that I have been crucified with Christ.

Galatians 5:25

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

26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Don't revert back to religious legalism and the works of the flesh.

Now we come to Galatians chapter 6 verse 1. This is a continuation of chapter 5; we have not

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finished with casting out the law, standing firm in our freedom, refusing to submit again to a yoke of bondage.

As we walk together in the spirit, we are instructed as follows:

Galatians 6:1

1 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

I have heard many sincere and seemingly wonderful teachings which include this verse, out of context. What has happened is that many wonderful believers are confused as to what spiritual fault or faults are discussed here. Even the translators seem to have missed the context.

The King James Version reads:

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault...”.

Brethren means brothers and sisters. What “man” is this referring to? A believer, a brother or sister in Christ. It is NOT referring to the false brethren!

The next question is, what fault? By referring to the context, we can have a clear answer. I'm going to read some verses from the context:

Galatians 4:9

9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?

Galatians 5:1, 2

1 For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

2 Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.

What is the fault? It is turning back to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, to the religious legalism, submitting to a yoke of bondage, accepting religious ritual and the obligations to do the entire law.

Next question, what is overtaking or catching the believer? I will read some more verses from the context:

Galatians 4:17

17 They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them.

Galatians 4:29

29 But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now.

Galatians 5:7, 8, 11

7 You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

8 This persuasion is not from him who calls you.

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11 But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed.

What is overtaking and catching the believer? Deception, error, and bondage which works in the false brethren and false leaders!

Galatians 6:1 continues

“...you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

Instead of becoming conceited, provoking one another, envying one another, we who are walking by the spirit should gently restore our brother who has been pursued, overtaken and captivated. How are we to do this? Paul provided three wonderful examples of how he handled these instructions.

In Galatians 2:4, 5, he stood against the false brethren, the false leaders who wanted to enslave Paul. Note that he did not attempt to work with or restore the false brethren, he stood against them. That's keeping watch on yourself!

Next in Galatians 2:11-14, Paul observes his brother Peter, overtaken in a fault. In the process Peter was leading others into the same fault. What did Paul do? He restored him in a spirit of gentleness. He retaught some of the gospel of Christ to Peter and the others.

After that, Paul became aware of the same sort of trouble among the churches of Galatia. What did he do? He obeyed the word of wisdom and wrote this epistle of Galatians by spiritual believing. The short answer to how to restore him in a spirit of gentleness is to walk by the spirit; follow the spiritual guidance you can receive on how to minister to your fellow believer.

Galatians 6:2

2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

The law of Christ is that we are to love one another. Paul put up with Peter's weakness, he put up with the weakness of the believers in Galatia. Putting up with weakness, bearing one another's burden is done while strengthening the one who is weak. It's not a passive tolerance, but active ministering with the expectation that our brother or sister will become strong. That takes work and patience.

Galatians 6:3

3 For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

No one is too important or too good to help bear one another's burdens.

Galatians 6:4

4 But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor.

5 For each will have to bear his own load.

Verse 2 is speaking of burdens which can be shared. Verse 5 is speaking of burdens which cannot be shared. For example, I can help someone walk by the spirit, but I cannot walk by the spirit for

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them.

Galatians 6:6

6 One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches.

7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

In Galatians 4:19 and 20, Paul expressed anguish and perplexity about the believers in Galatia. He is calling them back to the gospel of Christ, reteaching them, and reminding them that it is right to support the teacher of the word. He does not indicate here what this support consists of. It is clear that he wants to hear from them, to know that they stand in freedom.

Doing good to everyone is consistent with the examples of life and teachings that Paul has provided by revelation, here in this epistle. First and foremost it is walking by the spirit, not gratifying the desires of the flesh. Someone in religious legalistic bondage is not able to fulfill this guidance.

Galatians 6:11

11 See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

Paul personally writes here to validate and endorse this epistle, that it was actually composed by him.

Galatians 6:12

12 It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

13 For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.

The truths revealed here in verses 12 and 13 are true today. Those involved in leadership positions within the religious, legalistic corporations of our time are in bondage to the counterfeit legalistic teachings. They are not able to change and teach the truth, even if they wanted to. If they did teach the truth they would be out of their corporate positions and out of a job very quickly. Their audiences would, for the most part, desert them.

Galatians 6:14

14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Paul gave up his worldly religious credentials, associations, oaths of allegiance, status and acclaim.

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These were all dead to him, and he was dead to the world. He did this so he could minister powerfully as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 6:15

15 For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Our backgrounds, whether religious or not, do not count for anything. What counts is the newly created spiritual self which we each have become.

Galatians 6:16

16 And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

Teachers take this verse and wax eloquently about the country of Israel which was established by the UN in the 20th century. However, this verse is not talking about that country. We read in Galatians 4:25 that the Jerusalem which now exists is dominated and ruled by devil spirits of bondage!

Galatians 4:28 declares that we are children of promise. That makes us, the believers, those in the body of Christ, the Israel of God.

Galatians 6:17

17 From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

As he ministered, preaching and teaching the gospel of Christ, Paul certainly had received his own share of physical abuse and the scars that resulted.

What trouble is he referring to? The same trouble from the false brethren, the false leaders which were troubling the believers in Galatia. Paul was not going to give up teaching the gospel of Christ, no matter what.

To close this series of teachings on Galatians, Turn to Colossians 2.

In order to effectively stand in the freedom with which Christ set us free, to resist submitting again to a yoke of bondage, we need to know exactly who we are, who we have become.

Colossians 2:6

6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,

7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

There is nothing in this verse about religion, legalism, or religious organizations. This work of building up of the believers was illustrated in Acts 15:32 by Judas and Silas who were prophets. It is illustrated by Paul's care of the believers in Galatia, and the epistle that he wrote to them.

We are to build up and edify each other in love as we walk by the new spiritual self.

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Colossians 2:8

8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

We have learned extensively who and what does this persecuting and capturing.

Colossians 2:9

9 For in him the whole fullness of deity God dwells bodily, (*in the body of Christ*)
10 and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

Where you are, there is Christ. Where you are, there is the head of all rule and authority. You and I and all the other believers are united with Christ, who is the head. We are members of the body of Christ. That is the reality of who we are.

Colossians 2:11

11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,
12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.
13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,
14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.
15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Any valid religious, legal, judicial requirement that we violated has been paid for by the accomplishments of Jesus Christ.

Turn to Philippians 3.

Now any religious legalistic requirement which anyone attempts to put on us is tempting God. IT IS WRONG! If someone tells you that you must be water baptized, its WRONG. Jesus Christ fulfilled every legal religious requirement.

Christ disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities who move these deceptions and these twisted teachings. He OPENLY exposed them and put them to shame when he triumphed over them.

Philippians 3:2

2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

These are the false brethren, the false leaders. Look out for them, because they are still around working. As we walk by the spirit they will be exposed. Now we know that we never have to submit to the yoke of religious legalism ever again. We are called and enabled to stand firm together in the freedom with which Christ has made us free.

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Philippians 3:3

3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.

This is who we are, set free to worship and love God by the new spiritual self which we received by the accomplishments of Jesus Christ. We are free to encourage, edify and love the believers as God would have them loved. We are enabled and free to expose the deceptions of the world and the god of this world. We are instructed and enabled to stand firm in this freedom, never submitting to a yoke of religious legalistic bondage ever again! We are, indeed, free from bondage!