



BAND of BROTHERS

SUMMER SERIES 2024 – WEEK 5

Galatians 5: Free to Live by Faith

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word:

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

– Galatians 5:13-14 ESV

- **We live in enemy territory**
 - This world is a battle zone
 - And we are at war
 - No one understood this better than Paul

2 Corinthians 11:23-29 NLT

I know I sound like a madman, but I have served him far more! I have worked harder, been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm.

*Then, besides all this, I have the daily burden of my concern for all the churches. Who is weak without my feeling that weakness? **Who is led astray, and I do not burn with anger?***

- **Room for righteous indignation**
 - Paul took the Gospel seriously
 - He was committed to defending it
 - He refused to compromise it

- He despised any who attempted to alter it
- And he was willing to suffer and die for it

*I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. **I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!** – Galatians 5:10-12 ESV*

- The gloves are off
 - And Paul pulls no punches
 - He has no interest in diplomacy
 - He has no intentions to compromise

apokoptō – amputate, mutilate, cut off

“I wish they would castrate themselves.”

*... if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. **You are severed from Christ**, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. – Galatians 5:2-5 ESV*

katargeō – to be separated from, to be severed, cut away

*...**you have been cut off from Christ!** You have fallen away from God’s grace. (NLT)*

- This has nothing to do with losing your salvation
 - It refers to a loss of **benefit**
 - Any advantage you had is forfeited
 - **Grace** gets replaced with **reward**
 - **Earning** replaces **unmerited favor**

*...if you accept circumcision, **Christ will be of no advantage to you.** – Galatians 5:2
ESV*

- Returning to the law sacrifices our **freedom**

*For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and **do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.** – Galatians 5:1 ESV*

- **A lesson from the lips of Jesus**
 - Paul wasn’t making this stuff up
 - He had received it from the Jesus Himself

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you... – 1 Corinthians 11:23 NET

John 8:31-38

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?”

Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.”

- **Freedom for Jews and Gentiles**

For freedom Christ has set us free... – Galatians 5:1 ESV

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. – Galatians 5:13 ESV

- The Jews...

...were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. – Galatians 4:3 ESV

- A life based on **God’s rules** but solely dependent upon the flesh...

*...when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, **to redeem those who were under the law**, so that we might receive adoption as sons. – Galatians 4:4-5 ESV*

*And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” **So you are no longer a slave**, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. – Galatians 4:6-7 ESV*

- The Gentiles...

*Formerly, when **you did not know God**, **you were enslaved** to those that by nature are not gods. – Galatians 4:8 ESV*

- They were enslaved to idolatry
- They followed pagan rites and rituals

*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 4:9 ESV*

- A life based on **man-made rules** but solely dependent upon the flesh...

You observe days and months and seasons and years! I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain. – Galatians 5:10 ESV

- Judaism was just another form of paganism

- **The failure of the flesh**

- Paul put no hope in the flesh
- He knew it would fail him every time

*For we know that the law is spiritual, **but I am of the flesh, sold under sin.** – Romans 7:14 ESV*

*For I know that **nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh.** For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. – Romans 7:18 ESV*

*There is therefore now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus. For **the law of the Spirit of life has set you free** in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. – Romans 8:1-3 ESV*

- The fruit of the flesh

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 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. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 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. – Galatians 5:16-21 ESV

- God's holy law can't produce **good fruit** from **sin-prone flesh**

- Paul knew this from first-hand experience

...it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, "You must not covet." But sin used this command to arouse all kinds of covetous desires within me! If there were no law, sin would not have that power. – Romans 7:7-8 NLT

I discovered that the law's commands, which were supposed to bring life, brought spiritual death instead. Sin took advantage of those commands and deceived me; it used the commands to kill me. But still, the law itself is holy, and its commands are holy and right and good. – Romans 7:10-12 NLT

- The fruit of the Spirit

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; **against such things there is no law.** – Galatians 5:22-23 ESV*

- This fruit is **preferred** and never **prohibited**
- It is **Spirit-produced**
- It is **selfless** and **sacrificial**
- It reflects a love for God and others
- Our flesh stands opposed to it
- The Enemy seeks to destroy it

*And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we **live by the Spirit**, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. – Galatians 5:24-26 ESV*

“If we try to live according to the law, we are depending upon the flesh again. If we assume that we can practice license, doing whatever we want, because we are guaranteed eternal life, then we are allowing the flesh to control our lives. And the result of both legalism and license is death. Our lives will be characterized by rotten fruit that does no one any good. But if we set our mind on the Spirit and His will for us, our lives will be characterized by life and peace, fruitfulness and selflessness, and a love for God that finds expression in our love for others.” – Ken Miller, *Devotionary™ on Galatians*

- **Discussion questions**

What does our freedom from the Law have to do with our ability to produce fruit? How do legalism and license stymie our fruitfulness?

In what ways does adherence to a list of religious rules, and rites diminish our fruitfulness?

How can our freedom end up producing selfishness and a lack of love for others? (See verses 13-14)



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SUMMER SERIES 2024 – WEEK 6 HOMEWORK

WEEK 6 – Galatians 6: Free to Make a Difference

As we wrap up the series, we will follow Paul’s lead and call our men to live out the truths contained in this book within the context of their faith community. Paul is writing to believers, not a single, solitary Christian. There is corporate context to his message that must be played out within the sometimes messy world of human relationships. Sanctification is not a solo-sport. Our growth in Christlikeness cannot take place in a vacuum, but must be lived out in the context of the church and the fallen world in which we live.

- Read Galatians 6. Write down any thoughts that jump out at you from these verses.
- Now read pages 57-62 of Ken’s Devotionary™ on Galatians.
- Read verses 1-5 of chapter six. Now go back and look at the fruits of the Spirit that are listed in Galatians 5:22-26. What part do these Spirit-produced fruits play in helping us accomplish what Paul commands? Why would it be impossible to carry out Paul’s admonitions without them?

Paul refers to “the law of Christ.” What do you think he means?

Look at Matthew 22:36-40. How does Jesus summarize “the Law” and how do these two commands incapsulate every other law God gave?

Look at James 2:8-13. James refers to “the Law of Christ” as “the royal law.” How does the command to love others show up in Paul’s commands in Galatians 6:1-5?

- Read Galatians 6:6-10. According to verse 6, how important to Paul was the proper teaching of God’s Word and what should our response be to those who do it faithfully and well?

Why would this be essential to the health of the body of Christ?

Why does Paul put so much emphasis on reaping and sowing? What is the point he is trying to make and how would you apply it to your life?

- Read Galatians 6:11-13. How does Paul get in one last dig against the Judaizers? What does he accuse them of?
- Look at verse 14. What do you think it means to boast in the cross of Christ? See Ephesians 2:8-9 for help.
- Look at Galatians 6:15-16. When Paul mentions circumcision and uncircumcision, he is really emphasizing two states of “the flesh.” If you are a Jew and happen to be circumcised, it counts for nothing. If you are a Gentile and uncircumcised, it also counts for nothing. Why is this important?

What does it tell us about the role of our flesh in terms of our salvation?

Close your time by reading Romans 8:1-11. How does this passage support all that Paul has taught the Galatian believers?

Now read Romans 8:12-13. What does Paul encourage us to do and what would that look like in your life today?