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# *Galatians: Experiencing Freedom*

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## INTRODUCTION

Millions of people are looking for freedom. They want to be free from fear, from poverty, from war. These freedoms are important but not one of them gets to the real heart of our problem. The freedom that people and nations everywhere need most is freedom from sin. Until people are set free from the bondage and slavery of their own sinful natures, the other “freedoms” ultimately will never satisfy.

Galatians was written to explain the freedom provided by Christ Jesus—a freedom that *will* satisfy. The writer of this letter is the apostle Paul, a convert from Judaism to Christianity. After his conversion he traveled from place to place preaching the gospel of the grace of God. Christ had set him free from bondage to sin and religious traditions. He was determined that others also should know the truth that would set them free.

One of the areas Paul visited was Galatia, located in the part of Asia Minor now called Turkey. On his first missionary journey, Paul had the joy of winning many to Christ and establishing several churches in Galatia (see Acts 13:14-14:23). After he left, false teachers (Paul calls them “false brethren”) came to these churches. These men taught that accepting Christ as Savior was not enough. In addition to Christ, certain Jewish customs such as circumcision (Galatians 1:3,4) and the observing of special days and seasons (Galatians 3:10) needed to be kept as well.

Many groups today still add such “extras” to the Gospel message. For some it involves keeping a particular day, as the “Sabbath.” For others, it’s being baptized or demonstrating a spiritual gift such as tongues. Galatians speaks to us today concerning these situations just as surely as it did to the first century Christians. Study this book and discover how you can experience the freedom Christ meant for you to have.

**Instructions:** It takes only about fifteen minutes to read the whole Epistle to the Galatians. Please read through the entire book once, then go back and reread the first chapter of Galatians again in preparation for the first lesson.

**Pharisees:** A religious group or sect within Judaism, known for carefully keeping every part of the law down to the smallest detail.

**Law:** Originally, it referred to the 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17). This was broadened later to include *any* commandment given by God. In Paul's day, it had come to imply not only God's commandments but also the interpretations and applications that had evolved around the scriptural commandments.

**Grace:** Unmerited or undeserved favor. That response on God's part which is the basis for our restoration with the Father.

**Peace:** A cessation of conflict, a state of contentment and quietness of heart, a sense of well-being.

## LESSON 1

# THE POWER OF GRACE

## Galatians 1:1-24

### *Background:*

Paul ministered in Galatia for a time before moving on to other regions. Soon after he left the infant churches in that area, false teachers infiltrated the local groups of believers and began to teach the new converts that they were not true Christians unless they lived under the law of Moses. In other words, these false teachers mixed the Mosaic law with the grace of God as a condition for salvation. The apostle Paul saw the error of this teaching and immediately wrote a letter to the Galatian churches warning them of the dangers of trying to mix law and grace.

To help us understand what was taking place, we should know that there were three groups in these Galatian churches:

- **false teachers (false brethren)** who insisted on keeping the law but were unconverted men, Pharisees at heart
- **converted Jews** who observed the traditions of their people without attaching any religious value to them
- **converted Gentiles** who did not observe the Jewish traditions; their cultural heritage differed widely from that of the Jews.

These false teachers declared it was necessary for men and women to observe the law of Moses for salvation both from the guilt and penalty of sin and from sin's power in daily life. The Bible, however, teaches that "through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved" (Acts 15:11).

Paul points to his own life as proof that living by the Law was ineffective. As a Pharisee he had kept the Law zealously (v. 14), but it only caused him to be full of hate and condemnation toward others (v. 13). His life began to change, however, when God called him by grace (v. 15), and he responded. In fact his life changed so dramatically that people knew that only God could have brought about this transformation (v. 24).

## EXAM 1

**Instructions:** In preparation for the first exam, read Galatians 1 at least three times. Read also Acts 9:1-30 as a background for Galatians 1.

**Read the following sentences and fill in the missing words.** (*The responses for all exams are based on the New King James translation.*)

1. In Galatians 1:4, we are told that Christ gave Himself for \_\_\_\_\_, that He might \_\_\_\_\_ us from this present evil world.
2. In verse 6, Paul says, "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you \_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_."
3. In verse 12, Paul claims that the gospel which he preached was not received from \_\_\_\_\_ but it came through the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Based on what you've read in chapter 1, write "true" or "false" after each of the following statements:**

- A. Before his conversion, Paul persecuted the Church of God.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- B. After his conversion, Paul went immediately to Jerusalem to confer with the apostles. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. According to verses 6 and 9 there is more than one true gospel.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**List the verse numbers in which the following phrases appear:**

1. For I neither received it from man, . . . but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. \_\_\_\_\_
3. That I might preach Him among the Gentiles. \_\_\_\_\_
4. He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy. \_\_\_\_\_
5. They glorified God in me. \_\_\_\_\_

**POINTS TO PONDER:**

1. Paul desired for all believers to experience two blessings from the Lord: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 3, also see Ephesians 1:2, Philippians 1:2, Colossians 1:2).

**Paul always lists the one blessing before the other. Look at the definitions for these words in the column on page 4. Why do you think he does that?**

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2. The Lord Jesus Christ revealed Himself to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-9). After that experience Paul says that Christ is now revealed “\_\_\_\_\_” (v. 16).

**How would you explain to someone the difference in these two experiences?**

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***Beyond the Text:*** Paul's life was changed significantly after experiencing the power of God's grace. While you may not have seen as radical a change as Paul, how has the power of God's grace at work changed your life?

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**In preparation for the next lesson, read Galatians 2 at least three times.**

## LESSON 2

# FREEDOM FROM TRADITIONS

### Galatians 2:1-21

#### *Background:*

In Galatians 2, Paul related that he went to Jerusalem for the second time after his conversion (1:18; 2:1; Acts 22:17) after spending 14 years preaching the gospel of the grace of God in Syria and Cilicia. He received this gospel from Christ—it was not a human invention, nor had it come from any human agency. This is the same visit as mentioned in Acts 15, which took place about A.D. 50. At this time some in Jerusalem who claimed to be converts to Christ tried to insist on circumcision for the Gentile believer, Titus, after the commandment of Moses. Circumcision was an important religious ceremony in the days of the Old Testament. It was the sign of the covenant between God and the Jewish nation. The rite represented the “circumcision of the heart” or “consecration to God.” But Paul opposed this, maintaining that we are justified before God by faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, not by becoming slaves to religious ceremonies and traditions.

Even the apostle Peter was influenced by these “false brethren” (Galatians 2:4) despite what God had taught him in the case of Cornelius (Acts 11:1-18). This grave error led Paul to rebuke Peter publicly.

Acts 15 informs us about the first Church Council and throws light on this whole problem. This is why it's useful to read this chapter before we go on in our study. (Read Acts 15.) After lengthy discussion, the Jerusalem Church Council concluded that Gentiles were saved by the grace of Jesus Christ. And as God gave the Holy Spirit to them just as to Jewish believers, then certainly the Gentiles should not be required to follow laws and traditions that even the Jews had been unable to keep. In other words, people of all nationalities and every social status are saved from sin and justified before God by the grace of Jesus Christ, through faith, without circumcision or bondage to any other tradition.

**Circumcision:** The removal of the male foreskin. In Judaism this act symbolized the special relationship that the Jew had with God. Any male convert to the Jewish religion was required to go through this ceremonial rite before they were considered a true believer.

**Uncircumcised:** Only the Jews regularly practiced circumcision. Consequently the term “uncircumcised” was used as another name for a person who was not a Jew. These people were considered outside of God's special relationship and therefore looked down upon.

**Gentile:** Anyone who was not a Jew. As a non-Jew, they were not partakers of all the blessings God promised His people. A “good” Jew had nothing to do with a Gentile unless that individual submitted himself/herself to all the traditions and ceremonies of Judaism—especially circumcision, for a male.

**Barnabas:** A Jewish traveling companion of Paul's. His real name was Joses, but he was such an encourager that he

was given the nickname Barnabas, which means “Son of Encouragement” (Acts 4:36). He had been commissioned by the other apostles to join Paul in the ministry to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:9).

**Titus:** A Gentile traveling companion of Paul’s. It is probable that Paul had been instrumental in leading him to Christ (Titus 1:4). Titus became the center of controversy because he had never been circumcised like those Gentiles who converted to Judaism.

## EXAM 2

**Study Galatians 2 carefully; then choose and underline the correct word in the following questions:**

1. Paul’s first visit to Jerusalem took place three years after his conversion; then he returned to Jerusalem (eighteen) (six) (fourteen) years later.
2. The “false brethren” were insisting that Gentile converts should be (baptized) (circumcised) (excommunicated).
3. Paul found it necessary to rebuke (Peter) (James) (John) because he had caused confusion among the Jewish and Gentile believers.

**Fill in the missing words in the following verse (Galatians 2:16):**

“Knowing that a man is \_\_\_\_\_ justified by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the law, but by \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ, even we have \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ that we might be \_\_\_\_\_ by faith in Christ and \_\_\_\_\_ by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the law; for by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the law \_\_\_\_\_ flesh shall be \_\_\_\_\_.”

**Write “true” or “false” after each of the following sentences:**

- A. Titus was a Greek convert who was compelled to be circumcised. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Peter’s apostleship was primarily to the Jews. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Paul’s apostleship was primarily to the Gentiles. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. No flesh will be justified by the works of the law. \_\_\_\_\_
- E. If we obtain righteousness by the works of the law, then Christ died in vain. \_\_\_\_\_
- F. No one can gain entrance into heaven on his own merit. \_\_\_\_\_

## POINTS TO PONDER:

1. Paul would not “yield submission” (compromise) even for an hour (v. 5). Why? How can we decide when we can “yield submission”?



**2. If righteousness (a right relationship with God) could be obtained by keeping the law or doing some other set of good works, what would Christ's death on the cross accomplish (v. 21)?**

***Beyond the Text:*** If traditions or religious rituals have no saving value, why keep them?

**In preparation for the next lesson, read Galatians 3 at least three times.**

## LESSON 3

# THE PREMINENCE OF THE PROMISE

### Galatians 3:1-29

#### *Background:*

In Galatians 3:15 Paul argues that the Galatians experienced the effect of the gospel when they received the Holy Spirit through faith, and not by the works of the law. He also pointed out that God promised Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, that in him all nations would be blessed (vv. 6-9). This promise of blessing to the world referred to the coming of the Savior through the nation Israel. Though “the law” was not given until 430 years after “the promise” made to Abraham, yet in Paul’s day the law had overshadowed the promise in the minds of the Jewish people. To the law the Jews added hundreds of detailed and binding traditions that no one could ever keep. Christ rebuked the religious leaders of His day by saying, “Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition” (Matthew 15:6).

Paul maintained that the promise had preeminence (first in authority or rank) over the law. God gave the promise before He gave the law because He never intended people to obtain salvation through the keeping of regulations, traditions and ceremonies. Furthermore, Paul makes it very clear on the basis of Scripture that if anyone attempts to be saved by keeping the law, he must keep the whole of it, not just circumcision and ceremonies (Galatians 3:10-12).

In the plan of God, we obtain favor with God through faith in Christ (3:13, 14). In this third chapter, we will learn why the law was given. This will help us to understand the difference between the “works of the law” and “justification by faith” which was promised through Jesus Christ.

The following passage taken from Paul’s Epistle to the Romans is helpful at this point, “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe” (Romans 3:19-22).

**Justify:** An act whereby God declares a sinner “not guilty.” Some have suggested that it’s “just as if you had never sinned.”

**Righteousness:** That which meets a certain standard of rightness or correctness.

**Covenant:** An agreement between two parties binding them to a mutually agreed-upon relationship.

**Seed:** Used figuratively to mean descendants.

**Transgressions:** To break a set of standards or the law, to cross over the line.

**Mediator:** One who stands between two opposing parties in order to bring about reconciliation.

**EXAM 3**

**Study the third chapter of Galatians carefully, noting the contrast between “the law” and “the promise.” Indicate your answer at the end of the sentence.**

1. How many times does the word “law” appear in this chapter? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many times does the word “promise” appear in this chapter?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How many times does the word “faith” appear in this chapter?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Write three of the six questions that appear in the first five verses of this chapter:
  - A. \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_

**Fill in the missing words in Galatians 3:6, 8, 11:**

“Just as Abraham ‘ \_\_\_\_\_ God, and it was \_\_\_\_\_ to him for \_\_\_\_\_.’ . . . And the Scripture, \_\_\_\_\_ that God would \_\_\_\_\_ the nations by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, ‘In you \_\_\_\_\_ the nations shall be blessed.’ . . . But that \_\_\_\_\_ one is \_\_\_\_\_ by the law in the sight of \_\_\_\_\_ is evident, for ‘the \_\_\_\_\_ shall live by \_\_\_\_\_.’”

What does this verse say to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**POINTS TO PONDER:**

- 1. How would you answer Paul’s question in verse 3, “Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?” Explain your answer.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. If neither the Law of Moses, the traditions of religion nor people's own good works can cleanse their heart or justify them before God, why did God give the law in the first place? The answer is found in verse 24. Write it out in your own words.**

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***Beyond the Text:*** What does it mean to you to live under grace rather than under the law?

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**In preparation for the next lesson, read Galatians 4 at least three times.**

## LESSON 4

## CHILDREN OF PROMISE

## Galatians 4:1-31

*Background:*

In Galatians 4, Paul talks about being children of God and heirs of God. The apostle continues the defense of the Gospel begun in chapter 3, enlarging on its benefits as the argument moves to its climax in the spiritual truth illustrated in the story of Sarah and Hagar.

When Paul first went to Galatia, the people were living as slaves to religious laws and ceremonies. They were in bondage to the observances of special days, seasons and festivals—even as many people today are bound to religious traditions. Though Paul was sick at the time, he preached the Gospel of the grace of God to the Galatians with love, compassion, and earnestness. The people's hearts were opened to the glorious message of salvation by grace, and they rejoiced in their freedom from the futile demands of the Mosaic law and the traditions of Judaism. However, legalistic teachers soon tried to lead these new Christian converts back to the slavery of the law.

To combat this heresy, Paul relates the Old Testament story of Sarah and Hagar (Genesis 16-18, 21). God promised Abraham and Sarah a son. As they both grew older and that didn't happen, Sarah urged Abraham to take her servant Hagar and have a child through her. Abraham complied and a child (Ishmael) was born. In Galatians 4:22-31, Paul uses this family situation to illustrate the difference between the freedom of faith and the bondage of law. He says that Abraham's son Ishmael, born of the slave woman (Genesis 16:16), was a child of the flesh. This son was a type (allegory) representing the entire sweep of the legalistic, fleshly, ceremonial, religious system in existence among the Jews of Paul's day. On the other hand, Abraham's other son, Isaac, born years later to Sarah by virtue of the promise of God (Genesis 21:1-2), represents God's new covenant with the believer—the free position of privilege that is ours by the grace of God.

Paul reminds us that God's children are always “children of promise” born of faith and not of the flesh (v. 28). Galatians 3:26 says, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.” This agrees perfectly with the words of Jesus Christ who said, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. . . . You must be born again” (John 3:6-7). The apostle John also wrote, “But as many as received Him [Christ], to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (1:12). Physical birth is not enough, a child of God must be born spiritually as well.

**Heir:** One who has received or will receive an inheritance.

**Steward:** A person who is responsible for the care of someone else's possessions.

**Redeem:** To ransom, to buy out of captivity.

**Abba:** Aramaic word meaning “Father.”

**Bondswoman:** A female slave or servant.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Romans 8:14-17

**EXAM 4**

**Read carefully Galatians 4 and respond to the following questions:**

1. Verses 4-6 of this chapter deserve your special attention. What six statements follow the phrase, “when the fullness of time was come”?

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) \_\_\_\_\_

(4) \_\_\_\_\_

(5) \_\_\_\_\_

(6) \_\_\_\_\_

The expression “fullness of time” means “at the appropriate time.” God was neither too soon nor too late but right on time. How might this apply to your life?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What five questions does Paul ask in this chapter?

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) \_\_\_\_\_

(4) \_\_\_\_\_

(5) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Read Romans 8:14-17. What three similarities do you find between these verses in Romans 8 and Galatians 4?

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) \_\_\_\_\_

### POINTS TO PONDER:

**1. When we accept Christ's offer of salvation, we are adopted into God's family as His children. If we choose to try and earn God's acceptance by keeping traditions or doing good works, we become slaves to those efforts. How does this affect our inheritance (v. 7)?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Read Genesis 21:8-9 and Galatians 4:29. What does this tell us about our relationships with those who are not believers?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***Beyond the Text:*** If you are an heir (literally: a joint-heir) with Christ (v.7), what will you inherit?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**In preparation for the next lesson, read Galatians 5 at least three times.**

## LESSON 5

# LIBERTY IN CHRIST

### Galatians 5:1-26

#### **Background:**

In Galatians 5, Paul deals with our liberty in Christ. He again emphasizes that reliance on circumcision destroys such liberty. Circumcision was a sign of the covenant which God had made with Abraham, the forefather of the Jews (see Genesis 12:1-4; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; and 17:1-14). But Paul would never consider imposing the religious rite of circumcision, because the Christian is free from the yoke of the law (Galatians 5:3). Paul is not opposed to circumcision as such, but he is opposed to requiring it as a condition for being a believer in Christ.

Mystery and ceremony in religion intrigue people. These false teachers led the new Galatian Christians to think that the full privileges of Christianity could be received only through the elaborate Jewish system of ceremonies and laws.

Paul also warns against the abuse of our Christian liberty. We are free from the bondage of religious laws, traditions and ceremonies, but we are not free to live any way we choose to live. We are free from the law of sin and death in order that we might obey the law of the Spirit, which is “life in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:2).

In the closing portion of this chapter, Paul contrasts the “works of the flesh” with the “fruit of the Spirit.” In this passage, “flesh” refers to our natural human condition without the Spirit of God. It is because of the very nature of the flesh and the weakness of the flesh that the works of the flesh cannot please God. The works of the flesh listed in this chapter (vv. 19-21) remind us of what Christ said in Matthew 15:19-20: “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are things which defile a man.”

Only Christ can set a Christian free from the power of sin. He does this through the power of the indwelling Spirit, not by our self-effort (v. 16).

**Estranged:** Separated, no longer in fellowship with

**Leaven:** Yeast, often used to symbolize sin

**Love (Gk. agape):** An unconditional affection, a no-strings-attached commitment to someone else's welfare

**Walking:** An action that implies daily living

**Fornication:** Sexual relationships apart from marriage

**Licentiousness:** Lacking moral restraint, disregarding sexual standards

**Heresies:** False teachings especially of a religious nature



**EXAM 5**

**Complete the following sentences found in Galatians 5:**

1. "You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; \_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, \_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.
3. "A little leaven \_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.
4. "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, \_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.
5. "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, \_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.
6. "But if you are led by the Spirit, \_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.
7. "Just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things \_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.
8. "If we live in the Spirit, \_\_\_\_\_."  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Answer each of the following questions:**

1. How does Paul view the man who is “entangled” with the law (i.e. trying to keep the Jewish ceremonial law)?

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2. Who is a “debtor to keep the whole law”?

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3. Against whom does the flesh lust?

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4. What does the phrase “and the like” (v. 21) mean?

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**List the “works of the flesh” here.**

- |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____  | 2. _____  | 3. _____  | 4. _____  |
| 5. _____  | 6. _____  | 7. _____  | 8. _____  |
| 9. _____  | 10. _____ | 11. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 14. _____ | 15. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 17. _____ |           |           |           |

**List the “fruit of the Spirit” here.**

- |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ | 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ | 7. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 9. _____ |          |          |          |

**Points to Ponder**

1. What does Paul mean by, “A little leaven leavens the whole lump” (v. 9)?

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2. What does “walking in the Spirit” mean (vv. 16, 18, 25)?

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**Beyond the Text:** How can you fulfill the law (v. 14)? Give some specific examples of how you plan to do this.

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**Before doing the next study, read Galatians 6 at least three times.**

## LESSON 6

# LIMITS OF FREEDOM

### Galatians 6:1-18

#### *Background:*

When Christ set us free from bondage to the law, it was not a freedom to do as we please. As someone said, we aren't free to do what we want but to do what we ought. Paul warns us not to "use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh" (Galatians 5:13).

As he brings this letter to a close in chapter 6, Paul outlines some of the ways that we should use our new-found freedom to benefit others. This includes bearing one another's burdens (v. 2), giving generously to others (v. 6) and showing compassion especially toward those who are fellow believers (v. 10). A focus on others is one of the key concepts of the New Testament. Paul uses the expression "one another" at least 36 times in his letters. In a time known for its selfishness and self-centeredness, this is a message that Christians need to take to heart.

This chapter also reminds us where our focus should be: on the cross, not the flesh. The outward show of religious behavior is too often just a front for other motives (v. 12). It is the cross that makes a Christian a new "creation" (v. 15).

## EXAM 6

**1. In reading Galatians 6 carefully, you will notice that the first ten verses are a continuation of the subject that Paul deals with in the closing portion of the fifth chapter (a contrast between the "works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit"). This subject is summarized in verses 7 and 8.**

Write out Galatians 6:7, 8 in your own words in this space.

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**Trespass:** To deviate from the straight and narrow, to go astray.

**Flesh:** Used figuratively to mean those desires apart from God's will.

**Corruption:** The process of decay.

**Household of faith:** Those who are part of the Body of Christ, the Church, fellow believers.

**2. Paul shows us in this chapter that there are several things that the spiritual man does and does not do. Fill in the missing words.**

The person who walks in the Spirit:

A. Let us not become \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ one another, \_\_\_\_\_ one another (5:26).

B. You who are spiritual restore such a one in a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ (6:1).

C. Bears one another's \_\_\_\_\_ (6:2).

D. Does not grow weary while \_\_\_\_\_ (6:9).

**3. In verses 11 through 18, Paul contrasts those who boast in the flesh (brag about their human accomplishments) with his own determination to boast only in the cross of Jesus Christ (what God has done for us through Christ's death on the cross).** Paul had much about which he could boast. He was circumcised; he was a Pharisee and a Hebrew of the Hebrews. But when he accepted Christ as his Savior, all of this meant nothing. His testimony about this is given in verse 14. Put this verse into your own words.

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**POINTS TO PONDER:**

1. Explain why the works of the law cannot justify you but you *can* be a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus?

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2. Paul says to "bear one another's burdens" (v. 2) but then says in verse 5, "For each one shall bear his own load." How can we reconcile these two verses? (Hint: Look at the context of these verses.)

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## CONCLUSION

People's effort to "get right with God" through works is universal. In fact, all of the great religious systems (with the exception of the Gospel of Christ) are based on the endeavors of humans to keep certain traditions, ceremonies, and laws. These efforts are vain because they are built upon a misconception of God's righteousness and of the sinfulness of the human heart. Righteousness before God cannot be obtained by keeping the law of Moses because no man can totally keep it.

Why was the law of Moses given? In order to show us our need of a Savior. How then can we be saved? God's Word says, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved'" (Romans 10:9-13).

The whole point is this—the human heart (the seat of our emotions) is deceitful, and its thoughts are impure. It is impossible for us to purify our soul or to obtain the forgiveness of our sins by works. Knowing this, God has made every provision for man's salvation through Christ Jesus. He is able to save you from the penalty of sin and to keep you from the power of sin. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9). "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5).

# Galatians: Experiencing Freedom

## EXAM 1

### Fill in the blank:

1. our sins, deliver
2. in the grace of Christ
3. man, revelation, Jesus Christ

### True/False

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| A. | T |
| B. | F |
| C. | F |

### Find the Verse

1. v. 12
2. v. 14
3. v. 16
4. v. 23
5. v. 24

### Points to Ponder:

1. Grace and peace (notice that this is repeated in most of Paul's letters and always in that order).

Grace is the basis for our restoration. Scripture says that we are "saved by grace" (Ephesians 2:8). Until we are reunited with the Father by grace, we cannot experience peace (or contentment). Grace must come before peace.

2. "in me" When Christ revealed Himself to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-5), Paul surrendered his life (note his use of the word "Lord," which means "master," in Acts 9:5) and received salvation. After this experience, the Holy Spirit began a work in Paul's life to change him from a proud Pharisee into a humble servant of God. As Paul grew in his spiritual life, the characteristics of Christ (love, purity, gentleness, etc.) began to be seen in his life. God's ultimate goal is that others might see Christ in us. First we are saved (Christ revealed to *us*) and then we are sanctified (Christ revealed *in us*).

**Beyond the Text:** Personal response

## EXAM 2

### Underline:

1. fourteen
2. circumcised
3. Peter

### Fill in the missing words:

not, works, faith, believed, justified, not,  
works, works, no, justified

**True/False**

- A. F
- B. T
- C. T
- D. T
- E. T
- F. T

**Points to Ponder**

1. This was a crucial issue because it affected the basis of our salvation. If Paul had yielded to “keep the peace,” it meant he would have had to agree that it took more than Christ to save us. He would have added the law or good works as a requirement for salvation. Any time that the person of Christ (who He is) or the work of Christ (what He did for us on the cross) is at stake, we cannot afford to back down. On the other hand, there are other issues such as whether we sing hymns or worship choruses that are not “salvation issues” (i.e. do not affect our salvation). In these situations we should be willing to be a bit flexible. In situations where there is a legitimate difference of interpretation, we may need to agree to disagree. As someone once said, “In the essentials, unity; in everything else, love.”

2. According to verse 21, if our relationship to the Father could have been restored by good works, then Christ’s death would have been in “vain.” In fact, the Father would be cruel to have required Christ to die an agonizing death on the cross if another way was possible. A gospel that preaches the necessity of works not only downplays the importance of Christ’s death on the cross, it portrays God as an unloving and cruel father.

**Beyond the Text:** Traditions develop when some action is meaningful and/or helpful. Because of the benefit it provides, this action gets repeated for years and sometimes, as in the church, for centuries. As long as that action remains meaningful and/or helpful,

there is nothing wrong with it. Unfortunately we often abuse traditions. Sometimes we keep repeating an activity even though it has lost its meaning and/or is no longer helpful. Other times the tradition becomes more important than the reality that it is supposed to represent. If traditions are kept in the proper perspective, they help us in our Christian walk. If we abuse them (as the Pharisees had), they can hinder our relationship to the Lord. Consider some of the traditions you are involved in. Perhaps you need to find out why you do something in a certain way. This can renew its meaning for you. Maybe you need to do something else that would be more helpful to you. The secret to healthy traditions is not to take them for granted.

**EXAM 3**

1. 15

2. 7

3. 14

4. Any 3 of the following six questions:

Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth?

Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Are you so foolish?

Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

Have you suffered so many things in vain?

Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you . . . does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

**Fill in the blank:**

believed, accounted, righteousness, foreseeing, justify, all, no, justified, God, just, faith



These verses tell us that it was God's plan all along (from the time of Abraham) to bring others (Gentiles) into the same relationship as He had with the Jews. Furthermore, this plan involved salvation by faith rather than by keeping the Law.

### Points to Ponder:

1. No, having begun by the Spirit, I cannot be made perfect (in the sense of complete) by the flesh. I do not have on my own either the strength or the wisdom to become the person God wants me to be. Only as I surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit in my life can I experience spiritual growth and maturity.

2. This is your personal paraphrase, but it may go something like the following: The law was meant to teach us (be our "tutor") that we are not able to come to God on our own merit. Instead, we need to place our faith in Christ and accept His payment for our sins.

**Beyond the Text:** My salvation does not depend on performing certain rituals or keeping certain standards (the law). Instead, salvation is offered to me by grace as I surrender my life to Jesus Christ, God's Son.

## EXAM 4

### Questions:

1. Six statements from Galatians 4:4-6:

- (1) God sent forth His Son
- (2) Born of a woman
- (3) Born under the law
- (4) to redeem those under the law
- (5) receive adoption as sons
- (6) sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts

Application: God will also bring to pass what is needed in your life at the appropriate time.

2. (1) But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? (v. 9)

(2) What then was the blessing you enjoyed? (v. 15)

(3) Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? (v. 16)

(4) Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? (v. 21)

(5) Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? (v. 30)

3. You may have seen other similarities, but the following are three possibilities:

(1) We are not under bondage as slaves to the law but are part of God's family.

(2) Our relationship to God is one of Father (Abba) and child.

(3) Our relationship as God's children is confirmed by the Holy Spirit.

### Points to Ponder:

1. A child inherits whatever belongs to his father. A slave inherits nothing.

2. People who have not been born spiritually will not get along with those who have. In particular, those who are living in bondage to legalism or some form of the law will have conflicts with those who aren't.

**Beyond the Text:** Christ will inherit everything (Ephesians 1:22, Hebrews 2:8). As a "joint-heir" (one who inherits equally), then we, too, will inherit all things.

## EXAM 5

### Sentence completion:

1. you have fallen from grace (This does not mean you have lost your salvation. It means, rather, that you have “stopped” or “turned away from” living by grace and are trying to live out the Christian life by keeping the law.) (v. 4)

2. but faith working through love (v. 6)

3. leavens the whole lump (v. 9)

4. but through love serve one another (v. 13)

5. and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh (v. 16)

6. you are not under the law (v. 18)

7. will not inherit the kingdom of God (v. 21)

8. let us also walk in the Spirit (v. 25)

### Questions:

1. Under a yoke of bondage (v. 1)

2. The man who becomes circumcised (or tries to make himself acceptable to God by keeping the Old Testament ceremonial law). (v. 2)

3. Spirit (v. 17)

4. Other sins of a similar nature—Paul doesn’t intend to give an exhaustive list.

### The “works of the flesh” are:

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. adultery           | 2. fornication         |
| 3. uncleanness        | 4. licentiousness      |
| 5. idolatry           | 6. sorcery             |
| 7. hatred             | 8. contentions         |
| 9. jealousies         | 10. outbursts of wrath |
| 11. selfish ambitions | 12. dissensions        |
| 13. heresies          | 14. envy               |
| 15. murders           | 16. drunkenness        |
| 17. revelries         |                        |

### The “fruit of the Spirit” are:

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. love         | 2. joy           |
| 3. peace        | 4. longsuffering |
| 5. kindness     | 6. goodness      |
| 7. faithfulness | 8. gentleness    |
| 9. self-control |                  |

### Points to Ponder:

1. Yeast begins as something very small, but, if left alone, it will grow and infect the whole. If we leave a small sin unchecked, it will sooner or later take over our whole life.

2. “Walking in the Spirit” means to allow the Holy Spirit to influence all parts of our daily lives whether we’re at work, school, home or enjoying some form of entertainment.

**Beyond the Text:** Paul says that unconditional love fulfills the law. How can you show this “no-strings-attached” kind of love in the next few days?

## EXAM 6

1. This is your personal response.

2. A. conceited, provoking, envying  
B. spirit, gentleness  
C. burdens  
D. doing good

3. This is your personal response.

### Points to Ponder:

1. The works of the law were meant to show us how far from God’s perfection we fall. They are not able to provide salvation. Jesus paid

the price on the cross for our sins. When we accept Him as our Savior, His death pays for our sins as well. By faith (trust), we accept that payment and give Him thanks. John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name."

2. The context of bearing one another's burdens is that of love. Because we love one another, we should help one another. When Paul observes that "each one shall bear his own load," the context indicates being responsible or taking ownership of our behavior ("his own works"). Paul is not contradicting himself. He is simply saying that Christians should help one another, but, ultimately, we have to be responsible for our own behavior. We are responsible to people (to help, to show compassion), but we are not to be responsible *for* people (i.e.: take responsibility for their decision and/or actions).