

He Sunday, November 10 – Galatians Pt. 5

The Three R's Of Spirit-Led Living

Reality, Responsibility & Resource

Today we continue with our series in the Book of Galatians. Galatians is a call for freedom from the dependence on the Law for salvation.

The Letter to the Churches in Galatia is a passionate and heartfelt response of Paul to the young believers that he and Barnabas had witnessed to and led into a saving faith in Christ. Paul & Barnabas, more than likely, had baptized them or at least witnessed their baptism, helped them set up their churches and set up elders/pastors to lead the churches. Sadly, as we have discovered a group of people legalists, called the 'Judaizers' or 'party of circumcision', took it upon themselves to '*correct*' the new Christians of Galatia and lead them to be what they would call '*true religious believers*'. This sadly mistaken group was very persuasive and successfully confused them over what Paul had taught them and 'bewitched' (tricked) them into thinking that that need the Law of Moses and the religious practices of Judaism in order to be complete and true Christians (a Jesus+Moses belief).

When Paul discovered that he had been undercut by these false teachers he was heartbroken & angry and immediately began a passionate plea to address the problem as an Anguished Father, to confront them with the Real Truth as a Freedom Fighter; to rebuke and hold them accountable as a JAG Officer, Attorney of Truth & Grace; and then he called a Family Conference as a Family Counselor. Today in Chapter 5 we hear a heartfelt call to serve, love and live in freedom in the power of the

Holy Spirit. I will also be utilizing a questioning approach for us to consider in applying this passage to us in the 21st Century Church.

Some of the outline is from John Davis (Philly Church Galatians Summary) and Warren Wiersbe. (With The Word Commentary)

The Three R's Of Spirit-Led Living

- 1. Reality – You Are Free In Christ.**
- 2. Responsibility – Serve One Another In Love**
- 3. Resource – Walk In The Spirit**

1. REALITY: You Are Free In Christ (5:1-12)

The first 'R' speaks of our spiritual reality - knowing that God accepts us completely in Christ and that we are to Guard our Freedom In Christ

Question No. 1: Are You Standing Free?

Galatians 5:1-3... ¹ It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore, keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. ² Look! I, Paul, tell you that if you have yourselves circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. ³ And I testify again to every man who has himself circumcised, that he is obligated to keep the whole Law.

Our freedom in Christ is a costly thing as it cost Jesus His very life. In Christ, we stand free, and the yoke or slavery of the Law has been removed. (Wiersbe. see also Acts 15:6-11)

Question No. 2: Are You Falling?

Galatians 5:4-6... ⁴ *You have been rendered powerless from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by the Law; you have fallen from grace.* ⁵ *For we, through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.* ⁶ *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.*

The phrase ‘*fallen from grace*’ in this passage, in my opinion, Paul is not addressing specifically whether or not you can lose your salvation. It appears that Paul is warning about falling out of the *Sphere of Grace* into the *Sphere of Law*. He seems to be warning of the danger to substitute REGULATIONS for a personal RELATIONSHIP with God. (adapted Wiersbe) In essence, your faith is ‘*rendered powerless*’ when you move away from Christ and His grace and rely on the Law and personal effort. It is not works, but your “*faith working in love*”

Question No. 3: Are You Running On Course

Galatians 5:7-12... ⁷ *You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?* ⁸ *This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you.* ⁹ *A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough.* ¹⁰ *I have confidence in you in the Lord, that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you will bear the punishment, whoever he is.* ¹¹ *But as for me, brothers and sisters, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been eliminated.* ¹² *I wish that those who are troubling you would even emasculate themselves.*

Paul is questioning them by saying basically, ‘What happened?’ You were doing so well, then you got off course. Then he brought in a Jewish theme of leaven. Leaven, or yeast is a common metaphor used in the Old and New Testament for sin or error. Paul is saying you were on course then you let some ‘leaven’ or sin and error creep in and pull you off course. Jesus used leaven to picture sin in Matthew 16:6-12, here Paul is using a similar theme to describe how subtly false teaching can come in and like leaven causes bread to rise, the false teaching causes sin to rise in our lives and pull us off course.

2. RESPONSIBILITY – Serve One Another In Love

Question No. 4: Are You Serving Others

Galatians 5:13-15... ¹³ *For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh but serve one another through love.* ¹⁴ *For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”* ¹⁵ *But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.* ([*Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 19:19, John 13:34](#))

You have probably heard the old saying, ‘With great freedom, comes great responsibility’. That is what Paul seems to be saying here. The freedom that he is talking about doesn’t give us a license to live anyway we want. Freedom in Christ comes with the responsibility to serve others, and to serve others in love. We are not to use freedom just for our own benefit, we are to use it to love and serve others as Christ did.

3. **RESOURCE** – Walk In The Spirit

Question No. 5: *Are You Walking in the Spirit?*

Galatians 5:16-18...¹⁶ *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.* ¹⁷ *For the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, in order to keep you from doing whatever you want.* ¹⁸ *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.*

The third ‘R’ speaks of our spiritual Resource – we live the Christian life through the Holy Spirit who lives within us. As Warren Wiersbe said “*Life, not Law changes behavior, Law works by compulsion from without, Grace works by compassion from within*”. (p.1528, With the Word) If we are to live a Genuine Christian Life, we must yield to the Holy Spirit and let Him empower us to live a life of godliness and not according to the flesh.

Verses 19-21 give a description of what the deeds of the flesh look like. **Question 6 Are You walking in the flesh?**

¹⁹ *Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: sexual immorality, impurity, indecent behavior,* ²⁰ *idolatry, witchcraft, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions,* ²¹ *envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Obviously, these are acts that we should NOT be involved in. However, even Christians can ‘get off course’ and let the flesh get the best of us at times. That’s why it is imperative that we allow the Holy Spirit to control our

lives consistently. When we do, we will see these fruit or results in our lives:

Verses 22-26.. **Question #7 -Are you Walking in the Spirit and producing the Fruit of the Spirit?**

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.* ²⁴ *Now those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.* ²⁵ *If we live by the Spirit, let’s follow the Spirit as well.* ²⁶ *Let’s not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.*

Take-Aways To Consider:

The three points all interrelate in a mature believer -

1. “If you are enjoying your freedom in Christ, you are serving others in love by the power of the Spirit.
2. If you are serving others in love, you are doing it out of your freedom in Christ and through the power of the Spirit.
3. If you are walking in the Spirit, you are enjoying your freedom in Christ and serving others in love”.

(Davis)

Life in the Spirit

*Our calling,
Our privilege,
Our joy”!*

(Adapted from Davis)

Which then helps us

To Be Powerful Witnesses of Gods’ Good News Story,
Motivated by Love and Empowered by the Holy Spirit.

The following references were utilized in preparation of this message:

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