

Galatians

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Translation

Gal. 1:1 Paul, an apostle, not from the ultimate source of men [not by human selection, as was Matthias] nor through the intermediate agency of man [not by apostolic succession], but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who raised Him [resurrection] out from among the dead ones,

Gal. 1:2 And all the brethren who are together with me [nobody they would know by name], to the assemblies of Galatia:

Gal. 1:3 Grace [no human merit or legalism] to you and prosperity [blessings from experiential sanctification] from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

Gal. 1:4 Who gave Himself [voluntarily and obediently] as a substitute for our [His sheep] sins, so that He could rescue us [His elect] out from the present evil age [the end result is not in question] according to the sovereign will of our God and Father [not man's will],

Gal. 1:5 To Whom [Jesus Christ] is the glory from the ages [eternity past] unto the ages [eternity future]. Acknowledge it.

Gal. 1:6 I am amazed that you are of such a kind [of believer] as to have so soon deserted [gone AWOL] from Him [God the Father] Who called you [positionally and experientially] into the sphere of the grace of Christ unto another of a different kind of [altered, perverted] gospel [based on legalism],

Gal. 1:7 Which [false gospel] is not another of the same kind of gospel [based on grace alone], especially since there are some [legalists] who are making it a practice to mentally disturb you [constantly stirring up trouble] and who want to distort the gospel [good news] of Christ [by adding works to grace].

Gal. 1:8 In fact, even if we [one of the apostles] or a messenger from heaven [angel] preach a gospel to you contrary to [or alongside of as an addition] that [grace gospel which I have preached], let him be under the curse of God [severe divine discipline].

Gal. 1:9 As we warned before and now I say again [pay attention this time because this is a deadly serious matter]: If anyone preaches a gospel to you contrary to [or along side of as an addition] that [grace gospel] which you have previously received [from me], let him be under the curse of God.

Gal. 1:10 What? Should I at this moment be trying to seek approval from men [conciliatory to their dictates] instead of God [adhering to divine viewpoint]? Or should I be constantly attempting to please men [striving to be politically correct]? If I was still trying to please men [as I used to do when I was enmeshed in Judaistic legalism], then I would no longer be living like a bondsman of Christ [but rather living as a slave to the dictates of men].

Gal. 1:11 Indeed, I am telling you, brethren, that the gospel which has been preached by me is not according to the norms and standards of man [human viewpoint],

Gal. 1:12 Because I myself did not receive it by the instrumentality of man [from Gamaliel or the Judaizers], nor was I taught it [along with the original Twelve], but by the direct revelation of Jesus Christ.

Gal. 1:13 Certainly [I'm sure] you have heard about my former manner of life in the Jewish religion [Judaism], that beyond measure [to the extreme] I continually persecuted the church of God [chased down its members individually] and tried to destroy it [kill Christians with bitter hostility],

Gal. 1:14 And I advanced [blazed a trail] in the Jewish religion [Judaism] above many contemporaries in my race [in my hatred for Christianity], being far more zealous [religious fanaticism] with reference to my ancestral traditions.

Gal. 1:15 But at which time God was pleased [according to His plan], having separated me out from my mother's womb [human life begins at birth] and called me by His grace,

Gal. 1:16 To reveal His Son in me [indwelling of Jesus Christ], so that I might preach the good news about Him among the Gentiles. Immediately I did not consult with flesh and blood [did not confer with any human being],

Gal. 1:17 Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

Gal. 1:18 Then, after three years [in Arabia], I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas [Peter], and stayed face-to-face with him for fifteen days [not enough time to learn the entire realm of Christian doctrine].

Gal. 1:19 Moreover, I did not see any of the other apostles, except James, the brother of our Lord.

Gal. 1:20 Now the things I am writing to you, behold, in the presence of God [I swear] I am not lying.

Gal. 1:21 Next I went into the regions of Syria and Celicia,

Gal. 1:22 But I continued to exist unknown by appearance [lived an invisible life among them] to the assemblies of Judea in Christ.

Gal. 1:23 In fact, the only thing they heard from time-to-time [vague rumour] was that the one [Saul the Judaizer] who used to persecute them is now preaching the gospel of the faith [Christian doctrine] which he formerly tried to destroy.

Gal. 1:24 And they kept on glorifying God for me.

Gal. 2:1 Then, after fourteen years [living in the region around Syria and Celicia], I went again to Jerusalem, accompanied by Barnabas and having brought along Titus as a companion.

Gal. 2:2 So I went up according to a revelation [a sign of God's will], and I presented the gospel to them which I continue to preach to the Gentiles, but by means of a private conference to those [such as Peter, John and James] who are recognized as being experts in such spiritual matters, so that I would not in some way [while in Jerusalem] exert myself in vain [run up against unnecessary barriers] nor rush into things too quickly [catch the local church leaders by surprise].

Gal. 2:3 But not even Titus who was with me, although he was a Greek [Gentile], was compelled to be circumcised;

Gal. 2:4 For it [circumcision] was brought in under false pretenses by means of false brethren [those who pretend to be likeminded with us], who slipped in [through the back door] for the express purpose of spying on our liberty [freedom] which we have in Christ Jesus, for the ultimate purpose of enslaving us [to their laws];

Gal. 2:5 To whom [false brethren] we did not yield [give in to their dirty tactics] for even an hour, so that the truth [doctrine] of the gospel might continue to abide with you.

Gal. 2:6 But concerning these [Jerusalem apostles] who seem to have a reputation [among you] - Whatever kind of importance they once possessed [as spiritual leaders in the Jewish community], it makes no difference [it doesn't really matter], they are nothing to me [I'm not impressed]; God accepts [defers to] no man's reputation [outward appearance] - For those [legalistic brethren] who seem to have a reputation [among you] contributed nothing of value [spiritually] to me.

Gal. 2:7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel to the uncircumcision [Gentiles] had been entrusted [to me] just as Peter was entrusted with the circumcision [Jews] -

Gal. 2:8 Because He [God the Holy Spirit] Who effectively operated through Peter with respect to his apostleship to the circumcision [Jews] also effectively operated through me with respect to the Gentiles -

Gal. 2:9 And when they came to understand [by listening to me preach] the grace which was given to me, James and Cephas [Peter] and John, who seemed to be recognized as pillars [of the church], gave to Barnabas and I the right hands of fellowship [shook hands with us, confirming our ministry], with the understanding that we should preach to the Gentiles and they should preach to the circumcision [Jews] -

Gal. 2:10 Only [asking as a special request] that we might keep on remembering the poor [because

of the famine in Judea], which [remembrance] I myself have indeed made a diligent effort to carry this out [kept my promise].

Gal. 2:11 However, when Cephas [Peter] came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face [stood my ground and resisted him], because he was guilty and stood condemned [of promoting legalism].

Gal. 2:12 For before certain ones [a delegation of Jewish believers] from James arrived, he made it a habit to eat with Gentile believers. But when they [the Jewish delegation] arrived, he began to withdraw [from the Gentile believers] and separated himself [from his former dining habits], because he was afraid of those [the legalistic delegation] from the circumcision [Jerusalem].

Gal. 2:13 In fact, the rest of the Jews joined in the hypocrisy with him, to the extent that even Barnabas [my grace-preaching companion] was carried away with their legalistic hypocrisy.

Gal. 2:14 But when I saw that they were not walking correctly [according to divine protocol] with reference to the truth of the gospel [doctrines of grace], I asked Cephas [Peter] in front of everyone: If you, being a Jew, are making it a practice to live like a non-Jew [like the rest of the Gentile world] and not according to Jewish customs, why are you compelling the Gentiles to live according to Jewish customs?

Gal. 2:15 We who are Jews by nature [Paul, Peter & Barnabas], and not sinners of Gentile origin,

Gal. 2:16 And knowing that a man is never justified out from the source of works through the law, but by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, even we [Paul, Peter & Barnabas] placed our trust on Christ Jesus, in order that we might be justified out from the source of the faithfulness of Christ and not by works through the law, because by works through the law no flesh [human being] shall be justified.

Gal. 2:17 But if while we are seeking to be justified by Christ, we ourselves [as Jews] also were judged to be sinners [just like Gentiles], is Christ therefore an official minister of sin? May it not be true!

Gal. 2:18 For if I build up again that [the law and its works] which I have demolished, I make myself a transgressor [taking back the sins that Christ bore on the cross].

Gal. 2:19 For I through the law died to the law, in order that I might enter into life with God [experiential sanctification].

Gal. 2:20 I have been crucified together with Christ in the past with the result that I will keep on being crucified with Him forever [retroactive positional truth]. And I [as a Jew] no longer live [in the sphere of the law], but Christ keeps on living in the sphere of me [indwelling of Christ]. And that [life] which I am now [since the beginning of my Christian life] living in the flesh [my human body], I am living by means of the faithfulness of the Son of God [as opposed to my works through the law], Who loved me [in eternity past] and gave Himself [in time] for me.

Gal. 2:21 I do not thwart [cancel, void] the grace of God. For if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain [for no purpose].

Gal. 3:1 Oh foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you? Jesus Christ, who lived before your very eyes, was publicly proclaimed [well advertised] when He was crucified.

Gal. 3:2 I want to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the [indwelling of the] Spirit from the law [obviously not, because as Gentiles they had never heard of the law] or from the message of the faith [the gospel message]?

Gal. 3:3 Are you that foolish? Having begun in the Spirit [entrance into the spiritual life], are you now trying to finish in the flesh [attain maturity by keeping the law]?

Gal. 3:4 Have you suffered so much [trials and tribulations for being a Christian] for no apparent reason? If, as a matter of fact, it appears to be indeed [as hard as it is for me to believe it, it appears to be true] for no apparent reason.

Gal. 3:5 He [Jesus Christ], therefore, Who graciously provided the Spirit to you [indwelling of the Spirit which begins at regeneration] and keeps on working in you with supernatural power [the filling of the Spirit empowers you for the spiritual life], does He do this through the works of the law or through the message of the faith [gospel message]?

Gal. 3:6 Just as [for example] Abraham trusted God [in what He promised], and it [trusting in the promise of God] was credited [imputed] to him for righteousness [forensic justification].

Gal. 3:7 You know, therefore, that those out from the source of [Christ's] faithfulness, these are sons of Abraham.

Gal. 3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles out from the source of [Abraham's] faithfulness, proclaimed the good news in advance to Abraham: In you all peoples [including non-Jews] will be blessed.

Gal. 3:9 So then, those [Jews and Gentiles] out from the source of faithfulness are being blessed together with faithful Abraham.

Gal. 3:10 For as many as are out from the source of the works of the law are under the curse, for it stands written that: Cursed is everyone who does not persevere in [keep perfectly] all the things [not just a few commandments] which are written in the book of the law for the purpose of carrying them out [fulfilling them to the letter].

Gal. 3:11 However, no one is justified by means of the law in the sight of God, since it is clear [in Hab. 2:4] that: The Righteous One [immediate reference: Jesus Christ; remote reference: the

individual believer in Christ] shall live out from the source of faith(fulness).

Gal. 3:12 Moreover, the law is not out from the source of faith. Indeed, the one who attempts to keep them [commandments of the law] will live in the sphere of them [under legal commandments as a principle of life rather than faith].

Gal. 3:13 Christ delivered us [Jewish believers] by the payment of a ransom from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us [on the cross], for it stands written: “Cursed is every one who is hung upon a tree,”

Gal. 3:14 So that the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus [positional relationship], so that as a result we [Jews & Gentiles] would receive the promise of the Spirit through [Christ’s] faithfulness.

Gal. 3:15 Brethren, I am going to elaborate with a human example. Although from the source of man [human contract], after a covenant is ratified, no one may declare it invalid or add further stipulations to it.

Gal. 3:16 Now the promises [of the unconditional covenant] were given to Abraham and to his Descendant [spiritual Seed]. He [God the Father] does not say: And to the descendants [plural: spiritual seeds], as to imply many, but as a reference to One [spiritual Descendant], namely your Descendant, Who is Christ.

Gal. 3:17 Now let me elaborate on this: The [unconditional Abrahamic] covenant which was previously ratified by God, the law which came four hundred thirty years later did not cancel, with the result that it invalidated the promise.

Gal. 3:18 For if the inheritance is out from the source of the law, it is no longer out from the source of the promise [mutually exclusive spiritual principles]. However, God graciously provided the inheritance to Abraham through the promise.

Gal. 3:19 What then is the purpose of the law? It was added [brought in alongside of the promise in a different sphere of operation] for the sake of [to make men see] transgressions (until the Descendant should come to Whom the promise was made), directed by angels into the hand of a mediator [Moses].

Gal. 3:20 Now a mediator [angels and Moses as mediators of the law] is not of One [one in essence with God], but God [Jesus Christ as the superior mediator of the promise] is One [in essence].

Gal. 3:21 Is therefore the law against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given which had the power to give life [justification], then indeed righteousness could have been out from the source of the law.

Gal. 3:22 But the scripture [as a jailer] has imprisoned everyone under sin, so that the promise out from the source of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe [the elect].

Gal. 3:23 Moreover, before the faith [as a power field or domain unique to Christianity] came, we [Jews] were held in custody under the law, shut up in prison from the faithfulness [of Jesus Christ] which was destined afterwards [at the incarnation] to be revealed.

Gal. 3:24 Therefore, the law became our [Jews] repressive slavemaster until Christ, in order that we might be justified out from the source of [Christ's] faithfulness.

Gal. 3:25 But since this faithfulness was demonstrated publicly [Jesus Christ on the cross], we [Jews] are no longer under a repressive slavemaster.

Gal. 3:26 For in Christ Jesus [positional truth] you [both Jew and Gentile believers] are all sons of God, through [the principle of] faith.

Gal. 3:27 For as many as were placed into union with Christ [positional truth] have put on Christ.

Gal. 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek [no racial distinctions]; there is neither slave nor free man [no distinction in rank]; there is neither male nor female [no sexual bias]: for you are all one in Christ Jesus [members of one body, the Church].

Gal. 3:29 And since you [Gentiles] are Christ's, then you are Abraham's [spiritual] descendants, heirs according to the [unconditional] promise.

Gal. 4:1 Now I say: As long as an heir remains an infant [spiritually immature], he is in no way different from a slave [spiritually in chains], although he is lord [positionally] over all [his inheritance is just sitting there waiting for him to grow up],

Gal. 4:2 But remains under slave-guardians and stewards [trustees] until the time [adult son placing] appointed by his father [adoption].

Gal. 4:3 In this manner, we [Jews] also, when we were infants [spiritual babes], were in a state of permanent bondage under the control of the basic precepts [fundamentals of the Mosaic Law] of the world [Jewish system].

Gal. 4:4 But when the fullness of time arrived [the precise moment in God's plan], God sent forth His Son [Jesus Christ] on a specific mission [to redeem Jews from the law, adopt Gentiles, and give both the Holy Spirit as sons], born out from a woman [emphasis on His humanity], established under the authority of the law [so He could fulfill the requirements of the legal dispensation],

Gal. 4:5 In order that He might redeem those [Jews] under the authority of the law, in order that we [Gentiles] might receive the adoption,

Gal. 4:6 And because you [both Jew and Gentile believers] are [positionally] sons [redeemed Jewish sons and adopted Gentile sons], God [the Father] has sent forth the Spirit [Holy Spirit] of His Son [Jesus Christ] on a specific mission [to assist you in living the supergrace life] into the mentality of your souls, calling out inaudibly on a continual basis: Oh Father, my Father.

Gal. 4:7 Therefore, you [Gentile believers] are no longer a slave, but a son, and since you are a son, you are also an heir through God.

Gal. 4:8 Indeed, during the time when you [Gentiles] did not know God [as unbelievers], you served as slaves those [demonic entities behind idols] which by their very nature and essence were not gods.

Gal. 4:9 But now, after you have come to know God [human response], or rather [correcting himself in mid-sentence] being known by God [sovereign initiative], how is it possible that you are turning once more to weak [having no power to transform anyone] and beggarly [bringing no rich endowment of spiritual blessings] elements [precepts of the law], with reference to which [turning from God], for some time now, you seem increasingly desirous to be enslaved again?

Gal. 4:10 You are making it a practice to carefully observe special purpose days [Sabbaths, legislated days off] and monthly festivals [feasts & celebrations] and favorable periods of time [sabbaticals] and other certain days of the year [jubilees, personal holidays].

Gal. 4:11 I am afraid about you, that perhaps I have labored to the point of exhaustion for you [studying and teaching] in vain [I feel like I have wasted my time on you].

Gal. 4:12 Brethren, I beseech you: Keep on being [free from the bondage of the law] like me, since I also became like you [by giving up the law to be like Gentiles]. You have done nothing harmful to me [you are only hurting yourself by adhering to the law].

Gal. 4:13 Now you know that because of a sickness of the flesh [perhaps a common eye disease called ophthalmia] I preached the gospel to you during my first visit [I was headed for Asia Minor but my infirmity kept me in Galatia for awhile].

Gal. 4:14 Moreover, against [contrary to] your natural inclination, you did not reject with contempt nor despise me in my flesh [because of my outward appearance], but welcomed me as a supernatural messenger [thinking he was Hermes or an angel], as you would Christ Jesus.

Gal. 4:15 Where is your generous condition now? For I stand as a witness that if possible [though it obviously wasn't], after plucking them out, you would have given me your eyes.

Gal. 4:16 Because I speak the truth to you, for this reason, have I become your enemy?

Gal. 4:17 They [Judaizers] are filled with zeal courting you, but not honestly [just wait until the

honeymoon is over], desiring to isolate you [from the doctrines of grace] so that you might be increasingly zealous towards them [without grace you would have nowhere else to go but to legalistic teachers].

Gal. 4:18 Now it is good to be zealously courted in a good thing at all times [as long as you are hearing the truth], and not only in it [correct doctrine] when I am present face-to-face with you.

Gal. 4:19 My children, I am suffering birth pangs for you again, until Christ has been formed in you [part of the stage of Christian growth called spiritual self-esteem].

Gal. 4:20 Moreover, I wish that I was present face-to-face with you at this very moment so I could change the tone of my voice [from a severe rebuke to a friendly greeting], because I am at a loss about you.

Gal. 4:21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear [truly understand the ramifications of] the law?

Gal. 4:22 For it stands written: Abraham had two sons, one out from a slave girl [his wife's maidservant, Hagar, representing legalism] and one out from a free woman [his wife, Sarah, representing grace].

Gal. 4:23 Moreover, on the one hand, this one [Ishmael] was born [in ordinary circumstances] out from a slave girl [Hagar] according to the flesh [works]; on the other hand, this one [Isaac] was born [supernaturally after his mother's 90th birthday] out from a free woman [Sarah] through the promise [grace],

Gal. 4:24 Which class of things [historically] are spoken symbolically, for these [two women: Sarah & Hagar] represent two covenants. On the one hand, one is from Mount Sinai [outside the land], which keeps on giving birth to bondage [slavery], which is classified as Hagar [the law].

Gal. 4:25 Now this Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the current [earthly] Jerusalem, for it is in slavery [to the law and Rome] with her children [all believers who place themselves under the law].

Gal. 4:26 But the Jerusalem which is above [the heavenly church] is free [under grace], which is our mother [city].

Gal. 4:27 For it stands written [in Isaiah 54:1]: Receive inner happiness, O infertile one [Sarah] who is not giving birth. Break forth with joyful shouting and cry out loud with gratitude, you [Sarah] who have not travailed in labor [like Hagar under the law]. Because the descendants [Jew & Gentile believers] from the abandoned one [Sarah thought she had been abandoned by the Lord because she had no child] will be more numerous than from the one [Hagar] who brought forth this man [Ishmael].

Gal. 4:28 Now you, brethren, are the children of promise according to the standard of Isaac [grace principle].

Gal. 4:29 But just as when [during the dispensation of promise] he who was born according to the flesh [Ishmael representing the legalistic believer] constantly persecuted he who was born according to the Spirit [Isaac representing the grace-oriented believer], even now [during the Church Age dispensation] it continues in the same manner.

Gal. 4:30 But what does the Scripture [Gen. 21:10] say? Cast out the servant girl [legalism] and her son [works of the flesh], for the son of the servant girl [works of the law] can certainly not [mutually exclusive] be an heir with the son of the freewoman [grace mechanics].

Gal. 4:31 Therefore, brethren [members of the royal family], we are not children of the servant girl [legalism], but of the freewoman [grace].

Gal. 5:1 Therefore, keep on standing firm and holding fast to the liberty [grace] with which Christ set you free, and stop being loaded down again with a yoke of bondage [the straight-jacket of the law].

Gal. 5:2 Behold, I, Paul, am telling you, that if you are being circumcised [as a step for salvation], Christ will be of benefit to you in not one thing [in no way].

Gal. 5:3 And I solemnly affirm again to every man who receives circumcision [as a step to salvation], that he is under obligation [as a debtor] to accomplish [carry out] the entire law.

Gal. 5:4 Apart from Christ you [legalistic, reversionistic believers] have become useless [ineffective in the spiritual life], those of you who are trying to be pronounced righteous [experiential sanctification] in the sphere of the law; you [legalistic believers] have drifted off course from grace [the mechanics of the supergrace spiritual life].

Gal. 5:5 But we [grace-oriented believers], through the Spirit [walking by the Spirit as opposed to keeping the law], are assiduously and patiently looking [for our resurrection bodies] with confidence for righteousness [experiential sanctification leading to ultimate sanctification] out from the source of faith(fulness) [as opposed to works of the flesh].

Gal. 5:6 For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision [rituals are irrelevant] has any inherent power, but rather faithfulness [in executing the precisely correct protocol plan of God for the spiritual life] which is empowered by means of virtue love.

Gal. 5:7 You were making great progress [rapidly advancing in the spiritual life]. Who detained you [cut you out of your lane] so that you stopped obeying the truth [following precisely correct spiritual protocol]?

Gal. 5:8 This [legalistic] persuasion did not come from the One [God the Father] Who called [elected] you.

Gal. 5:9 A little leaven [legalism] will always permeate [corrupt] the whole lump of dough [the spiritual life of the believer].

Gal. 5:10 I have confidence in the Lord with respect to you [Galatian believers], that in no way will you form a different [contrary to grace] opinion. But the one [legalist] who continues to trouble and confuse you [with false doctrine] will bear his own judgment [pay the penalty which the law demands], whoever he is.

Gal. 5:11 And I, brethren, if I am still preaching circumcision [but I'm not], why am I still being persecuted? For then the offense that causes revulsion with reference to the cross [the gospel message about Jesus Christ] would be brought to an end [nobody is offended by the teaching of circumcision].

Gal. 5:12 I wish they [the legalists] who are constantly troubling you [about circumcision] would castrate themselves [as the logical outcome of or next step in their doctrine].

Gal. 5:13 But as for you, brethren, you were called to freedom [liberty]. Only do not turn your freedom into an occasion [base of operations] for the flesh, but keep on serving one another by means of virtue love.

Gal. 5:14 For the entire law stands fulfilled in this one principle: Keep on exercising impersonal love [maintaining a relaxed mental attitude in the filling of the Spirit] towards your neighbor [fellow human being] as you do yourself.

Gal. 5:15 But if you keep on biting [cosmic I: arrogance complex of sins] and devouring [cosmic II: hatred complex of sins] one another of the same kind [fellow believers], be careful [beware] not to be consumed [eaten alive] by one another.

Gal. 5:16 Now I say: Keep on walking by the Spirit and you will not execute the desire of the flesh [sin nature].

Gal. 5:17 For the flesh [old sin nature] desires to oppose the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, because these [two opposing spheres of operation] are constantly opposed to one another, so that you cannot keep on executing those things [divine protocol] that you desire.

Gal. 5:18 But if you are being led by the Spirit [grace mechanics], you are not under the law [legalism has no hold on you].

Gal. 5:19 Now the works [production] of the flesh [sin nature, cosmic system] are well-known,

which are, for example: sexual activity outside of marriage, sensual impurity [stopping just short of sex], debauchery [wanton behavior, acknowledging no restraints],

Gal. 5:20 Idolatry [worship of anything in place of God], witchcraft [drug addiction & sorcery], hostilities [all kinds], quarrels [discord], jealousy [party strife], outbursts of anger [rage], inordinate ambition [strife], dissensions [conspiracies], schisms [heretical sects],

Gal. 5:21 Envyings [lust of the eyes], drunkenness, riotous parties [carousing], and other things of similar nature [works of the flesh], concerning which I am warning you in advance [at this very moment] just as I have warned you before [when I was last with you in person], that they who engage in such things [practice without any inner restraint] will not inherit [share in] the royal power [kingdom] of God.

Gal. 5:22 But the fruit [production] of the Spirit is virtue love, inner happiness, spiritual prosperity [relaxed mental attitude], longsuffering [stability of temper], gentleness [generosity], kindness [grace-oriented behavior], faithfulness [doctrinal confidence],

Gal. 5:23 Genuine humility [grace-oriented thinking], self-control [discipline]. The law [precepts] is not in opposition to such things [doctrinal principles].

Gal. 5:24 Moreover, those who belong to Christ Jesus [retroactive positional truth] have crucified the flesh [old sin nature] once and for all together with its sufferings and defiling lusts.

Gal. 5:25 If we continue to live by means of the Spirit [residence in the sphere of divine power], let us keep on walking [according to precisely correct protocol] by means of the Spirit [function in the sphere of divine power].

Gal. 5:26 Let us not be conceited [legalistic pride], provoking [challenging] one another of the same kind [fellow believers], envying [being jealous of] one another of the same kind [fellow believers].

Gal. 6:1 Brethren [members of the royal family], if a man is surprised and overtaken by a particular [any will do as an example] transgression [personal weakness], you who are spiritual [spiritually mature] restore such a person [encourage him to confess his sin] by means of a spirit of genuine humility [grace-orientation, poise, dignity], keeping your eyes on yourself so that you are not also tempted to sin [placing you out of fellowship along with the person you are trying to help].

Gal. 6:2 Keep on bearing patiently one another's burdens [listening to the important issues of other believer's lives], and in this manner you will fulfill the mandate of Christ [to reside in the love complex and function in virtue love].

Gal. 6:3 For if anyone thinks [self-evaluation] that he is someone important [a spiritual giant], when he is a nobody, he is deceiving himself [arrogant self-deception].

Gal. 6:4 But let each person put his own [spiritual] production to the test for the purpose of approval [self-examination according to divine standards], and then he will have reasonable grounds for peace and inner happiness with respect to himself alone [his success in the spiritual life in the privacy of his priesthood is his own responsibility], and not with respect to another [comparing his successes and failures to another person's life].

Gal. 6:5 For each person [believers only] will endure the evaluation of his own private spiritual production [is responsible for his own achievements and failures in the spiritual life at the Evaluation Seat of Christ].

Gal. 6:6 Therefore, let the one [student] who is repeatedly being taught the Word [Bible doctrine] keep on sharing in the spiritual enterprise by concentrating on the one [pastor-teacher] who is continually teaching in the sphere of all [the whole realm of doctrine] good things [the entire Bible, verse-by-verse].

Gal. 6:7 Stop being deceived. God is not being outwitted [fooled by your contempt and evasion]. For whatever [good or bad decisions] a man sows, that [result] he will also harvest;

Gal. 6:8 Because the one [carnal, reversionistic believer] who makes it a habit to sow according to his own flesh [sin nature], shall harvest corruption [depravity] from the flesh. But the one [believer with positive momentum] who makes it a habit to sow according to the Spirit [filling], shall harvest eternal life [blessings and rewards in both time and eternity] from the Spirit.

Gal. 6:9 Moreover, let us not become discouraged [tired of criticism from others] from doing good things, for at the appointed time [Judgment Seat of Christ] we shall reap our own personal harvest [blessings and rewards] if we do not lose heart and become weary [apathetic about the Christian life].

Gal. 6:10 Since, therefore, we possess the same opportunity [to live the Christian life as the Galatian believers did], let us keep on producing good things [functioning in the filling of the Spirit] towards everyone, but especially face-to-face with those belonging to the household of the faith [members of the royal family].

Gal. 6:11 Look at what large letters I have written to you with my own hand [in spite of my handicap].

Gal. 6:12 As many [Judaizers] as desire to make a good impression in the flesh, these same ones will keep on pressuring you to be circumcised, only [for the sole purpose] so that they will not be persecuted for being associated with the cross of Christ,

Gal. 6:13 For not even they [the Judaizers] who are circumcised continually keep the law themselves, but they desire you to be circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh [point to their lack of foreskins as a sign of their power to influence other believers].

Gal. 6:14 But as for me, may it never happen that I should boast [glory] except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom the world system stands crucified unto me, and me unto the world system.

Gal. 6:15 For neither circumcision [Jews] nor uncircumcision [Gentiles] means anything [completely irrelevant in the Church Age dispensation], but rather a new creation.

Gal. 6:16 Moreover, as many as [all believers] follow this protocol plan [principles for living during the Church Age] in a precisely correct fashion [according to grace mechanics with no unwarranted intrusion of the law]: spiritual prosperity and mercy upon them [Gentile believers] and upon the Israel of God [Jewish believers].

Gal. 6:17 From now on, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear in my body the marks [scars] of Jesus.

Gal. 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your [human] spirit. Acknowledge it.

Introduction

Galatians embodies the germinal teaching on Christian freedom which separated Christianity from Judaism, and which launched it upon a career of missionary conquest. It was the cornerstone of the Protestant Reformation, because its teaching of salvation by grace alone became the dominant theme of the preaching of the Reformers. (M. Tenney) Galatians is polemical and militant throughout. Luther loved this short letter because he had to fight Paul's battle over again. He fought with the same joy and the same assurance of victory. (R. Lenski) It is "my epistle," Luther said. "I have betrothed myself to it. It is my wife." The epistle to the Galatians became Luther's dagger to plunge into the heart of the papacy. It was his battle-ax in his ceaseless war with Rome. (J. Phillips) Properly understood, the gracious gospel of Galatians liberates us from legalism. Since we are legalists by nature, the book challenges many of our preconceptions about what it means to have a right relationship with God. (P. Ryken) "Galatianism" is the false doctrine which teaches that we are saved by grace, and then after that we are kept by the law, making our ultimate salvation dependent on our works instead of the grace of God. (M. DeHaan)

Do you hear men and women preach today who call their message "gospel," but really don't preach the gospel at all? The moment you get "me" involved in your gospel message, it is not good news anymore. As soon as you suggest, "God will if you will," it is no longer good news. Our efforts have led us down the bitter trail of failure ... A gospel based on the law is bad news ... Salvation is of the Lord and man has nothing to do with redemption. It is God doing for us what we could not and would not do for ourselves ... The gospel of a different kind says, "This do and thou shalt live." The

gospel of Jesus Christ says, "It is finished." When Christ came, the law was made obsolete. This "outside" system for governing behavior proved to be inadequate and was unable to complete the task of bringing saints to maturity and the knowledge of God. It set limits for right and wrong actions, but it could not make them righteous. Someone once said, "It is like looking in a mirror to discover that your face is dirty. It will not wash your face, but it will show you all of the dirt." The law reveals what is wrong with me, but it cannot correct the problem ... The very moment we impose a legalistic stipulation on the believer, we have built again the same system we had destroyed and so make ourselves transgressors. (K. Lamb)

The righteousness of the law is earthly, and has to do with earthly things. But this righteousness is heavenly, which we have not of ourselves, but receive it from heaven; we work not for it, but by grace it is wrought in us, and is apprehended by faith; whereby we mount up above all laws and all works. (M. Luther) Judaizing teachers came down from Jerusalem teaching that if you should not be circumcised after the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved. The matter was taken up in the council of the apostles at Jerusalem, and Paul and Barnabas were sent with the decrees which made it manifest that circumcision was not necessary for the nations who believed. After they had delivered these decrees Paul passed through the Galatian province and founded the ecclesias to which this epistle is addressed. We never hear again that the Judaisers taught that circumcision was essential to salvation. The decrees of the twelve effectually forbade this. Now, however, they try to graft the law on to the evangel and make circumcision and the keeping of the law a further privilege and a means of perfection for the believers among the nations. It is against this subtler form of error that this epistle is directed. Paul shows that spirit and flesh, grace and works, faith and law, cannot be reconciled. (A. Knoch)

The Galatians had accepted Paul's preaching, and had adhered to it up to the time that he left them. Subsequent to his departure, however, they lapsed from their new found faith. They accepted a "different" gospel which was not "another" of the same kind. It had been preached by certain persons who were troubling or upsetting them, and who were desirous of perverting the gospel of Jesus Christ. The idea in the word "perverting" is stronger than distortion; it means reversal. The defection was not merely a difference in theological opinion, but was fundamental to the whole concept of the gospel ... The argument of Galatians is no tempest in a theological teapot nor an unimportant record of a personal quarrel. In the dispute within the Galatian churches the entire question of Christian liberty was at stake. Spontaneous spiritual life versus legalism, salvation by works versus salvation by grace, ceremonialism versus the activity of a creative faith were the alternate forces battling for supremacy. (M. Tenney) Paul saw in a moment that if the views of the legalizers prevailed, grace and the cross of Jesus Christ would be emptied of all value. Moreover, Christianity would lose its distinctive character and soon become little more than a minor sect of Judaism. In righteous anger, Paul wrote this letter to reprove legalism and regain the Galatian churches. (F. Gaebelein)

There was apparently in the Galatian nature a strange hereditary fondness for ritualistic practices. What was materialistic with its appeal to the senses, what bordered on asceticism and had an air of superstitious mystery about it, had special fascination for them. As the errorists brought a doctrine

that seemed to near some of their former practices, and might remind them of their national institute, they were the more easily induced to accept it. They were taught to rest on outer observances more or less symbolic in nature, to supplement faith with something done by or upon themselves, and to place their hopes of salvation, not on the grace of Christ alone, but on it associated with acts of their own, which not only could not be combined with it but even frustrated it ... The peril being so imminent, the alarmed and grieved apostle wrote to them in indignant surprise. He felt that their defection was all but incomprehensible. He was filled with holy anxiety for them, though he has nothing but angry censure for their seducers who had no true respect for the law which they were trying to bind on them, for they did not themselves keep the whole of it, but were only by a wretched diplomacy endeavoring to escape from persecution, that is, by representing to the bigoted Jews that they made heathen believers Jewish proselytes as a first and indispensable step in their change to Christianity. (J. Eadie)

Paul's argument is this: If ceremonies have not the power of bestowing justification, the observation of them is therefore unnecessary. We must remark, however, that he does not confine himself entirely to ceremonies, but argues generally about works, otherwise the whole discussion would be trifling ... What, then, was the purpose of ceremonies? Were they useless? Were the Fathers idly employed in observing them? He illustrates briefly two statements, that in their own time they were not superfluous, and that they now have been abolished by the coming of Christ, because He is the truth and end of them; and therefore he shows that we must abide by Him. Glancing briefly at the difference between our condition and that of the Fathers, he infers that the doctrine of the false apostles is wicked and dangerous, because it darkens the clearness of the gospel by ancient shadows. (J. Calvin) Galatians is the Gentile counterpart of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The same problems we find in Hebrews, Paul addresses in his letter to the Galatians. The root of this problem, in both cases, is primarily legalism or, more than that, religious self-effort. The Epistle to the Galatians was written to the Gentile believers in order to rescue them from the trap and the death-dealing snare of self-righteous effort ... The Spirit brings abundant life, but the efforts of the flesh to live by the law profits nothing. (K. Lamb)

There were added to the Christian community in Judea certain men of strong conservative tendencies who were convinced that Christianity ought to be built strictly on the basis of the Abrahamic covenant, and that the Christian sect ought to differ from other Jewish sects, in particular from the Pharisaic sect, only by the addition of the doctrine of the Messiahship of Jesus, and in no case by any subtraction from the doctrines or requirements of the OT religion as currently interpreted ... In rejecting the authority of the OT statutes, Paul did not reject the teachings of the OT *in toto*. He more frequently quotes from it sentiments which he heartily approves ... This rejection of the authority of the OT as such, coupled with the apostle's kindred contention that the gospel was for all nations as they were, i.e., without entrance into the Jewish community or subjection to Jewish law, raised squarely the issue whether Christianity was to be a potentially universal religion or was to continue, as it was at first, a sect of Judaism, differing mainly by one doctrine from current Pharisaism. On this question Paul took clear issue with the conservative party among the believers in the Messiahship of Jesus. The inspiration of his mission was a vision of a church universal worshipping the one God and Father, and accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour – a church into which

men should come from every nation and religion, not through the vestibule of Judaism and the acceptance of the law of Moses and the rites of the OT, but straight from where they were and through the single and open door of faith in Jesus Christ. (E. Burton)

The transition from the age of Law which ended at Calvary, to the dispensation of Grace was not a sudden change without incident, but a bitter struggle. It was not easy for the believing Jew, brought up under the law of commandments and ordinances, to accept without question the new message of Grace, not fully revealed or made known before Pentecost ... The Jews in Judaea refused to accept this new message, and followed Paul wherever he went, seeking to discredit his message, and teaching instead that a man must be saved by ritual and legalism. (M. DeHaan) Unquestionably these false teachers claimed for themselves the name of Christian and held that they faithfully preached the gospel. However, they not only modified this teaching with heresies so serious that Paul denies to their doctrine the name of gospel (1:7), but they also in their teaching acted out of false motives: that is, out of personal ambition (4:17, 6:13) and out of offense at the cross of Christ (6:12). Further, these erring teachers did not scruple to cast suspicion upon Paul's qualifications for the office and ministration of an apostle ... It is now generally agreed that the misguided teachers here being counteracted were Judaizers, that is, Jewish Christians who wanted to combine the gospel of Christ with the observation of Jewish ceremonies – a position which had been rejected at the so-called apostolic council at Jerusalem. (H. Ridderbos)

This book is a series of pictures of what spiritual life should be, not just a formulary of precepts. The writer was describing what he himself was enjoying after having lived a large part of his life in legalistic bondage ... Paul could not contain himself as he contemplated the possibility that the spontaneous spiritual life of the Galatian Christians might be stifled by the unnecessary imposition upon them of arguments and ceremonies which were irrelevant to salvation. Inner fruitfulness of the Spirit is more important than outward conformity of the flesh; and if the Holy Spirit is dominant within, the action of the outward man will be governed accordingly ... The truth he expounded so vigorously and so ably is still of the utmost value to those who think of the Christian life as a succession of inhibitions rather than as a continual expression of divine victories. Objectively and subjectively, then, Galatians is the charter of freedom from externalism in worship and from frustration in personal spiritual life. (M. Tenney) The synagogue leaders saw their own ranks thinned and their Gentile adherents drawn elsewhere. They were jealous of a cause far more successful than their own and they resented the non-enforcement of their traditional laws and practices – a cheapening of religion in their eyes. Small wonder that in this region the apostle found himself pursued by the fanatic hatred of his compatriots. They drove from city to city, pelting him with stones, covering him probably with those scars which he proudly calls the marks of the Lord Jesus. (J. Dow)

In the book of Acts we read that the Galatians wanted to make Paul a god one day, and the next day they stoned him. What do we do? We elect a man to the presidency and then we try to kill him in office. I think it is quite interesting that our system of government has survived as long as it has. Therefore the epistle to the Galatians has a particular message for us because it was written to people who were like us in many ways. They had a like temper, and they were beset on every hand by cults

and “isms” innumerable – which take us, likewise, from our moorings in the gospel of grace. (J. McGee) So then, how can the Galatians who began in grace continue under law? Law condemns; it cannot justify. Ritual acts and good works offered as the basis for salvation destroy grace. No man can win acceptance with God on terms other than God’s grace given freely. Anything less amounts to a denial of the completeness and finality of the cross of Christ. (S. Mikolaski) Galatianism is the subtlest of all the errors concerning the place of law-works in salvation. (M. DeHaan) The believer who seeks to live the Christian life in his own strength or in a legalistic fashion does not enjoy the power of the Holy Spirit to free him from his sinful self so he can live well-pleasing to God. (H. Vos)

Salvation by grace, wholly apart from the works of the Law, was for all, the Jews as well as the Gentiles. This being settled, the legalists, refusing to admit their error, attacked the Gospel from another angle. It having been settled that the believer is saved by grace, without being circumcised and keeping the law, they now began to teach that while we are saved by grace, we must be kept by the law, including circumcision. Instead of a requirement before salvation, circumcision is now proposed by the Judaists as a supplement to faith for full fellowship and ultimate salvation. The problem in Galatia was (3:3), that having begun in the Spirit, they now sought to be perfected by the flesh. (M. DeHaan) How can men, who are by nature sinful, win the favor of God, who is holy? Paul’s answer was, They cannot. The only way to please God is to trust His grace and stop trying to acquire saving merit by obedience to law ... Rightness with God requires a new nature, and no man can remake himself. Only God through the Spirit of His Son can do that. Therefore glad acceptance of God’s grace gift of life is the only way to freedom from fear and sin, wrath and death ... If he were allowed to have his way, men would believe and be baptized but keep on sinning, deluding themselves that the Christian sacraments would save them. Claiming to rise above Moses and the prophets, they would debase faith into magic, liberty into license, making Christ the abettor of sin ... It was easier to have a law to tell them what to do than to decide for themselves under the guidance of the Spirit, which required the faith and daring of the pioneer. Paul’s gospel has always been in danger of being stifled by those who would treat the teachings of Jesus as laws to be enforced by a hierarchy. (R. Stamm)

Prior to Paul’s conversion, God had been guiding his steps all unknown to him. At his conversion, God came into the foreground of his life, and took the central place in his consciousness and plans ... A man as thoughtful as Paul could scarcely have reversed his entire religious position overnight without having considered carefully at least some of the consequences of his decision. (M. Tenney) Activated by love and lured by hope, Paul’s faith was qualitatively different from mere assent to a creed (5:6). He was living on the plateau of the Spirit, where life was so free that men needed no law to say “Thou shalt” and “Thou shalt not” (5:22-24). But this rarified atmosphere was hard to breathe, and neither side could understand him. The conservatives were watching for moral lapses to prove that he had perverted the gospel, and the radicals blamed him for slowing the progress of Christianity by refusing to cut it loose from Judaism and its nationalistic religious imperialism. The debate was so sharp that Paul had to warn his readers against biting and devouring one another (5:15). His friends were tempted to regard him as their enemy, while he imputed selfishness and cowardice to those who were changing his gospel (4:16-17). He can only assume that they have been

bewitched (3:1). (R. Stamm)

Paul contrasts the hearty welcome of his first visit with his cold reception on this occasion, attributing their estrangement to the freedom with which he denounced their errors. Have I become your enemy, he asks, because I told you the truth? (J. Lightfoot) Judaizing teachers persuaded the Galatians that Paul had taught them the new religion imperfectly and at second hand; that the founder of their church himself possessed only a deputed commission, the seal of truth and authority being in the apostles at Jerusalem; moreover, that whatever he might profess among them, he had himself at other times, and in other places, given way to the doctrine of circumcision. (R. Jamieson) This is Paul's fighting epistle – he has on his war paint. He has no toleration for legalism. It is interesting to note that legalists do not spend much time with Galatians. It is a rebuke to them. (R. McGee) We also know that Paul usually dictated his letters to an amanuensis. This epistle he writes with his own hand. He must, then, have been alone. He sends no greetings from Timothy or from Silas or from any of his assistants. This again makes the impression that he was alone. "Brethren" includes those of the committee from Galatia plus a number of other believers. He sends no greetings from a church. Galatians is the first Pauline epistle we have. These conclusions are not absolute, but they do agree with all the data available. (R. Lenski)

In our modern ecumenical age, the necessity for Christian compromise is much in the air. We often wonder, for instance, if our Christian ancestors could not have avoided the bitterness, and even the bloodshed, of the religious wars of the past, by more readiness to exercise compromise, especially in matters which we can see clearly today not to be essential ... Would it not have been an act of self-sacrificing love on the part of the Gentile Christians in Galatia to make a small surrender of religious liberty in order to avoid putting a stumbling block in the path of these Hebrew fellow Christians? Paul would only compromise when the truth of the gospel was not directly involved (2:5). However, that Paul was perfectly ready to accept compromise in areas which he did not regard as essential can be seen clearly from Acts, if not from Galatians ... To go back to Judaism now would be unthinkable (3:3), while to remain in Judaism after Christ's coming would be to refuse to accept Israel's Messiah. (R. Cole) Contemporary Western man prides himself on personal freedom. The message of the book of Galatians is liberty – freedom from the law. Salvation is in no way based on human effort. Galatians teaches that Christ fulfilled the law and provided the means of salvation. Galatians attacks the ever present desire of men to achieve salvation by their own efforts and the tendency of Christians to live the Christian life in their own strength or in a legalistic way. It admonishes believers to live by the power of the Holy Spirit and to walk in the Spirit. (H. Vos)

CHAPTER 1

LWB **Gal. 1:1** Paul, an apostle, not from the ultimate source of men [not by human selection, as was Matthias] nor through the intermediate agency of man [not by apostolic succession], but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who raised Him [resurrection] out from

among the dead ones,

^{KW} **Gal. 1:1** Paul, an apostle, not from men nor even through the intermediate agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from among the dead,

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:1** Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul introduces himself as an apostle, emphasizing the highest ranking authority of the office he now holds. He did not receive this official, spiritual designation from any human organization. He was not “ordained” or appointed by any known religious institution. He received his appointment directly from heaven, through the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father. He was not voted into this office by the other eleven apostles. He did not receive his position by apostolic succession. Paul then adds a parenthetical reminder that it was the Father Who resurrected (Dramatic Aorist tense) Jesus Christ from the dead (Gk: nekros, Latin: mortis). The same God who resurrected Christ from the dead called Paul to his spiritual office and ministry by divine selection and omnipotence.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul was not sent by men; he did not act upon human authority, or by an human commission: this is said in opposition to the false apostles, and to an unlawful investiture with the office of apostleship, and an usurpation of it, as well as to distinguish himself from the messengers and ambassadors of princes, who are sent with credentials by them to negotiate civil affairs for them in foreign courts, he being an ambassador of Christ. (J. Gill) His very first words are an indignant denial of the lies that his enemies were telling about him, lies that the Galatians had been all too ready to entertain. (J. Phillips) It is not enough for a man to have the word and pure doctrine, but also he must be assured of his calling. (M. Luther) Paul did not have the other apostles lay their hands on his head and say, “Hocus pocus, you are an apostle.” (J. McGee)

God and Christ jointly were both the source and agent of Paul’s commission. He directly contrasts Jesus with man and links Him with God the Father. Indeed, the juxtaposition of Jesus with the Father, which pervades the Scriptures, speaks decisively for the deity of our Lord ... “From” reveals the origin, the seat of authority - the source from which power originates. He did not get his message, or his call to deliver it, from any group of people within or without the fellowship of the church. “Through” refers to the medium or means of expression. It is here that church orders could come in; however, there was no bishop, elder, or presbyter who ordained Paul. His credentials did not rest upon tactual, apostolic succession. (R. Stamm) To the apostles was committed the task of laying the foundations of the church and among those who were endowed with the gifts of the Spirit for the building up of the church they constituted the highest rank. (E. Burton)

In the first clause he distinguishes himself from the false apostles, who did not derive their commission from God at all; in the second clause he ranks himself with the Twelve, who were commissioned directly from God. (J. Lightfoot) While he does not deny the apostleship of others, he will not submit to them, nor will he submit disputed questions to them. Paul recognizes no college of apostles above him, only Christ and the gospel. (S. Mikolaski) Paul wrote to free the Galatian Christians from the bonds of Judaistic legalism in his day. Martin Luther wrote to free the people of his generation from the yoke of Roman Catholicism, with its religion of works-righteousness. The message of the epistle is still very pertinent. (R. Earle) In the subsequent review of his own personal life, Paul perceives the immediate hand of God in his pre-Christian life, setting him apart from his mother's womb, and training him under the law for his future work as an Apostle, before he was brought to Christ at all. (W. Nicoll)

The cross, as Christ's saving action, is God's action of "pistis," God's demonstration of fidelity to the promise made to Abraham. While Jesus is "sent forth" by God, there is a mysterious sense in which He is more than simply an intermediary or an agent of God's will. For Paul, Christ's death becomes God's own act, so that here, as, for example in Romans 8:9-11, there is an overlay and fusion of the agency of Christ and the agency of God. Ultimately, being united with Christ is salvific because to share His life is to share in the life of God ... The entire argument of Galatians presumes the following claims as axiomatic: God made a covenant with Abraham, promising to bless all nations through him; even though Jews and Gentiles alike were in a state of longstanding slavery, that promise remains unbroken; God fulfilled the promise through the death of Jesus, Who is both Abraham's true seed and the revelation of God's fidelity to the promise. Thus, the "pistis Jesou Christou" is the demonstration of God's righteousness, God's "pistis." (R. Hays)

Gal. 1:1 Paul (Subj. Nom.), an apostle (Nom. Appos.), not (neg. particle) from the ultimate source of men (Abl. Source; not selected by the other eleven apostles) nor (neg. adv.) through the intermediate agency of man (Gen. Agency, Channel; not by apostolic succession), but (contrast) through Jesus Christ (Gen. Agency; directly: no intermediary) and (connective) God (Gen. Agency) the Father (Gen. Appos.), who (Adv. Gen. Ref.) raised (ἐγείρω, AAPtc.GMS, Dramatic, Substantial; resurrection) Him (Acc. Dir. Obj.) out from among the dead ones (Abl. Separation),

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:1** Παῦλος ἀπόστολος οὐκ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:1** Paulus apostolus non ab hominibus neque per hominem sed per Iesum Christum et Deum Patrem qui suscitavit eum a mortuis

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:2** And all the brethren who are together with me [nobody they would know by name], to the assemblies of Galatia:

^{KW} **Gal. 1:2** And all the brethren with me, to the assemblies of Galatia.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:2** And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is joined by many unknown and therefore unnamed believers in sending greetings to the scattered assemblies in the geographical area of Galatia (Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch). This region is part of modern-day Turkey, south and east of the Black Sea. He makes no mention of Timothy or Titus or Silvanus, so it could be he had no missionary team at this point. He writes this epistle in his own handwriting, so he may not have had an amanuensis yet, either. It is quite possible that this was the first epistle he ever wrote.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It would appear that “the brothers” mentioned here are his fellow missionaries, though their actual identity cannot be known. The interesting point is that Paul does not name these fellow missionaries, as he does elsewhere, not wanting to give the impression that his gospel requires additional support. It was, after all, received directly from God. At the same time, he wishes to remind the Galatians that the gospel that had been preached to them, far from being a Pauline oddity, is actually the received doctrine of all the Christian church and its missionaries. (F. Gaebelin) I am not alone in my doctrine. All my colleagues in the Gospel work, traveling with me, join with me. (R. Jamieson)

He takes notice of the brethren here, whoever are meant, to show that they agreed with him in the doctrines of grace he defends, and in the charges he brought against this church, and in the reproofs and advice he gave them. (J. Gill) His reference to them would remind his readers that he was not without supporters. (R. Stamm) It is a characteristic fact that false teachers never appear except in churches already established. They seldom attempt the conversion of either Jew or Gentile, thus carefully avoiding persecution; but wherever they scent a work of grace from afar, they gather in eager haste to pervert the gospel of Christ. (E. Huxtable)

Gal. 1:2 And (connective) all (Nom. Measure) the brethren (Subj. Nom.) who (Nom. Appos.) are (ellipsis) together with me (Dat. Assoc.; his missionary team), to the assemblies (Dat. Ind. Obj.) of Galatia (Gen. Place):

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:2** καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ πάντες ἀδελφοί ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:2** et qui mecum sunt omnes fratres ecclesiis Galatiae

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:3** Grace [no human merit or legalism] to you and prosperity [blessings from experiential sanctification] from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

^{KW} **Gal. 1:3** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ,

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:3** Grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul may have been mixing the common Gentile greeting (grace) with the Jewish common greeting (peace) as a simple introduction to both categories of believers in the geographical region called Galatia. Or he may have meant the words to have special significance. He may have started with the word “grace” as a hint that his entire epistle was going to emphasize the doctrines of grace while totally excluding human merit or Judaistic legalism. In this vein, “prosperity” would be those blessings that come to the believer who is utilizing correct spiritual protocol and is making forward progress in the spiritual life, i.e., experiential sanctification. Whether the simple greeting or the “loaded” greeting is used, the source of grace and prosperity is God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The deity of Christ is asserted by His equality with the Father in this often used phrase.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To choose law, as the Galatians were doing, is to fall from grace. To live by works is to lose the peace with God that was purchased for believers by Christ’s atonement. (F. Gaebelein) Let us cast under our feet and utterly abhor all the power of free-will, all pharisaical wisdom and righteousness, all religious orders, all masses, ceremonies, vows, fastings, and such like as a most filthy rotten rag, or as dung, and as the most dangerous poison of the devil. Contrariwise, let us extol and magnify the glory of Christ, who has delivered us by His death, not from this world only, but from this present evil world. (M. Luther) This verse affirms once more the co-operation of the Father with the Son in devising and carrying out the scheme of man’s redemption. (W. Nicoll)

The word “peace” means more than freedom from outward strife. It means essentially an inner harmony, something that can be brought about only by the grace of God. As Christians we have adequate resources at our disposal, in the grace of an infinite God, to meet all the emergencies of life. But we only feel peaceful as we are conscious of that adequacy. (R. Earle) Coeternal and coequal with God the Father is our Lord Jesus Christ. He joins with the Father in bestowing the twin blessings of grace and peace upon His own. (J. Phillips) Grace is the root of peace; peace is the inner comfort that springs from grace. (E. Huxtable)

Gal. 1:3 Grace (Ind. Nom., Exclamatory; no human merit or legalism) to you (Dat. Adv.) and (connective) prosperity (Ind. Nom.; blessings from experiential sanctification) from God (Abl. Source) our (Gen. Rel.) Father (Gen. Appos.) and (connective) the Lord Jesus Christ (Abl. Source),

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:3** χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:3** gratia vobis et pax a Deo Patre et Domino nostro Iesu Christo

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:4** Who gave Himself [voluntarily and obediently] as a substitute for our [His sheep] sins, so that He could rescue us [His elect] out from the present evil age [the end result is not in question] according to the sovereign will of our God and Father [not man's will],

^{KW} **Gal. 1:4** Who gave Himself in behalf of our sins so that He might rescue us out from this present pernicious age according to the will of our God and Father,

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:4** Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ voluntarily and obediently gave Himself (Dramatic Aorist tense) as a substitute for our sins. Every person He went to the cross and died for was covered in this effective substitution. Their sins were completely taken care of; it was a perfect substitution. None of their sins will ever be brought up again in the Supreme Court of Heaven. They were all placed on Jesus Christ as our Substitute on the cross. What does the designation “our” mean? Does that mean He gave Himself as an effective substitute for all the sins of mankind? If He did, and one person ends up in hell, then it was an ineffective substitution – His purpose, plan and intended result failed. I do not worship a God that is capable of failure. I do not worship a God who is unable to exert His divine omnipotence over the wills of fickle, sinful men. The God I worship accomplishes His ultimate purpose in ALL of its myriad details.

Unbelief is a sin. If He died as a substitute for our sins, and “our” is referring to all mankind without exception, then the “sin of unbelief” was died for and all men without exception are going to heaven. This is a ridiculous and illogical philosophy that is not taught in Scripture. The volumes written before, during, and after the Protestant Reformation on this topic are in the hundreds - perhaps over a thousand. Jesus Christ gave Himself as a substitute for “those that the Father had given Him” by His sovereign will. He died for His chosen people, His sheep, His bride, His elect – not an unidentifiable blob of humanity. When He died on the cross, He obtained redemption for His people, He reconciled His people to the Father, He became a Substitute for their sins, and each and every one of them will be with Him in heaven forever. He did not give Himself as a potential substitute. Jesus Christ did not die on the cross leaving justification, redemption, and reconciliation an open question.

Jesus Christ did not set aside His divine attributes of sovereignty, omnipotence and omniscience (in some weak and sickly perversion of kenosis) so that man's enslaved will could pick up where He left off and complete the work of salvation. God the Father did not set aside His sovereign

plan, designed in eternity past, so that man's sinful will could decide its ultimate conclusion. This heresy was thoroughly dispensed with during the Reformation! The subjunctive mood in this verse is not potential, as if God designed an indefinite plan and then left it up to us to say 'Yes' or 'No'. The subjunctive mood is a definite result; the Substitution was 100% effective. Not one member of His elect will be left in this present evil age with sins attributed to his account. The substitution is a done deal. "It is finished." The selection of His sheep in eternity past and the deliverance (rescuing) of them in time is according to "HIS sovereign will," not the will of billions of spiritually dead human beings.

"Sins" in the plural is not the same as "sin" in the singular. Paul is actually referring to sanctification in this verse, not justification. Being rescued out of this age does not refer to justification or the rapture; it has to do with our experiential spiritual walk. "Sin" is the root, "sins" is the fruit. Of course He died for our sin, but He also died for our sins. Even though all the Reformers have done a marvelous job explaining the intricacies of the extent of the atonement, which is true, that is not the emphasis in this passage. Jesus Christ took care of our position, but He is also providing us with spiritual support in our walk. The important thing is that He is not providing us assistance through the law, but through grace. We are saved (experientially) not by what we do in the flesh according to rules, but by what we think in our soul according to the filling of the Spirit and Bible doctrine. He helps us by renewing our mind so it may live apart from the evil of this present age. This is deliverance in the present (experiential sanctification), not a future (eschatological) deliverance. We confess our sins (1 John 1:9) and He is faithful to forgive us, restore our temporal communion, and deliver us from the evil of this age.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Galatians 1:4 may well refer to the future event when believers are "taken out" of this age, the Rapture. If so, it directly supports the pretribulational view of Revelation 3:10. Another possibility is that it is a figurative expression describing believers as those "rescued out of this age." The figure is not of protection in but of "taking out." (T. Edgar) Actual guilt is not an attribute, but a relation. It is a personal relation between a sinning agent and the sovereign will which legislates the penal statute. Now, when the Scriptures and theology speak of penal imputation or substitution, it is this relation only which is transferred or counted over from the sinning person to his substitute. We do not dream of a similar transfer of personal acts, or of the personal attributes expressed in such acts. Readers must observe that in sacred Scripture the word "sin" is often used by metonymy where the concept intended is that of actual guilt. In a multitude of places, God's mercy is said to "remit sins." But actual guilt is what is meant. For God's act of forgiveness only removes our actual guilt from us; not sinfulness, as is proved by our own subsequent, most hearty confessions of unworthiness and sinfulness whenever God really forgives us. (R. Dabney)

There can be little doubt that Jesus viewed His death as a representative sacrifice for "the many." The idea of substitution which is prominent in Isaiah 53 appears in the ransom saying ... It is difficult to empty the thought of substitution out of His words. (L. Morris) In the penal substitution

of Christ, it is the actual guilt of sinners and nothing else, which is transferred from them to Him. The whole plan of gospel redemption rests upon this substitution of Christ as its corner-stone. He who overthrows the corner-stone overthrows the building. The doctrine of substitution is taught by the Scriptures so expressly in both Testaments, by types and didactic propositions, and with such iteration, that it cannot be eliminated from the Bible system without a license of exegesis destructive of all faith in the inspiration of Scriptures. Infidelity lies as the next remove from these disingenuous misconstructions. Let these three propositions be set side by side: Jesus was perfectly innocent; guilt cannot be imputed from a sinner to his substitute on any condition whatsoever; Jesus suffered the bitterest sorrows and death. The flippant and superficial spirit of our age disdains a thorough study of what the masters believed about penal imputation and substitution; they are flipped aside by the words “antiquated” and “Calvinistic.” (R. Dabney)

“Aion” is used by our Lord when He speaks of this age and that age which is to come. He is not speaking of this present existence as compared to the existence after death, as might be inferred from the use of the word “world,” but of the present age (Church Age) and the millennial age to come. (K. Wuest) It has to be admitted that the extent to which Scripture seems to go out of its way to avoid inclusive statements when speaking specifically of those for whom Christ died is certainly remarkable – even here where he says: “He gave Himself for OUR sins that He might deliver US.” (A. Custance) “Aion” is used to speak of this present evil age or world system. (R. Morey) “Aion” means “course,” its “age” or time, each generation having a more or less distinct character, but essentially the same “evil world.” (A. Pink) Salvation begins in the eternal counsel of God. It is a matter of His will and not of the will of man. As Paul says elsewhere, “It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.” (Rom. 9:16) The will of God to save men leads next to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with its focus in His substitutionary death for sinners. (F. Gaebelein)

Is it really so odd to think that Paul might attribute soteriological significance to Jesus’ faith? It is universally acknowledged that Paul speaks at least twice (Rom. 5:1-2, 19; Eph. 3:12) in his letters of Jesus’ obedience and attributes to this obedience saving significance. (R. Hays) For Paul the obedience and faithfulness of Jesus Christ are of central soteriological significance; the accent of the gospel story lies upon His faithfulness in accomplishing the promised redemption. The cross is not an isolated religious symbol; instead, it is the climactic event in the story of Jesus Christ, Who was sent forth by God, Who enacted the obedience of faith by giving Himself up in order to free humanity from the power of sin and death, “to deliver us from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father.” This act of obedience, which according to Romans 5 stands in typological antithesis to Adam’s obedience, is a representative action, in which the fate of humanity is carried, or, to use a key term of Irenaeus, “recapitulated.” Thus, Jesus’ faith is not merely exemplary, as in 19th-century liberal theology, but vicariously efficacious. (ibid)

The oblation of Himself upon the cross, was not for any sin of His own, nor for the sins of angels, of whom He was no Redeemer and Saviour, but “for our sins;” not the sins of the apostles, or of the Jews only, nor yet of all mankind, but of God’s elect, called the friends of Christ, His sheep and church, for whom He gave Himself ... It was His will of command, that He should lay down His life

for His sheep, to which He was obedient; it was His pleasure, it was what was agreeable to Him, was to His good liking, that He should die for the sins of His people. (J. Gill) “Aion” means lifetime, a generation, an indefinitely long time, time without limit, eternity, a period of indefinite duration, an age. Each age is characterized by its own culture and quality of life. (R. Stamm) Sin (singular) is what I am. It is our nature, our root. Sins (plural) is what I do. It is the fruit of our nature. Galatians deals more with sanctification than justification, a fact most people don’t realize, although they can’t be separated totally from each other ... This evil age refers to the age of legalism. Grace sets us free from the “do’s and don’ts” of this evil age. The mind desires the law of God (what I want). The flesh serves the law of sin (what I feel). God starts with our hearts. (K. Lamb)

Christ’s Self-sacrifice, with its gracious and effective purpose, was no human plan, and is in no sense dependent on man’s legal obedience. Its one source is the supreme and sovereign will of God, and that God is in relation to us a father who wins back his lost child. The process of salvation stands out in divine and fatherly pre-eminence, and is not to be overlaid by man’s devices which would either complicate or enfeeble it. In harmony with the eternal purpose, the Son of God incarnate gave Himself for us, and for our rescue. This redemptive work was no incident suddenly devised, nor was it an experiment made on the law and government of God. (J. Eadie) Can you find any human effort or contribution in this verse? It is all God’s work. He saved us, He called us, He purposed to save us by His grace, and He settled it before we were born. He chose us before the foundation of the world, and this grace of salvation was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. He settled it all before we were born, so we wouldn’t be able to get our hands on it and ruin it. (M. DeHaan) The death of Christ was not a historical accident or expedient, but according to the will of our God to deliver us. The initiative was God’s. (S. Mikolaski)

The crucifixion and the resurrection, the cross and the empty tomb – these are the simple facts of the gospel. The good news is that Jesus Christ, whom God raised from the dead, gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of God our Father. These facts do not contain a single word about anything we do. They simply document what God has done in human history through Jesus Christ. The gospel is not about what we do for God; it is about what God has done for us. (P. Ryken) The definite doctrine of Scripture is, that in dying, Christ bore a representative or a substitutionary relation to sin and sinners, as is expressed by “anti,” and implied in “peri” and “huper.” The “aion” is this passing age, this world as it now is – fallen, guilty, and corrupt, in bondage to a god. Believers are rescued out of “this present age” with all its evils of curse, corruption, sense, and selfishness. (J. Eadie) The phrase “evil age” (lifetime, generation, duration of time) refers to the current time in which Satan is ruling the earth. It is a period of evil rule. Legalism is but one more arrow in Satan’s quiver. (LWB)

What Christ’s death has done is to transfer the Christian from one age to the other, from the sphere of Satan’s power to that of God. While still living physically in this present evil age, therefore, we enjoy already the life of the age to come. This is for Paul the victory of the cross. (R. Cole) The age of the flesh, the mode of existence based on the works of the law is eschatologically obsolete. The law as a redemptive-historical period has come to an end. Faith, on the other hand, is the way to a new life. (M. Silva) The revival of rites and ceremonies, which had been fulfilled and therefore done

away in Christ, pandered to the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. The religion of Christ is freedom. He means to deliver us from bondage. It is our own fault if we are not delivered. (R. Edgar) The church age, like other ages before it, is evil because it is under the domination of the god of this age, Satan. The world system in this age, directed by Satan, seeks to detract from the glory of God. The underlying principles upon which it is built are apart from God. This age is also characterized as to its nature as evil, because the mystery of iniquity is working its steady course through it. (C. Feinberg)

Today, Satan is the sovereign of the world, and he rules through the policy that he naturally calls good but that God calls “evil.” Evil is the sum total of Satan’s genius; it is the thinking of Satan as opposed to the thinking of Christ, Bible doctrine. Satan sponsors many different – even antithetical – ideas and false systems of thought by which he seeks to gain control of the human soul and hence of the entire human race. When we understand Satan’s reason for revolting against his own Creator and recognize his current objectives, we have a frame of reference for understanding evil. Satan revolted because of arrogance. His objective, both then and now, is to make himself “like the Most High” (Isaiah 14:14) and to usurp the throne of heaven. In order to do so, the devil is determined to solve all the problems of life independent of God’s design and Bible doctrine. Thus, he promotes human good – any good deeds accomplished apart from the filling of the Spirit and doctrine, or any solutions contrary to the laws of divine establishment. Evil thinking leads to evil function, and such satanic doctrines as socialism, activism, and legalism lead people to sincerely pursue “noble” ends at the expense of divinely ordained human freedom, privacy, property, prosperity, and spiritual growth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 1:4 Who (Gen. Appos.) gave (δίδωμι, AAPtc.GMS, Dramatic, Substantival) Himself (Acc. Dir. Obj.; voluntarily and obediently) as a substitute for our (Poss. Gen.; the elect) sins (Gen. Substitution), so that (result) He could rescue (ἐξαίρω, AMSubj.3S, Culminative, Result; deliver, select, choose) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.; His sheep) out from the present (ἐνίστημι, Perf.APtc.GMS, Descriptive, Temporal) evil (Descr. Gen.) age (Abl. Separation; world order) according to the sovereign will (Adv. Acc.) of our (Gen. Rel.) God (Abl. Means) and (connective) Father (Gen. Appos.),

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:4** τοῦ δόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ὅπως ἐξέλγεται ἡμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεστώτος ποινηροῦ κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:4** qui dedit semet ipsum pro peccatis nostris ut eriperet nos de praesenti saeculo nequam secundum voluntatem Dei et Patris nostri

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:5** **To Whom [Jesus Christ] is the glory from the ages [eternity past] unto the ages [eternity future]. Acknowledge it.**

^{KW} **Gal. 1:5** To Whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

KJV **Galatians 1:5** To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ will receive all the glory for the work of salvation. He will not share the glory of the work of salvation with sinful man. His glory is also not restricted to our day and age. It began in eternity past and will continue in eternity future. It covers all the ages or dispensations, i.e., forever and forever. Those misguided believers (of Arminian persuasion) who continually try to insert man's will into God's glorious plan of salvation should cease and desist from their futile efforts. They should acknowledge that substitution, and therefore salvation, is 100% of God and 0% of man. I dare say they will not be seeking their own glory when they meet the Author and Finisher of our faith at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Right at the start, having affirmed Jesus' resurrection, Paul describes the effect of His divinely planned death as rescuing us from our bondage and lostness in this sin-dominated, demon-ridden world for that fellowship with God through adoption and the gift of the Spirit that is essential and integral to life in the world to come (call it heaven, if you wish) and to the freedom from slavery to sin that Christ bestows. Atonement, says Paul, is thus foundational for entry into the new order. (J. Packer) In the doxology the whole period of duration is conceived as a succession of cycles. (M. Vincent) It is probable that we should supply "estin" (is) in such cases rather than "esto" (be). It is an affirmation rather than a wish. Glory is the essential attribute of God. (J. Lightfoot) The glory consists in the manifestation of the Father's character throughout all the ages in the continual redemption of mankind according to His will. Hereby is revealed His union of perfect wisdom, holiness and love. (W. Nicoll)

That is, either to Christ, Who gave Himself to expiate the sins of His people, on the account of which all honor and glory are due to Him from them; or to God the Father, according to whose will of purpose and command Christ gave Himself, for which glory ought to be ascribed unto Him; and it may well be thought, that both are taken into this doxology. (J. Gill) If salvation is God's work from beginning to end, then all the honor and majesty belong to Him forever. If all the glory goes to God, what comes to us is only grace, which is what Paul's letter to the Galatians is all about. (P. Ryken) "Aion" denotes in Scripture a divinely appointed period. The larger of these divine dispensations comprehend within them other shorter periods, and are therefore designated "aiones aionon." The phrase in the text ascribes glory to God for the whole term of these dispensations, i.e., for all the ages of human life, since these together make up the sum of man's existence. (W. Nicoll)

Gal. 1:5 To Whom (Dat. Adv.) is (ellipsis) the glory (Ind. Nom.) from the ages (Adv. Gen. Time; dispensations prior to the Church Age) unto the ages (Gen. Extent of Time; all future dispensations). Acknowledge it (truly indeed).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:5** ὧ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων ἀμήν

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:5** cui est gloria in saecula saeculorum amen

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:6** I am amazed that you are of such a kind [of believer] as to have so soon deserted [gone AWOL] from Him [God the Father] Who called you [positionally and experientially] into the sphere of the grace of Christ unto another of a different kind of [altered, perverted] gospel [based on legalism],

^{KW} **Gal. 1:6** I am marveling that in such a manner suddenly you are becoming of another mind and deserting from Him who called you in the sphere of Christ's grace to a message of good news diametrically opposed to the gospel,

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:6** I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is astounded that the believers in Galatia had so quickly abandoned (Dramatic Present tense) the doctrine of God the Father for an altered gospel of human conception. He thought he had taught them so well that there was no way they could be embracing heresy this quickly. But the middle voice points to their doing this abandoning themselves; they couldn't blame their faltering on false teachers from the outside (passive voice) because they were responsible for doing this to themselves. Instead of comparing the teachings of Paul with those of the false teachers on a point-by-point basis, they hastily abandoned Paul's teachings for (Latin: transferred their allegiance to) that of certain legalists in the area.

The Father had called them (Constative Aorist tense) into the sphere of the grace of Christ, not into the sphere of legalism. How could they abandon Christ (as renegades) for such a paltry substitute? The gospel of Jesus Christ is both positionally and experientially based on grace, not law or works. The true gospel is centered on grace; the false gospel in this case is based on legalism. Legalism added to grace is, therefore, a heretical gospel – a gospel completely different from the one given to us by God. Paul cannot believe they would go AWOL from the grace of God and embrace any form of legalism. Why would anyone want to do that?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Is it by my act of free will, or God's act of free will, that I am in Christ Jesus? Every believer must ask this question. It is not enough to limit God's free will to making a plan available. The question is not "Is God ultimately the source of the plan of salvation?" Even the Judaizers in Galatia, who were placed under the curse of God as false teachers, could say that. The question is, Who, ultimately, is responsible for my union with Jesus Christ? God is both the One who is the origin and source of salvation in general, and the One who powerfully, purposefully, and perfectly draws His elect people

into blessed union with Jesus Christ. The Arminian simply cannot allow this freedom to God. The Scripture knows no other doctrine. If anyone knew that the idea of “free will” was a myth, it was Paul. It was not free will that knocked Paul to the ground on the road to Damascus. It was not free will that blinded him. Paul was not “seeking after God” nor the Saviour, Jesus Christ on that day when God chose to reveal His Son to him. No, God determined the day and the hour, and Paul was only happy to oblige. (J. White)

Under the Old Covenant people were justified by grace also, but they lived in the sphere of law instead of the sphere of grace ... Any activity on my part that attempts to obtain God’s favor or, for that matter, to keep it, frustrates the grace of God and becomes “another gospel.” (K. Lamb) Why do a large number of evangelicals desire to maintain a commitment to an Arminian understanding of free will if it entails a distorted doctrine of justification by faith alone? The Arminian presupposition of a free will weakens the Bible’s doctrine of grace to the same degree that it weakens the doctrine of omnipotence. When the Arminian insists that somehow God limits Himself at the door of the human will, this can only mean in practice that the sinner must supply something for salvation that God is powerless to supply. That something is the act of saving faith, essentially an autonomous manifestation of a purely natural, innate spiritual competence. In other words, salvation is partly a transcendent act of God’s mercy in providing the necessary circumstances and partly an immanent natural achievement of the sinner’s spiritual competence. (G. Johnson, R. Wright)

The tragic flaw of the Galatians was legalistic reversionism. They were trying to vindicate themselves by following the works of the Mosaic Law rather than the grace system outlined by Paul. Although they had been saved by grace, they were now utterly confused about salvation, spirituality, and how to live the Christian life. They were now adding the works of the Law to the non-meritorious gift of salvation and equating the Law with the spiritual life of the Church Age. The Judaizers had slipped into town behind Paul and sold the Galatian believers a fraudulent bill of goods. The Mosaic Law was never intended to be an instrument of salvation or the spiritual life. While it reveals the sinful condition of man, his need of salvation, and the principles of morality and the laws of divine establishment, it can neither save nor justify man before the Lord, nor provide spirituality. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul has reason to believe that the Christians of Galatia are on the point of turning from the gospel of Christ to embrace something that was no gospel at all, but only legalism. (F. Gaebelein)

They are not, nor can they be removed from the everlasting and unchangeable love of God to them in Christ, of which their calling is a fruit, effect, and evidence; nor from their covenant interest in Him, which is immovable and inviolable; nor from a state of justification, in which they openly are, who in the effectual calling have passed from death to life, and so shall never enter into condemnation. (J. Gill) The Judaizers were pursuing a standard, the law - instead of a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. But the righteousness of God was imputed to the believer by means of faith, not the works of the law. They were ignorant, still, of the finished work of Christ. The righteousness which came by faith is absolute; nothing can be taken away from it, nothing can be added to it. Paul’s gospel is a deliverance from this world’s system and from the law and self-effort into the fullness of God through Jesus Christ. Paul’s gospel is the salvation of God. (K. Lamb) Just because

men quote Scripture and talk about Jesus and grace and justification and faith does not mean anything, unless we also know what else they believe. (M. DeHaan)

Can you distinguish between the true gospel and all the false gospels in the contemporary church? We worship in a church of many gospels. There is the gospel of material prosperity, which teaches that Jesus is the way to financial gain. There is the gospel of family values, which teaches that Jesus is the way to a happy home. There is the gospel of the self, which teaches that Jesus is the way to personal fulfillment. There is the gospel of religious tradition, which teaches that Jesus is the way to respectability. There is the gospel of morality, which teaches that Jesus is the way to be a good person. What makes these other gospels so dangerous is that the things they offer are all beneficial. It is good to be prosperous, to have a happy home, and to be well behaved. Yet as good as all these things are, they are not the good news. When they become for us a sort of gospel, then we are in danger of turning away from the only gospel there is. (P. Ryken) The Galatians had been swept off their feet. After all, the Judaizers specialized in quoting Scripture. But they took texts out of context and ignored the dispensational dimension of the Scriptures. Error, especially when it is wrapped in Scripture and presented under cover of a false hermeneutic, can sound very much like the truth. People who are not instructed in the whole counsel of God can become an easy prey to false teachers. The whole so-called “charismatic” movement today thrives on such errors. (J. Phillips)

What might our evangelicalism, without the evangel, look like? We would have to replace the centrality of the gospel with something else, naturally. So what might take the place of the gospel in our sermons and books and cassette tapes and Sunday classes and home Bible studies, and above all, in our hearts? A number of possibilities are: a passionate devotion to the pro-life cause, a confident manipulation of modern managerial techniques, a drive toward church growth, a deep concern for the institution of the family, a clever appeal to consumerism by offering a sort of cost-free Christianity Lite, a sympathetic, empathetic, thickly-honeyed cultivation of interpersonal relationships, a determination to take America back to its Christian roots through political power, or a warm affirmation of self-esteem. (R. Ortlund, Jr.) This call, this salvation was decided before human history. (T. Schreiner)

In other words, the church without the gospel would look very much the way the evangelical church looks at this very moment. Unless we keep the gospel at the center of the church, we are always in danger of shoving it off to one side and letting something else take its place. The church’s greatest danger is not the anti-gospel outside the church; it is the counterfeit gospel inside the church. (P. Ryken) That work which is built up of long labour, may be overthrown in a night. A man may labour half a score of years to build up some little Church to be rightly ordered, and when it is so ordered, there creepeth in some malbrain, yea, a very unlearned idiot, and he in one moment overthrows all. (M. Luther) An indignant expression of surprise takes the place of the usual thanksgiving for the faith of his converts. This is the sole instance where Paul omits to express his thankfulness in addressing any church. (J. Lightfoot)

There is a deception in that the law gives an appearance of bringing in righteousness because it tells me how to behave. But the fact is: I couldn’t do it before, I can’t do it now, and I will never be able

to do it. The Judaizer says, Yes, Christ died for your sins, but you need to keep the law so that you maintain a righteous walk. This is a different kind of spirit, a different kind of gospel than the one you have come to know. It is promulgated by false apostles, ministers not of unrighteousness, but ministers of righteousness. They are demanding behavior for righteousness. You must maintain this or that legal standard to grow. Grace raises me up to Christ. Law brings me down to childhood again. God takes a dim view of legalism ... Where did God ever tell you: “Don’t drink beer?” He didn’t. That is a doctrine, a commandment, a tradition of men ... This type of self-abasement (touch not, taste not, handle not) might make you look like a paragon of virtue, someone who honors your church. It makes us look like a spiritual body: We don’t do any of those things here. But that’s the description of a fencepost in west Texas; it doesn’t do any of those things, either. (K. Lamb)

Gal. 1:6 I am amazed (θαυμάζω, PAI1S, Descriptive; incredulous, astounded) that (conj.) you are of such a kind (Adv.; of believer) as to have so soon (Adv.; quickly, hastily) deserted (μετατίθημι, PMI2P, Dramatic; gone AWOL, turning into renegades) from Him (Abl. Separation; God the Father) Who called (καλέω, AAPtc.GMS, Constative, Substantival) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; positionally and experientially) into the sphere of the grace (Loc. Sph.) of Christ (Abl. Source, Gen. Poss.) unto another of a different kind of (Acc. Disadv.; altered, heretical: human instead of divine) gospel (Acc. Gen. Ref.; based on legalism),

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:6** Θαυμάζω ὅτι οὕτως ταχέως μετατίθεσθε ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς ἐν χάριτι Χριστοῦ εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:6** miror quod sic tam cito transferimini ab eo qui vos vocavit in gratiam Christi in aliud evangelium

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:7** Which [false gospel] is not another of the same kind of gospel [based on grace alone], especially since there are some [legalists] who are making it a practice to mentally disturb you [constantly stirring up trouble] and who want to distort the gospel [good news] of Christ [by adding works to grace].

^{KW} **Gal. 1:7** Which message is not an alternative gospel. Only, there are certain ones who are troubling your minds and are desiring to pervert the gospel of Christ.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:7** Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul does not attempt to compromise with the false teachers. He calls their gospel “another of a different kind,” meaning it is not genuine or authentic. Their gospel message is not based on grace alone, but adds a legalistic perversion to the genuine article. If Paul had used the Greek word “allos” twice, the argument could be made that there was more than one gospel they could

follow. There could have been four, five or even more ways to pursue the truth. But Paul used “heteros” the second time, which means there was only one legitimate gospel and the others are counterfeit. Paul had warned them before that there were Judaizers following him around the Middle East. Since he had warned the Galatians about these false teachers, he was all the more shocked that they had given in to their heresies so quickly.

Legalistic Christians were making it a daily habit to argue and torment (Iterative Present tense) those believers who held fast to the “grace alone” message. It was their intended goal (Purpose Infinitive) to change the gospel of Christ by adding law and works to the “pure grace” message. This was not a small theological difference that could be overlooked or compromised so that everyone could live in peace and harmony together. This was a gross distortion (Dramatic Aorist tense) which completely changed (Latin: converted) the divine message into a damnable counterfeit. This substitute message was a complete perversion of the truth, so Paul had to do damage control and then put a stop to it immediately. He could not allow any mixture of grace and law, or faith and works, to corrupt his new converts in Galatia.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Redemption is not conditional. The entire work of salvation and the redemptive work of God requires no participation on an individual’s part. It is important for you to understand that I am referring to the believer’s position and justification before the Father. You and I have absolutely nothing to do in gaining that position. We are passive recipients. (K. Lamb) “Pervert” is not a denial of the Gospel, but a twisting of the message. This twisting or distortion is accomplished by ADDING something to the grace of God. In the case of these false teachers, it was the preaching of grace – plus something. They taught that we are saved by grace – and then kept by works. This is called by Paul “another gospel, which is not another,” but a perversion or distortion of the message of salvation. (M. DeHaan) Their new life in Christ is probably at an early and critical stage of development, and Paul writes in great anxiety to head off spiritual disaster. They are, the wording implies, in the act of turning, but have not done so completely. To desert the grace of Christ for law is also to desert God. (S. Mikolaski)

Most former Pharisees have a problem. It is hard for them to leave their legalism behind. Although initially they received God’s grace for free, they keep trying to put a surcharge on it. They believe that God loves them, but secretly they suspect that His love is conditional, that it depends on how they are doing in the Christian life. They end up with a performance-based Christianity that denies the grace of God. To put this in theological terms, they want to base their justification on their sanctification. The church has always been full of recovering Pharisees who want to add human effort to God’s grace. (P. Ryken) The Church’s greatest troublemakers (now as then) are not those outside who oppose, ridicule and persecute it, but those inside who try to change the gospel. (F. Gaebelin)

As a result of law having been given, flesh becomes very active, even though it has an inability to perform. It is weak, coming short of the glory of God. The flesh wants to do the will of God, but it

can't do the will of God. And boy, do we have religious flesh. And since it can't do the will of God, it formulates something it can do. So it starts putting in stained glass windows, and organs for background music, etc. And all that's nothing but flesh. It has absolutely no profit before God; they are minor things. But it gets religious and it builds an atmosphere of religion and makes it feel like it's being spiritual. But there's a big difference between what you want to do and what you feel like doing; and flesh functions in the field of what you feel like doing, not in the field of what you want to do. So works become the activity of the flesh, really putting forth a stalwart effort to please God – but it cannot. We often mistake activity for spirituality, when the fact of the matter is that some of your busiest believers are your most carnal. The reason they are busy is because they feel their carnality and they want to somehow overcome that feeling of carnality, so they go do something religious. But it's just religious and isn't spiritual at all. Law has an outward show of righteousness, but grace does not. (K. Lamb)

Paul marveled that these Celts in Asia so speedily turned away from the gospel of grace to a gospel of ritual. He wondered at their fickleness. And yet, when we consider the sensationalism which underlies every ritualistic system, we can understand the hold it has upon those constitutionally fickle. Whatever is showy, palpable, and helpful to self-esteem and pride secures the homage of shallow minds. But the sad aspect of this tendency is that it removes souls from God. Every rite and ceremony which is interposed as essential between man and God creates a sense of distance between those whom the gospel would bring nigh. Instead of ritualism tending to intensify communion with God, it can only intensify the superstitious feeling which puts souls at a distance from Him. (R. Edgar)

It takes a lot of grace to live under the law! Legalists will think you're utterly irresponsible, but just go on living. There is an error of concern in legalism; there is an error of responsibility in freedom. Love God, do as you please. It is the law of the heart that is concerned. For instance, there are many Southern Baptists who know all the qualities and can build a church on them, but they don't know Him. Self-righteousness creates a vacuum that all manner of doctrines of demons may enter ... justification by faith is positional sanctification, union with Christ – the kingdom of heaven, related to blood and the cross. Salvation by confession is experiential sanctification, unity with Christ – the kingdom of God, related to power and having a heart for God ... A legalist walks by sight and looks to the outward deeds of people. You can perform many works and deeds and think yourself to be maturing spiritually, but still remain a babe. Works are what believers do; motivation is the question. Fruit comes naturally from a man's integrity. (K. Lamb)

Gal. 1:7 Which (Nom. Appos.; false gospel) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) not (neg. particle) another of the same kind of (Nom. Appos.; genuine, authentic) gospel (ellipsis; based on grace), especially since (emphatic & affirmative conj.) there are (εἰμί, PAI3P, Static) some (Pred. Nom.; legalistic Judaizers) who are making it a practice to mentally disturb (παράσσω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Substantial; trouble, agitate, stir up) you (Acc. Disadv.) and (continuative) who want (θέλω, PAPtc.NMP, Gnostic, Substantial; wish, desire) to distort (μεταστρέφω, AAInf.,

Dramatic, Purpose; alter, change) the gospel (Acc. Dir. Obj.; good news) of Christ (Gen. Source; by adding works).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:7** ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο εἰ μὴ τινές εἰσιν οἱ ταρασσόντες ὑμᾶς καὶ θέλοντες μεταστρέψαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:7** quod non est aliud nisi sunt aliqui qui vos conturbant et volunt convertere evangelium Christi

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:8** In fact, even if we [one of the apostles] or a messenger from heaven [angel] preach a gospel to you contrary to [or alongside of as an addition] that [grace gospel which I have preached], let him be under the curse of God [severe divine discipline].

^{KW} **Gal. 1:8** In fact, even if we or a messenger from heaven should preach a gospel to you which goes beyond that which we preached to you as good news, let him be accursed.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:8** But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a protasis of a 3rd class condition to present a plausible (hypothetical) scenario to the Galatians. There is also, in my opinion, an element of sanctified sarcasm in Paul's voice. If any other apostle or a messenger from heaven comes to Galatia and preaches (Potential Subjunctive mood) a gospel that is contrary to the gospel that Paul has been preaching, Paul asks that this false teacher be under the curse of God (Imperative of Entreaty). Paul is still incredulous that they would toss the gospel of grace aside and embrace legalism. They apparently believe almost anything they hear through the grapevine (eg., newspapers, television or other form of snakeoil). Some of them were so gullible that when Paul first passed through Galatia, they thought he was Hermes and Barnabas was Zeus! Paul's reference to a messenger from heaven is a sarcastic sting to remind them that this isn't the first time they have believed a foolish notion. His reference to "we" includes all of the other apostles, since there seemed to be a loyal following of the apostles who resided in Jerusalem.

Paul doesn't care who or what is doing the preaching. If it is not the pure gospel of grace, with no legalism or works added to it, it is false. The preposition "para" can mean "contrary to" or "added along side of." That means if the gospel is a complete substitute for the true gospel, or is the true gospel with something else added to the end, it is still false. He is fighting here for the absolute purity of the gospel of Christ. The divine message, unadulterated with human wisdom or traditions, is the only acceptable message. He is so adamant on his defense of the truth that he calls down a curse from heaven on anyone who might preach a different gospel. If the communicator is a Christian, this is a request for severe divine discipline. If the communicator is an unbeliever, it is a request for divine destruction. Paul is not exactly exhibiting a compromising attitude by cursing false teachers, is he? Although I wouldn't recommend calling

down curses on your neighbors, in this scenario Paul is justified in doing so.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This is not the raving of narrow-minded fanaticism. It is the expression of a deeply-held conviction that the gospel is divine in origin and in content. To pervert it accordingly or to oppose it is to pervert or oppose the very purpose of God. Little that Paul says on the atonement, or for that matter on any other theological topic, will be understood unless this point is grasped. Paul was not playing a parlour game. He was proclaiming a God-given message to men on the brink of hell. (L. Morris) To maintain that the dispensation of grace did not abrogate the Law as a rule of life is to misunderstand completely the force of the argument in the entire epistle to the Galatians. Those addressed were believers in the churches of Galatia; they were not trying to be saved by the Law but seeking to live under it. Paul anathematizes such a course of action. (C. Feinberg) In evangelism the co-operation of evangelicals with deniers of the cardinal teachings of the Christian religion is ruled out. It is forbidden by the Apostle Paul in this verse. (R. Kuiper)

The logical objection to what Paul has been saying is that the teaching he calls the gospel is not THE gospel, but only the gospel of Paul. If this is the case, then the Galatians must evaluate the source of the teaching they had received, taking into account that they, the legalizers, were the official representatives of the Jerusalem apostles, while Paul was not ... Paul uses the words “eternally condemned” to denounce those who teach another gospel. In spiritual terms it means damnation. (F. Gaebelin) What kind of words, as a servant of Christ, was he entitled to use in defending it? Paul stopped short only of profanity. He could have used no stronger language and have remained within the bounds of propriety. They were God’s words before they were Paul’s. (R. Stamm) The good news of justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, is the only gospel there is. Anyone who says anything different – Paul doesn’t care who – deserves to go to hell! (P. Ryken) This is a petition that the person referred to may be deprived of God’s grace, and instead be the object of His disapproval. (E. Burton)

Some advocates of extreme religious tolerance hold that what a man believes is his own business. They insist that life and work, as sure demonstrations of his belief, are the tests that matter, at least as far as the public is concerned; that every man’s religion is larger than he can define; that life is more definitive than theology. Being brotherly is all that matters, say they. Why quibble? Be practical. Cooperate or unite for worthy service programs in the spirit of Jesus and men will be led into the truth they need to live by. Let the theologians argue, not they. Theologians, as far as they are concerned, are left to split hairs, burn the midnight oil, and live on salaries which to many laymen symbolize their worth. Not so with the drawing of sharp social distinctions. Not so with United States Supreme Court lawyers, who split hairs so sharply that many of the court’s most history-making decisions have been by 5-4 votes. Not so with airplane pilots, whose split-second navigation means landing safely or cracking up. Not so with the scientist, whose split-cell research in laboratory or clinic means life or death. And in high and holy fact it is not so with theology either. It is from men like Paul and books like Galatians that contenders for the significance of doctrine get their ammunition. Such men and books sharpen the church’s conscience to perform its historic function of

being the custodian of truth. Such men cannot understand the morals of, nor will they have fellowship with, those who are tolerant of doctrinal looseness or unconcern; because what a man in his heart believes, soon or late he begins to be and do. (R. Stamm)

Getting men to see that strong, clear doctrinal thinking essentially matters is a difficult business; for one reason, because so much of the most original, authentic, and creative Christian thought is embedded in layers of obscure wordage, cumbersome phraseology, unimaginative or over-imaginative writing. It is held down by thought patterns that are unrelated to literal, demonstrable, living concerns. Here is the Christian's call – to get the truth of Christ into more general circulation, so that it may influence concrete situations and the general public. Why not let the earthly style of the market place become the language of religion? That is what Luther did in translating the Bible into German. (R. Stamm) It is because of the fact that many theological terms in the area of sanctification are so obscure, cumbersome and misunderstood, that I like some of Robert B. Thieme, Jr.'s vocabulary. It organizes and explains experiential sanctification in a mechanics format using (in many cases) the original Greek in Scripture. (LWB) Throughout the Scripture, the strongest language is reserved not for the murderer, or the adulterer, or the extortioner, but for those who propagate religious error. Jesus called the scribes and the Pharisees hypocrites, whited sepulchers, serpents, and a generation of vipers. It is a crime in the court of heaven to subvert the true faith of Christ. (J. Phillips) A professed revelation, even though seemingly accredited by miracles, is not to be received if it contradict the already existing revelation, for God cannot contradict Himself. (R. Jamieson)

It is the habit of modern times to regard error in religious matters as in no way endangering the salvation of man. A flippant infidelity denies that a man is responsible for his beliefs. There is a spirit abroad that leads men to think that everybody is right, that nobody is wrong, that nothing but an evil life will bring retribution hereafter. By men of this spirit the apostle would be regarded as cruelly illiberal and narrow. Yet we must hold that there are fundamental doctrines in religion which are essential to salvation. The apostle regarded heresy as a serious thing when he attached a curse to it. This anathema was not excommunication; for an angel could not be affected by such a thing; but the very curse of the living God. (E. Huxtable) The intense zeal of the apostle for the evangel he had proclaimed comes out in the fact that he calls down this anathema on himself, in case he should be guilty of distorting the message he is proclaiming. (A. Knoch) Paul placed a high priority on the right understanding of the gospel. He placed a low priority on the doctrine of the observance of particular days (Col. 2:16-17). We all need priorities in our evaluation of doctrine. (C. Ryrie)

Gal. 1:8 In fact (emphatic, adversative), even (ascensive) if (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe someone will, maybe someone won't") we (Subj. Nom.; one of the apostles) or (disjunctive part.) a messenger (Subj. Nom.; angel) from heaven (Gen. Place) preach a gospel (εὐαγγελίζω, AMSubj.3S, Constative, Potential) to you (Dat. Adv.) contrary to (or alongside of as an addition) that (Acc. Gen. Ref.; the grace gospel which I have preached), let him be (εἰμί, PMImp.3S, Descriptive, Entreaty) under the curse of God (Pred. Nom.).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:8** ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐὰν ἡμεῖς ἢ ἄγγελος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ εὐαγγελίσηται [ὑμῖν] παρ' ὃ εὐηγγελισάμεθα ὑμῖν ἀνάθεμα ἔστω

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:8** sed licet nos aut angelus de caelo evangelizet vobis praeterquam quod evangelizavimus vobis anathema sit

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:9** As we warned before and now I say again [pay attention this time because this is a deadly serious matter]: If anyone preaches a gospel to you contrary to [or along side of as an addition] that [grace gospel] which you have previously received [from me], let him be under the curse of God.

^{KW} **Gal. 1:9** Even as we have said on a previous occasion, indeed, now again I am saying, If, as is the case, anyone preaches a gospel to you which goes beyond that which you took so eagerly and hospitably to your hearts, let him be accursed.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:9** As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul repeats his warning (Intensive Perfect tense) in case the Galatians are not paying attention, because this is a deadly serious warning. He does not petition the Supreme Court of Heaven to apply severe divine discipline to a believer for any minor infraction of the gospel. If someone is preaching a gospel that replaces or adds something to the pure grace gospel of Christ Jesus (Static Present tense), Paul asks that he be under the curse of God (Imperative of Entreaty). In the prior verse, the protasis is a 3rd class condition with the subjunctive mood, meaning maybe somebody is preaching a heretical gospel in your presence and maybe they aren't. What constitutes a heretical gospel? Any gospel message that takes the grace of God from central focus and replaces it with law or works is a heretical gospel. Any gospel message that begins with grace and then adds law or works as an addition to the gospel of pure grace is a heretical gospel.

Furthermore, any gospel message that says positionally you are saved by grace, but experientially you are saved by the law, is a heretical gospel. Not only are we saved by grace and justified by faith, but our Christian walk is also by grace and faith. The law cannot save us and the law cannot make us grow. In this verse, the protasis is a 1st class condition with the indicative mood, meaning it is a known fact (actuality) to Paul that there is someone preaching a heretical gospel in their presence. This conditional change is meant to point an accusing finger directly at those who are preaching the false gospel. If Paul were in their midst, he would point his finger and warn them to their face. Most commentators agree that the false teachers are believers, so the curse would not include a denial of eternal life. What it does imply is the complete temporal destruction of their spiritual life, their soul, their mind, their physical health, perhaps even death.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Failure to trust in Christ alone is disclosed when salvation is supposed to depend on anything other than believing in Christ, and when security is made to depend at any point whatsoever on human faithfulness. Men are saved and kept in sovereign grace through simple faith in Christ alone. This is the heart of the Gospel of divine grace. If any other Gospel than his be preached, it must fall under the unrevoked anathema of God. (L. Chafer) People may masquerade as evangelists in an outward conformity to religious regulations, but may actually be objects of God's wrath as perverters of the gospel of Christ! At this point the preacher is practically assaulted with applications. (D. Black) Galatia was exposed to all sorts of quacks and peddlers of specious gospels, and the whole world was infested with religious racketeers who knew how to make money by bewitching the masses in an age of catastrophic social change and spiritual bewilderment. Asia Minor was a home of ecstatic cults and a spawning ground for prophets of other gods. Paul tore off their masks and adjured his converts to have nothing to do with them. (R. Stamm)

When Pink and his modern followers, reacting to moral laxity in the church, back-load the gospel with means, they are flatly contradicting Paul, if words have any meaning at all. In so doing, they seem to be preaching "another gospel." They are saying that, if one is truly a Christian, he will inevitably produce a life of works and perseverance. If he does not meet this requirement of being a Christian, then he is not a Christian at all and will not go to heaven. Furthermore, these fruits are not only evidences of regeneration, but they are actual means by which God intends to secure our ultimate arrival in heaven. However, requirements which must be met in order to secure a certain result, going to heaven, are in fact conditions necessary for the attainment of that result. And if a life of works is a necessary condition for obtaining the result of heaven, then salvation is ultimately conditioned upon works and not faith alone, and so the words of Paul have been turned upside down ... But the gospel does not include all these additional items in the word "believe." To believe is to trust and includes nothing else. (J. Dillow) If the message excludes grace, or mingles law with grace as the means of either justification or sanctification, it is another gospel. (M. DeHaan)

This gospel was not good news, but law wrapped in religion. This cursed "gospel" that the legalizers were bringing was a message of "right action." These messengers were disguised as ministers of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:13-15). No believer in Christ would be deceived by a message that told him to do evil, but to require righteous action seems plausible ... They believed that once God has accomplished His work, we must maintain our relationship by how we behave. What makes this subtle approach appealing is that it sounds right ... But in accepting a doctrine of works as valid we become victims to one or both of the following: If we are reasonably successful, we become self-righteous; if we fail, which is more probably, we are condemned. We condemn ourselves because we feel that we failed God. We also are condemned by those who put us under this bondage because we failed to make them look good. Paul said that the legalizers like to "glory in your flesh." Legalism is any set of rules that purport to bring us to maturity or into right standing with God ... The "other" gospel preaches a merit-based relationship that cannot edify. The epistle to the Hebrews tells us that the law could do nothing to bring maturity; rather, it slays us for not being able to meet the standard others have set ... If the message of the legalist keeps the believer from growing to

maturity in Christ, and if it can only condemn the believer for his failure, is it any wonder that those who preach such a message would be under a curse? (K. Lamb)

This is not preaching that gains favor from men and from the world. For the world finds nothing more irritating and intolerable than hearing its wisdom, righteousness, religion, and power condemned ... For if we denounce men and all their efforts, it is inevitable that we quickly encounter bitter hatred, persecution, excommunication, condemnation, and execution. (M. Luther) Paul was one of those rare individuals who did not live to please anyone except God. If we ask how he was able to do this, the answer is that he was living by the one true gospel. Before he came to Christ, back when he was still a Pharisee, Paul did everything he could to keep up appearances. He put his confidence in his circumcision, his ethnicity, his family connections, his cultural background, and especially the way he kept the law. Back then he was living by a different gospel, which was no gospel at all. Then Paul left Pharisaism behind and came to Christ. He stopped trying to please anyone else and put all his confidence in Jesus Christ. He no longer cared what other people thought of him. He stopped living for his own publicity and started living for God's pleasure. (P. Ryken) To maintain that the dispensation of grace did not abrogate the Law as a rule of life is to misunderstand completely the force of the argument in the entire epistle to the Galatians. Those addressed were believers in the churches of Galatia; they were not trying to be saved by the Law but seeking to live under it. Paul anathematizes such a course of action. (C. Feinberg)

Gal. 1:9 As (comparative) we warned before (προλέγω, Perf.AI1P, Intensive) and (connective) now (temporal) I say (λέγω, PAI1S, Static) again (adv.; pay attention this time because this is a deadly serious matter): If (protasis, 1st class condition, "assumes it is true") anyone (Subj. Nom.) preaches a gospel (εὐαγγελίζω, PMI3S, Static) to you (Dat. Disadv.) contrary to (prep; alongside of, in addition to) that which (Acc. Gen. Ref., Spec.: the one I preached to you) you have previously received (παραλαμβάνω, AAI2P, Inceptive; from me), let him be (εἰμί, PMImp.3S, Descriptive, Entreaty) under the curse of God (Pred. Nom.).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:9** ὥς προειρήκαμεν καὶ ἄρτι πάλιν λέγω εἴ τις ὑμᾶς εὐαγγελίζεται παρ ὃ παρελάβετε ἀνάθεμα ἔστω

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:9** sicut praediximus et nunc iterum dico si quis vobis evangelizaverit praeter id quod accepistis anathema sit

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:10** What? Should I at this moment be trying to seek approval from men [conciliatory to their dictates] instead of God [adhering to divine viewpoint]? Or should I be constantly attempting to please men [striving to be politically correct]? If I was still trying to please men [as I used to do when I was enmeshed in Judaistic legalism], then I would no longer be living like a bondsman of Christ [but rather living as a slave to the dictates of men].

^{KW} **Gal. 1:10** For, am I at this present moment seeking to win the favor of men rather than the approval of God? Or, am I making it my business to be constantly pleasing men? If I still were pleasing men, in that case Christ's bonds slave I would not be.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:10** For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul starts this verse with a conjunction used as an exclamatory interrogative - "What?" He anticipates that some of his listeners will think he is being overly mean or harsh by calling down a curse from God upon believers who corrupt the gospel. He correctly imagines that there will be some Galatian believers who will say, "Paul, that wasn't a very nice thing to say." He continues the interrogative with a rather sarcastic question: "Are you telling me I should be seeking approval for what I say from men instead of God?" The potential indicative mood expresses propriety, which means his imaginary questioner thinks he should be more conciliatory towards the false teachers. After all, they are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul should treat them with more dignity and respect even though they are corrupting the gospel message. They're nice Christians; they don't mean harm to anyone.

The sarcasm in Paul's question brushes this humanistic nonsense away. He has the choice at this moment to be more accommodating and conciliating towards the false teachers – which is in effect succumbing to or being seduced by the dictates of men. Or he can choose to retain divine viewpoint, recognize the inherent evil in the distortion of the gospel message, and severely chastise those who are perverting it. Paul chooses divine viewpoint over the opinions of men. Then he asks yet another sarcastic question: "Should I be trying to please men at all?" Do the Galatian believers who object to his tone of voice and choice of words think he should be constantly trying to be acceptable (in word and deed) to men? The potential indicative mood expresses obligation, as if they think his first priority should be to abandon the truth in pursuit of correct speech. In other words, they think he should be politically correct in what he says.

Paul's imaginary objectors think he should renounce the content of his curse. It isn't nice to say such things to fellow believers, even though they are mistaken in what they teach. He should be more delicate in this choice of words. "Anathema" is way too harsh, almost profane in this instance. There is a limit to how far he should go according to human reckoning. Paul tosses this weak argument aside as well as the first one. When he was enmeshed in Judaism, he made it a habit to please men by his words and deeds. That's what legalism is all about! It's all about being a slave to the ever-shifting human standards of thought and emotion. As a believer, Paul no longer strives to please men (Iterative Present tense). Striving to please men is a hopeless endeavor anyway – every person has different norms and standards and what works for one person offends another. Paul realized along ago that by seeking to please men he abandoned his desire to please God.

If Paul tries to please men by toning down his speech and withdrawing his curse, he will no longer be living (Durative Present tense) like a bonds slave of Christ. He will have essentially replaced God's divine standards with man's opinions. He will have switched his ultimate allegiance from the divine sphere to the human sphere. The protasis of a 2nd class condition means: "No, I absolutely refuse to please men because I prefer to remain a bonds slave to Christ." Politically correct and hyper-sensitive believers in Galatia will most likely read Paul's curse upon false teachers and demand that he set aside his convictions in order to avoid hurting someone's feelings. In other words, their limits to what he might say or do are more important than the truth of his message or his convictions. His autonomy to see things with divine viewpoint and to express them in that manner should stop when they are offended by his message. Paul rejects their humanistic viewpoint and defends his own past actions.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul has been accused of being a pleaser of men by his enemies. Would his enemies dare to say this now, Paul asks, after he has written so sharply? Do men-pleasers pronounce anathemas against those who teach false gospels? (F. Gaebelein) This is a question every person has to answer: Whose pleasure do I seek? If we try to please ourselves, or other people, then we are living by a different gospel. Pleasing God and pleasing others are mutually exclusive. We cannot follow our own ambitions and follow Jesus Christ at the same time. For us, the "good news" is a bigger paycheck, a better job, a new romance, or some other personal accomplishment. But once we understand the one true gospel, then we stop living for ourselves, or for others, and start living for God. (P. Ryken) Paul has learned not to waste time over his own hurt feelings; he appeals to well-known historical facts instead ... The 'religious' person is often praised by the world outside; the Christian is very rarely praised. (R. Cole) Corrupt men-pleasing is that sinful complaisance to the humours and prejudices of men which sacrifices truth, righteousness, and honour. (E. Huxtable)

Paul was willing to "make all things to all men" to win some, but he never compromised a conviction or watered down a truth. The faithful preacher often has to take a stand against the world's morality. He has to confront established error in religion and often comes into sharp conflict with entrenched religious systems that are opposed to the gospel. He has to denounce corruption and wickedness in high places. He sometimes has to deal with his own family and friends along the line of unwelcome and unwanted truth. He is called to persuade men, using every legitimate means at his disposal. But he is not called to please men. (J. Phillips) Indeed, does anybody who is trying to please men approach them with anathemas? (R. Lenski) "Seek approval" often means to prevail, or endeavor to prevail, upon others, by coaxing, persuasion, bribery, or anyhow, to go along with you in some particular course of thinking or acting indicated by the context. (E. Huxtable)

The severity of my language at least proves that I am no flatterer. (K. Wuest) We seek not the favour of men by our doctrine, for we teach that all men are wicked by nature, and the children of wrath. We condemn man's free-will, his strength, wisdom, and righteousness, and all religion of man's own devising, and, to be short, that there is nothing in us to deserve grace, and the forgiveness of sins; but, we preach, that we obtain this grace by the free mercy of God only, for Christ's sake. (M.

Luther) The tone of this letter, specifically the harsh language Paul had just used, was hardly calculated to win the approval of man. Men-pleasers simply do not hurl anathemas against those who proclaim false gospels. (D. Campbell) Actually, the law denies the fall of man – this was the position of Cain. Grace acknowledges the fall of man, as Abel did when he brought his offering to God. (J. McGee)

Gal 1:10 What (interrogative)? Should I at this moment (temporal; now) be trying to seek approval from (πείθω, PAIIS, Conative, Interrogative, Potential Ind. Expressing Propriety; persuading, conciliating, being obedient to the dictates, standards or viewpoint of; seduced by men or obedient to God) men (Acc. Source; human viewpoint) instead of (disj. Particle, contrast) God (Acc. Source; divine viewpoint)? Or (disj. Particle) should I be constantly attempting (ζητέω, PAIIS, Iterative & Durative, Interrogative, Potential Ind. Expressing Obligation; searching for, striving) to please (ἀρέσκω, PAInf., Customary, Purpose; be acceptable to) men (Dat. Disadv.; by eloquent or flattering speech, politically correct comments)? If (protasis, 2nd class condition, "but I'm not") I was still (Adv. Time; points to his past efforts at trying to do this) trying to please (ἀρέσκω, Imperf.AIIS, Iterative) men (Dat. Disadv.; a hopeless situation), then (apodosis) I would no longer (neg. particle) be living like (εἰμί, Imperf.MIIS, Durative; being, functioning, existing) a bonds slave (Pred. Nom.) of Christ (Poss. Gen.; but rather as a slave to men).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:10** Ὅτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἢ τὸν θεόν ἢ ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκειν εἰ ἔτι ἀνθρώποις ἡρεσκον Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἤμην

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:10** modo enim hominibus suadeo aut Deo aut quaero hominibus placere si adhuc hominibus placerem Christi servus non essem

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:11** Indeed, I am telling you, brethren, that the gospel which has been preached by me is not according to the norms and standards of man [human viewpoint],

^{KW} **Gal. 1:11** For I make known to you, brethren, the message which was announced as good news by me, that it is not as to its nature, human.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:11** But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Not only does Paul brush aside the probable objections to his curse on the false teachers, but he informs the Galatian believers (Static Present tense) yet again that the gospel he has been

preaching is not according to the norms and standards of man. He is giving it his personal certification. His gospel did not originate from human viewpoint, so why should he treat it as if it was human viewpoint? Those who object to his curse on the false teachers who pervert the gospel are treating the Word of God as if it was some mere human philosophy that can be bent or twisted to accommodate the whims of man. If they truly understood the divine source and nature of the gospel, they would be just as adamant as he was in defending the purity of its message. Absolute truth does not need to be toned-down to avoid upsetting a weak or emotional believer. Its principles came directly from God and they do not need to be adjusted to fit some human standard of acceptability.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A gospel according to man would have no Cross to scandalize the Jews and incur the ridicule of the worldly wise. A typical human gospel was that of the self-worshipping state, which proclaimed the deity and saviorhood of its Caesars. Men made their gods and their gospels in the image of these lords of creation, whose appetite for power, glory, and triumph required to be appeased with sacrifices, flattered with praises, and maintained with servile obedience. The gospel that came from God was a Cross borne by God's own Son. (R. Stamm) The message of grace is salvation by faith in the Person and finished work of Jesus Christ. It is simply believing what the Bible says about Jesus Christ. It is not religion, not good works, reformation, education, culture or ordinances. It is not ritual or ceremony, prayers or deeds of charity. It is coming as a poor lost sinner, bankrupt and helpless, and trusting Christ to save you by His grace. Man would like to have just some little part in his own salvation, but God says NO! (M. DeHaan)

Gal. 1:11 Indeed (emphatic, resumptive), I am telling (γνωρίζω, PAI1P, Static; laying it on the line, informing) you (Dat. Adv.), brethren (Voc. Address), that (def. art.) the gospel (Acc. Dir. Obj.; good news) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) has been preached (εὐαγγελίζω, APPTc.ANS, Constatative, Attributive) by me (Abl. Means) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) not (neg. particle) according to the norms and standards of man (Adv. Acc.; human viewpoint),

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:11** Γνωρίζω γὰρ ὑμῖν ἀδελφοί τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ ἐμοῦ ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν κατὰ ἄνθρωπον·

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:11** notum enim vobis facio fratres evangelium quod evangelizatum est a me quia non est secundum hominem

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:12** Because I myself did not receive it by the instrumentality of man [from Gamaliel or the Judaizers], nor was I taught it [along with the original Twelve], but by the direct revelation of Jesus Christ.

^{KW} **Gal. 1:12** For, as for myself, neither did I receive it directly from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation given me by Jesus Christ.

KJV **Galatians 1:12** For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul received the gospel directly from the Lord Jesus Christ. His use of the emphatic “I myself” pointed all the more to the special revelation that he received directly from Christ. He did not receive it (Ingressive Aorist tense) by any intermediary, such as his professor, Gamaliel, nor from any committee of Judaizers. Neither was he taught the gospel (Ingressive Aorist tense) along with the twelve disciples or apostles. Jesus Christ revealed His gospel to Paul directly on the road to Damascus. Nor is there is mention of anyone teaching or training him in the Arabian wilderness where he “disappeared” for several years.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The revelation of the Christian gospel to Paul, an unexpected unfolding of what had been secret, was a distinctive experience, paralleled only by the experience of those who were apostles before him. It can never be ours. Nevertheless, the gospel that was the product of that experience is unique and is ours. (F. Gaebelin) Seeing Jesus was not a prerequisite for being an apostle. Neither Timothy nor Barnabas saw Jesus resurrected, but they were both apostles. (K. Lamb) In a flash, the light dawned. It was not law; it was grace. It was not works; it was simple faith. It was not Moses; it was Christ. It was not Sinai; it was Calvary. It was not to be earned; it was to be received. It was not trying; it was trusting. It was not by means of the rules and rituals of religion, however hedged about with both truth and tradition; it was by means of the undeserved, undiluted, undying grace of God. His gospel was received on the Damascus road by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (J. Phillips) The apostle Paul claimed that he was caught up into Paradise and received his commission as the Apostle to the Gentiles directly from God. (M. DeHaan)

Gal. 1:12 Because (causal; since) I myself (Subj. Nom.) did not (neg. adv.) receive (παραλαμβάνω, AAI1S, Ingressive) it (Acc. Dir. Obj.) by the instrumentality of man (Abl. Means; from Gamaliel or the Judaizers), nor (neg. conj.) was I taught (διδάσκω, API1S, Ingressive) it (ellipsis; along with the original Twelve disciples), but (contrast) by the direct revelation (Abl. Means) of Jesus Christ (Gen. Source).

WHO **Galatians 1:12** οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτό οὔτε ἐδιδάχθην ἀλλὰ δι ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

VUL **Galatians 1:12** neque enim ego ab homine accepi illud neque didici sed per revelationem Iesu Christi

LWB **Gal. 1:13** Certainly [I'm sure] you have heard about my former manner of life in the

Jewish religion [Judaism], that beyond measure [to the extreme] I continually persecuted the church of God [chased down its members individually] and tried to destroy it [kill Christians with bitter hostility],

^{KW} **Gal. 1:13** For you heard of my manner of life aforetime in Judaism, that beyond measure I kept on continually persecuting the Church of God and continually bringing destruction upon it,

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:13** For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is sure that the rumor mill has made it to Galatia by now, so he is certain they have heard about (Constative Aorist tense) his former life in the Jewish religion. He was so steeped in Judaism that he considered it his solemn duty to persecute its number one enemy, the Church of God composed of Christians. The Greek word “portheo” is a military term used to describe the ravaging and pillaging of cities. Paul surpassed all others in his zeal to arrest Christians and have them tortured and killed. He was constantly pursuing the Church of God (Iterative Imperfect tense) and tried on every occasion to shut it down (Conative Imperfect tense), even if that meant murdering the believers in that area. As a fanatic member of Judaism, Paul was a bitter enemy against Christians. But in spite of his boundless energy to destroy the church, the imperfect tense points to his failure in getting the job done. Christianity spread too fast for him to wipe it out.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Judaism was not a mask to be donned or doffed at will, as was the case with so many of the pagan religions. Judaism was a way of life, involving all of life, and Paul is correct in describing it as his exclusive sphere of existence before his conversion. (F. Gaebelein) He was born of Jewish parents, had a Jewish education, was brought up under a Jewish doctor, in all the peculiarities of the Jewish religion, and so could have received no hints, not in a notional way, of the truths of the Gospel; which he might have done, had he been born of Christian parents, and had had a Christian education. (J. Gill) When Paul talks about the whole Levitical system he refers to it now as the Jew's religion. Because of Christ having fulfilled the righteous demands of the law, it has been reduced to nothing more than another religion. (K. Lamb) The imperfects represent an action carried on during his state of Judaism, but left unfinished owing to his sudden conversion. He was in the very act of it when Jesus called him on the road to Damascus, and that mission to lay waste was not carried out. (J. Eadie)

He persecuted the saints in a most violent and outrageous manner ... whom he hated, and committed to prison, and breathed out threatenings and slaughter against, and destroyed: wherefore it follows, and wasted it; or destroyed it; as much as in him lay, he sought to do it, though he was not able to effect it entirely; he made havoc of it, dispersed its members, caused them to flee to strange cities, persecuted them to death, gave his voice against them to have them punished and put to death: such

an aversion had he to the followers of Christ, and the Christian doctrine. (J. Gill) In times past, Paul was very zealous for the righteousness of the law, but that was because he was ignorant of the righteousness of God. (K. Lamb) He considered Jesus of Nazareth to be an imposter and a blasphemer. To his mind, Christianity was a cult of such a dangerous nature that it should be stamped out at all costs. We have only the barest hints in the NT of the fierce anti-Christian activities of the unregenerate, fanatical Saul of Tarsus. (J. Phillips)

Saul of Tarsus was a bigot and a fanatic, whole-hearted in his devotion to Judaism and in his persecution of Christ and the church. Now a man in that mental and emotional state is in no mood to change his mind, or even to have it changed for him by men. No conditioned reflex or other psychological device could convert a man in that state. Only God could reach him, and God did. (J. Stott) Zeal is not religion. Good intentions will never make anything really good with God. Zeal can never make the false true, nor justify any in persecuting the truth. (E. Huxtable) Paul's previous education could not have been responsible for his teaching of grace, for it was directly opposed to the latter. But when he was rethinking the OT economy in the light of the revelation received in Arabia, the supernatural significance of it all opened up to him. (K. Wuest) My early education is a proof that I did not receive the Gospel from man. I was brought up in a rigid school of ritualism, directly opposed to the liberty of the Gospel. (J. Lightfoot)

Gal. 1:13 Certainly (emphatic; I'm sure) you have heard about (ἀκούω, AAI2P, Constative) my (Acc. Poss.) former (temporal part.) manner of life (Acc. Gen. Ref.; conduct) in the Jewish religion (Loc. Sph.; Judaism), that (conj.) beyond measure (Acc. Measure; to the extreme, surpassing all others) I continually persecuted (διώκω, Imperf.AI1S, Iterative; chased them down individually) the church (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of God (Poss. Gen.) and (continuative) tried to destroy (πορθέω, Imperf.AI1S, Conative; kill them with bitter hostility) it (Acc. Dir. Obj.),

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:13** Ἦκούσατε γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀναστροφὴν ποτε ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ ὅτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἐδίωκον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐπόρθουν αὐτήν

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:13** audistis enim conversationem meam aliquando in iudaismo quoniam supra modum persequabar ecclesiam Dei et expugnabam illam

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:14** And I advanced [blazed a trail] in the Jewish religion [Judaism] above many contemporaries in my race [in my hatred for Christianity], being far more zealous [religious fanaticism] with reference to my ancestral traditions.

^{KW} **Gal. 1:14** And I was constantly blazing a pioneer path, outstripping in Judaism many of my own age in my race, being more exceedingly zealous of my ancestral traditions.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:14** And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also states that he advanced in Judaism (Intensive Imperfect tense) way beyond many of his peers in the Jewish race and/or nation. The imperfect tense points to Paul's advance as being: (a) on rather questionable grounds, and (b) short of his ultimate goal because the Church survived in spite of his persecution. Was persecution of others really an advancement of his religion? In other words, was arresting and murdering Christians really considered "progress" according to Judaism? Paul thought so at the time, and was proud of being more zealous for his ancestral traditions than most of his contemporaries. He was under the impression that he was protecting Judaism from a corrupting influence; so he functioned as the "point man" in his aggressive efforts. He was a religious fanatic and thought he was living the life of a religious hero. His so-called advance in the Jewish religion took the form of blazing a trail against its enemies. He spun like a hurricane through the Christian community, destroying everything in his path. His Judaistic comrades no doubt applauded his extraordinary efforts, but he now knows how evil his behavior had once been.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There are insurmountable differences between law and faith, flesh and spirit, works and grace ... Abraham was justified by faith; the law was later added. The flesh is weak and cannot perform; the Spirit gives life. Works are an activity of the flesh, as opposed to grace. The flesh always wants an outward show of righteousness; it is not concerned with the heart. The grace of God does not have an outward show of righteousness, although law does ... There is also a difference between precepts and principles. Under precepts, the demands of God are addressed; under principles, the needs of man are addressed. (K. Lamb) His progress not only carried him beyond his own former attainments, but by it he outstripped many of his contemporaries, making more rapid progress than they. (E. Burton) Traditions of my fathers here refers not to the national law and customs of Israel but to the oral law or traditions, especially as held by the Pharisees. Saul's family held membership in one of the strictest of the Pharisaical sects. (H. Vos) He pioneered in his studies, cutting new paths ahead of his fellow students. He was a brilliant pupil of Gamaliel. (K. Wuest)

Gal. 1:14 And (continuative) I advanced (προκόπτω, Imperf.A1S, Intensive; blazed a trail, spun like a hurricane) in the Jewish religion (Loc. Sph.; Judaism) above many (Acc. Measure) contemporaries (Acc. Dir. Obj.; peers) in my (Gen. Rel.) race (Loc. Sphe.; nation), being (ὑπάρχω, PAPtc.NMS, Descriptive, Modal) far more (Adv. Measure; exceedingly, to a greater degree) zealous (Pred. Nom.; religious fanaticism) with reference to my (Poss. Gen.) ancestral (Gen. Source) traditions (Adv. Gen. Ref.).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:14** καὶ προέκοπτον ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ ὑπὲρ πολλοὺς συνηλικιώτας ἐν τῷ γένει μου περισσοτέρως ζηλωτὴς ὑπάρχων τῶν πατρικῶν μου παραδόσεων

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:14** et proficiebam in iudaismo supra multos coetaneos in genere meo abundantius aemulator existens paternarum mearum traditionum

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:15** But at which time God was pleased [according to His plan], having separated me out from my mother's womb [human life begins at birth] and called me by His grace,

^{KW} **Gal. 1:15** But when it was the good pleasure of the One who set me apart before I was born and called me by His grace,

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:15** But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The timing of God's plan is perfect for each and every one of us. He separated Paul out from his mother's womb (Constative Aorist tense) at exactly the precise moment in history that he was to be born. The Ablative of Separation and the preposition "ek" means life begins outside the womb at birth, not inside the womb at conception. He called Paul by means of His grace (Constative Aorist tense) into the Christian life and gave him his appointed apostolic ministry at precisely the correct moment according to His plan. Nothing in God's plan is questionable. Nothing in God's plan is delayed. Everything happens at exactly the right moment as planned.

For Paul, his birth and calling were past tense. His emphasis in this verse is that after these two things happened in time, God was then pleased (Constative Aorist tense) to reveal His Son in Paul. God's divine pleasure is not so much our birth, or even our calling, but His revealing of His Son in us. Let's look at another important point. When was Paul separated? On the road to Damascus? No, he was separated from his mother's womb. He was separated long before his will, his flesh, his volition, could insert itself into the equation and remove God from His throne. We had nothing to do with our separation either, because we were not yet born.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

No man possessing such characteristics and engaged in zealous persecution of the church is about to be converted by someone else or by human testimony. God Himself must accomplish this conversion. This is precisely what happened in Paul's case. Thus Paul begins to speak of his conversion, pointing out that God did it entirely apart from any human agent ... The emphasis is on God's grace in electing Paul to salvation and to the apostleship. (F. Gaebelein) This designs divine predestination, which is a separation, a setting apart of persons, for such and such purposes, as here of the apostle; and the eternity of it, it being very early done, from his mother's womb; whilst he was in it, before he was born, and had done either good or evil. He intends by this either his predestination to grace and glory, to holiness and happiness, to sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, and to the obtaining the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; or his predestination to apostleship, to the work of the ministry, to the Gospel of Christ, to which he was separated in eternity, and in time; or to both. (J. Gill)

God claimed his life and ministry while he was still in his mother's womb. Calling refers to the life events that lead a person to repentance for sin and faith in Jesus Christ. Such effectual calling is always by grace because the call shows God's undeserved favor. Yet calling also refers to God's special plan for someone's life work. What God had planned for Paul to do was to take the gospel to the Gentiles ... God is the One who set us apart from birth. He knew us even when we were in our mother's womb. This is part of the doctrine of election, which is God's gracious choice of certain individuals unto eternal life in consequence of which they are called, justified, sanctified and glorified. Every Christian's story is different, but the story line is always the same. God chose you and called you to faith. He revealed His Son to your heart. Then He gave you a particular place of service. (P. Ryken) For many in the Arminian tradition, who emphasize the believer's free will and responsibility, texts like Romans 8:30, 9:18-24, Galatians 1:15, and Ephesians 1:4-5 are something of an embarrassment. (G. Fee)

His omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience enable Him to gather events into His hands with the greatest ease. From our perspective, events take place in a time sequence because we live in a time sequence, but God transcends time. He lives in the eternal present tense of time. He is the I Am. From God's standpoint, all of the events of time take place simultaneously. God can call the things that are not as though they are, because He does not have to wait for the future to reveal the end of a sequence of events nor wait for a specific moment of time to come before imposing His will upon that moment. (J. Phillips) The emphasis falls on the sovereignty of the divine grace manifested to Paul. Whatever impediments, therefore, he had himself interposed, these could not nullify God's plan for him. What the apostle is talking about here is the counsel of God which governs all things, most especially his work of redemption and the preparation and training of His agents. (H. Ridderbos) The moving cause of His call was God's good pleasure; the mediating cause was His grace; the instrument the heaven-sent voice. (Ellicott)

His pre-natal choice led to his historical call. Paul was fighting against God, against Christ, against men. He neither deserved mercy, nor asked for it. Yet mercy found him, and grace called him. Saul of Tarsus had been a fanatical opponent of the gospel. But it pleased God to make him a preacher of the very gospel he had been so bitterly opposing. His pre-natal choice, his historical call and the revelation of Christ in him were all the work of God. (J. Stott) Then came my conversion. It was the work of God's grace. It was foreordained, before I had any separate existence. It was not therefore due to any merits of my own, it did not spring from any principles of my own. The revelation of His Son in me, the call to preach to the Gentiles, were acts of His good pleasure ... Observe how words are accumulated to tell upon the one point on which he is insisting – the sole agency of God as distinct from his own efforts. (J. Lightfoot) He “set me apart” in His electing love, in order to show in me His pleasure, which is the farthest point that any can reach in inquiring the causes of his salvation. (R. Jamieson)

This separation was the purpose of God, by which Paul was appointed to the apostolic office, before he knew that he was born. The calling followed afterwards at the proper time, when the Lord made known His will concerning him, and commanded him to proceed to the work. God had, no doubt,

decreed, before the foundation of the world, what he would do with regard to every one of us, and had assigned to every one, by His secret counsel, his respective place. But the sacred writers frequently introduce those three steps: the eternal predestination of God, the destination from the womb, and the calling, which is the effect and accomplishment of both. Before they even existed, Jeremiah had been set apart to the office of a prophet (Jer. 1:5), and Paul to that of an apostle; but He is said to separate us from the womb, because the design of our being sent into the world is, that He may accomplish in us what He has decreed. The calling is delayed till its proper time, when God has prepared us for the office which He commands us to undertake. (J. Calvin)

Gal. 1:15 But (adversative) at which time (Adv. Time) God (Subj. Nom.) was pleased (εὐδοκέω, AAI3S, Constative), having separated (ἀφορίζω, AAPtc.NMS, Constative, Circumstantial) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.) out from my (Gen. Rel.) mother's (Poss. Gen.) womb (Abl. Separation; at birth) and (continuative) called (καλέω, AAPtc.NMS, Constative, Circumstantial) me (ellipsis) by His (Abl. Source) grace (Abl. Means),

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:15** ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεὸς] ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:15** cum autem placuit ei qui me segregavit de utero matris meae et vocavit per gratiam suam

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:16** To reveal His Son in me [indwelling of Jesus Christ], so that I might preach the good news about Him among the Gentiles. Immediately I did not consult with flesh and blood [did not confer with any human being],

^{KW} **Gal. 1:16** To give me an inward revelation of His Son in order that I might proclaim Him as glad tidings among the Gentiles, immediately I did not put myself in communication with flesh and blood for the purpose of consultation;

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:16** To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It pleased God to reveal His Son, Jesus Christ, in Paul (Dramatic Aorist tense). The Locative of Sphere points to the indwelling of Christ in Paul. The preposition is not “to” but “in,” which means this was not God pointing to His Son and saying, “Behold Him.” This was the internal revelation that every believer experiences at the new birth when Jesus Christ is revealed inside our spirit and soul. This internal revelation of the truth and presence of Jesus Christ is the ultimate pleasure God has for all of us. Nothing gives Him more happiness than to reveal His Son in us. In Paul’s case, this result was for a definite purpose - so that he might preach the good news about Jesus Christ (Potential Subjunctive mood) to the Gentiles. And as we know, this

purpose was fulfilled by Paul to the Nth degree! He became the apostle to the Gentiles.

What is the first thing we do after believing in Christ? I don't know about you, but I looked at my new friends and returned to some old friends - and couldn't wait to share my experience with them. I wanted to compare notes with other Christians and try to get my unbelieving friends to get excited about becoming Christians themselves. Paul didn't speak to anyone. He did not consult with a single human being (Constative Aorist tense). He did not speak to other believers; he did not return to his family and share his experience. He had no human association of any kind. A legitimate translation of this phrase could be: "Immediately I stopped associating with all human beings." He went into the Arabian desert to be completely alone with God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God's revelation of Jesus in Paul was an inner revelation concerning who Jesus was and what His life, death, and resurrection signified. (F. Gaebelein) Christ was formed in him, His Spirit was put within him, His grace was implanted in him; He lived and dwelt in his heart by faith, as the Son in His own house. (J. Gill) "To me" does not express the mystical fellowship in 2:20. The Son of God had taken possession of Paul's whole inner being, and it was his greatest concern to live so that others would become fellow imitators of the Christ they saw in him. (R. Stamm) Certainly Paul could not preach Christ among the Gentiles without the rich inward experience and in the objective vision he was called to that task. (A.T. Robertson)

When Paul got his message, he didn't go to Peter and John and ask them what to preach. But Paul was unique. So it behooves us to talk to others. We should not go around saying "we do not confer with flesh and blood!" We would do well not to try to emulate or duplicate "special" circumstances in Scripture, because there is something unique in them. It is not wise for us to be independent Lone Rangers, although it was essential for Paul. (K. Lamb) He was not seeking God, but was His most implacable human enemy. He is saved by a display of grace which had hitherto been unknown. Hence his evangel is the exponent of the unadulterated grace of God. (A. Knoch)

Gal. 1:16 **To reveal** (ἀποκαλύπτω, AAInf., Dramatic, Result) **His** (Gen. Rel.) **Son** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ) **in me** (Loc. Sph.), **so that** (Purpose) **I might preach the good news about** (εὐαγγελίζω, PMSbj.1S, Static, Potential) **Him** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **among the Gentiles** (Dat. Assoc.). **Immediately** (Adv. Time) **I did not** (neg. particle) **consult with** (προσανατίθην, AMI1S, Constative; seek advice from, confer with) **flesh** (Dat. Assoc.) **and** (connective) **blood** (Dat. Assoc.; no human associations),

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:16** ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:16** ut revelaret Filium suum in me ut evangelizarem illum in gentibus continuo non adqueivi carni et sanguini

LWB Gal. 1:17 Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

KW Gal. 1:17 Neither did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and again returned to Damascus.

KJV Galatians 1:17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul lays out his travel itinerary that followed his conversion on the road to Damascus. After his encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ on the road, he changed directions and went into (Constatative Aorist tense) the Arabian wilderness. He did not enter Damascus at that time, nor did he go to Jerusalem (Constatative Aorist tense) to share his conversion experience with the other apostles (Latin: antecedents). Only after a long period of living alone with the Lord in Arabia did he finally return to his original destination in Damascus. He needed to study and pray and allow the Holy Spirit to infuse His very being. He needed to search the OT for all those references to the Messiah - Whom he just learned is the Lord Jesus Christ. But by this time, his agenda had completely changed. He was no longer bearing documents that would imprison and kill Christians; instead, he returned to preach the very religion he had once been so zealously persecuting.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul as a tentmaker could there support himself during his period of solitude and struggle by making tents for the nomad tribes which lived nearby. However that may be, obviously there is in the desert an awayness, an apartness rarely equaled anywhere else. There social influences are reduced to a minimum; there it is easier to cultivate the vertical awareness of God without hindrance from the horizontal affairs of men. A gospel which had come to Paul directly from God could be pondered and spelled out in the eternal silence of God. He had to go through a profound reconstruction of his total thinking [Thieme's post-salvation epistemological rehabilitation]. Spelled out, that meant for him not the truth of life as written in a lawbook; it was rather a present-day fellowship fresh with every morning, built upon and around the actual contemporary presence of Christ. (R. Stamm)

The call on a man may come (purchase it), but the vessel is not yet prepared (prepare it). There is a time element for duty, in this case, 14 years for Paul. Only after preparation should a man thrust himself into the ministry. (K. Lamb) Paul did not hurry to Jerusalem to get anything, whether information and instruction or corroboration and approval, from any of the Twelve. Paul's action was not a reflection on the Twelve as though he cared nothing about a judgment of theirs. Quite the contrary. He acknowledges them as "the apostles" exactly as God had made him such a one. He also acknowledges the one point in which they outranked him: they were the apostles "before me." God had appointed Paul as the last apostle. By his revelation God had not only made Paul an apostle but

had equipped him in every respect exactly as he had equipped them, the Twelve, on Pentecost. (R. Lenski)

When Paul came with his message of grace, it met with serious misgivings by the eleven apostles, who were still preaching the Kingdom message to the Jews only. (M. DeHaan) His first attempts at Damascus seem to have convinced him of the need of lengthened preparation for his work. In silent communion with God he sought what the other apostles got in a three years' course of training under Christ. He had to adjust himself to the new situation; he had to recast his thoughts. The contents of the gospel, which had been supernaturally communicated to him, had in a natural way to be examined and inwrought with his own thoughts. (R. Finlayson) The eleven apostles never founded any Gentile churches. It was Paul who was God's messenger for this dispensation. (M. DeHaan)

Gal 1:17 Nor (neg. adv.) did I go up (ἀνέρχομαι, AAI1S, Constative, Deponent) to Jerusalem (Acc. Place) to those (Acc. Assoc.) who were (ellipsis) apostles (Pred. Acc.) before me (Gen. Time), but (contrast) I went away (ἀπέρχομαι, AAI1S, Constative, Deponent; departed) into Arabia (Acc. Place), and (continuative) returned (ὑποστρέφω, AAI1S, Constative) again (Adv. Time) to Damascus (Acc. Place).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:17** οὐδὲ ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα πρὸς τοὺς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἀποστόλους ἀλλὰ ἀπῆλθον εἰς Ἀραβίαν καὶ πάλιν ὑπέστρεψα εἰς Δαμασκόν

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:17** neque veni Hierosolyma ad antecessores meos apostolos sed abii in Arabiam et iterum reversus sum Damascus

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:18** Then, after three years [in Arabia], I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas [Peter], and stayed face-to-face with him for fifteen days [not enough time to learn the entire realm of Christian doctrine].

^{KW} **Gal. 1:18** Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:18** Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul did make it to Jerusalem, but not until three years after he entered the Arabian desert. And when he did go to Jerusalem (Constative Aorist tense), he went there for the sole purpose of getting to know Peter. He stayed with Peter (Constative Aorist tense) for a couple weeks, visiting with him, getting acquainted, and probably relating the story of his conversion to Christianity. Fifteen days was not enough time to learn the entire realm of Christian doctrine, even with Peter as his teacher 24-hours a day. So Paul's purpose in relating his travel itinerary was primarily to

answer his critics that he had learned everything he knew from Peter and the other apostles in Jerusalem. He did not see them first, receive advanced training, and then corrupt their teaching with something new that he made up. He learned the realm of Christian doctrine directly from the Lord in Arabia.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The reasons why he went so quietly to Jerusalem are clear enough. Otherwise, the rumor “Paul is here” might well have spread like a prairie fire through the Christian community, as well as among those who were still persecuting the Christians. (R. Stamm) Paul is insistent on showing how ridiculous was the assumption that he got his gospel from Peter. He could hardly have taken even an orientation course in fifteen days. What two weeks those two men must have spent together! Imagine the chief defender of Christ and the former chief prosecutor walking together amid the scenes – in and about the Holy City – so dear and sacred to the Christian heart. What a visit! (R. Stamm) This is the extent of Paul’s first contact with any apostle, “to visit” for the purpose of learning to know, to become acquainted with, not “to inquire of” or to get information from. (R. Lenski)

Gal. 1:18 Then (Adv. Time), after three (Acc. Measure) years (Acc. Time; in Arabia), I went up (ἀνέρχομαι, AAI1S, Constative, Deponent) to Jerusalem (Acc. Place) to get acquainted with (ἱστορέω, AAInf., Constative, Purpose; visit) Cephas (Acc. Dir. Obj; Peter), and (continuative) stayed (ἐπιμένω, AAI1S, Constative; remained) face-to-face with him (Acc. Assoc.) for fifteen (numeral) days (Acc. Time).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:18** Ἐπειτα μετὰ τρία ἔτη ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:18** deinde post annos tres veni Hierosolyma videre Petrum et mansi apud eum diebus quindecim

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:19** Moreover, I did not see any of the other apostles, except James, the brother of our Lord.

^{KW} **Gal. 1:19** But another of the apostles I did not see except James the brother of our Lord.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:19** But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul adds an emphatic comment that he did not see (Constative Aorist tense) any of the other apostles while he was in Jerusalem, except for James. Since James was the brother of our Lord in his humanity, everyone would know who he was. But Paul’s point is that he did not hold

teaching sessions with any of the other apostles. His meeting with James was probably no more than a fireside chat, or he would have elaborated on that. The apostles were not called together to hear his story or tell him theirs. Even more important, Paul did not think it necessary to get their opinions or blessings on anything he might say or do. He was an apostle, trained personally by the Lord Jesus Christ, and he did not need to submit to any imagined, intermediary line of authority. He did not need a consensus among the other apostles that what he was doing was sanctioned by them. His visit with Peter was a courtesy call; he was not “reporting for duty” to a commanding officer.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Failure to distinguish between the Kingdom message given by Christ to the apostles, and the new message of grace given by Christ to Paul and the disciples, AFTER the rejection by Israel of the Kingdom offer, is at the root of all the confusion among Christians. Unless we recognize God’s dispensational dealings we cannot understand the Bible, but it will appear to be full of contradictions. To apply the Kingdom message to the Church, and to mix law and grace results in confusion, chaos, fanaticism, error and misunderstanding ... Ninety percent of the difficulty would end if we would only recognize the totally different program of God for National Israel and for the Church. To apply the message for Israel to the Church can only lead to confusion. It is to correct this damaging error that Romans and Galatians were written ... Evidently God never recognized the choice of Matthias, for he is never mentioned again in the rest of the Bible. God ignored man’s ordination, and after the Holy Spirit came, He chose a man by the name of Paul to be an apostle. But it was not by man’s choice, but an outright ordination by Christ. (M. DeHaan) The Lord’s brother means that James was a son of Joseph and Mary. (M. Vincent) It seems then that James is here called an apostle, though it does not therefore follow that he was one of the Twelve. (J. Lightfoot) Paul means, “I visited Peter, casually met James, but met no other person of importance.” (S. Mikolaski)

Gal. 1:19 Moreover (emphatic), I did not (neg. particle) see (ὁράω, AAIS, Constative) any of the other (Acc. Spec.) apostles (Adv. Gen. Ref.), except (conj., neg. particle) James (Acc. Gen. Ref.; Jacobus), the brother (Acc. Appos.) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord (Adv. Gen. Ref.; Jesus).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:19** ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:19** alium autem apostolorum vidi neminem nisi Iacobum fratrem Domini

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:20** Now the things I am writing to you, behold, in the presence of God [I swear] I am not lying.

^{KW} **Gal. 1:20** But the things which I am writing to you, behold, in the sight of God I am not lying.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:20** Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul pleads with his listeners (Imperative of Entreaty) to pay close attention to his next statement. He swears on the presence of God before him that he is not lying to them (Gnomic Present tense) about the occasion of his conversion or his travels afterwards. He is relating his story to them with 100% accuracy. He has no ulterior motives; he is not bending the truth in any way. As fond as he is of using hyperbole to get their attention, or to pursue a philosophical debate, he is not using any of that now! If anybody is lying, it is his false accusers who have been making up stories about Paul.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Arabian retreat had had its desired effect: he now sufficiently understood his faith in Christ to be able to define and defend it. He applied to his conversion what we would call the laboratory method. (R. Stamm) You see that Paul, the elect vessel of God, was in so great contempt among his own converts of Galatia, to whom he had preached Christ, that it was necessary for him to swear that he spoke the truth. (M. Luther)

Gal. 1:20 **Now** (transitional) **the things** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **I am writing** (γράφω, PAI1S, Pictorial) **to you** (Dat. Adv.), **behold** (ἰδοῦ, AAImp.2S, Constative, Entreaty; solemn oath: pay attention to me please), **in the presence of** (adv.) **God** (Gen. Rel.) **I am not** (neg. particle) **lying** (ψεύδομαι, PMI1S, Gnomic, Deponent).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:20** ἃ δὲ γράφω ὑμῖν ἰδοὺ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι οὐ ψεύδομαι

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:20** quae autem scribo vobis ecce coram Deo quia non mentior

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:21** Next I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia,

^{KW} **Gal. 1:21** Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia,

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:21** Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues with the next destination in his travels after he left Jerusalem. He went into the regions around Syria and Cilicia (Constative Aorist tense). Tarsus, his hometown, was in Cilicia. But he traveled quietly and did not tell the people he met that Peter or James had sent him.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

After his brief visit to Jerusalem, Paul was escorted down to Caesarea, the Roman seaport on the coast of Palestine. From there, he took ship for his native Tarsus, where he remained - evangelizing his hometown and homeland until the time Barnabas came looking for him to solicit his help in evangelizing Syrian Antioch. (J. Phillips) His object is to show how far he was from where the apostles were, so that they could not have been his teachers. (R. Jamieson)

Gal. 1:21 Next (temporal) I went (ἔρχομαι, AAI1S, Constative; made an appearance) into the regions (Acc. Place) of Syria (Gen. Spec.) and (connective) Celicia (Gen. Spec.),

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:21** ἔπειτα ἦλθον εἰς τὰ κλίματα τῆς Συρίας καὶ [τῆς] Κιλικίας·

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:21** deinde veni in partes Syriae et Ciliciae

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:22** **But I continued to exist unknown by appearance [lived an invisible life among them] to the assemblies of Judea in Christ.**

^{KW} **Gal. 1:22** But remained personally unknown to the assemblies of Judaea which are in Christ,

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:22** And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul did not enter Syria and Celicia with a big splash. There were no announcements of his arrival. There were no billboards inviting anyone to hear him speak. There were no scheduled meetings, debates or townhalls. He moved into their area and lived a rather quiet and almost invisible life (Durative Imperfect tense). Perhaps the three years in Arabia made his appearance look different, because nobody recognized him initially upon his return. Enough time had elapsed that the fear of being on his prison and death list has long since passed.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The geographical location was Judea, but the permanent locale was in Christ. The former is the church visible; the latter is the church invisible. (R. Stamm) The churches in Judea did not know him personally, and they are thus distinguished from the churches in Jerusalem, many of whom had a knowledge of his person, and could recognize him if they saw him, for he had been “going in and going out” among them. (J. Eadie) Certainly at the time of his conversion Paul was quite familiar to persecuted Christians; but with an absence of more than ten years a new generation was rising that did not know him. (H. Vos)

Gal. 1:22 But (adversative) I continued to exist (εἰμί, Imperf.AI1S, Durative) unknown by appearance (ἀγνοέω, PPpTc.NMS,

Descriptive, Modal) to the assemblies (Dat. Ind. Obj.) of Judea
(Gen. Place) in Christ (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:22** ἤμην δὲ ἀγνοούμενος τῷ προσώπῳ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Ἰουδαίας ταῖς ἐν Χριστῷ

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:22** eram autem ignotus facie ecclesiis Iudaeae quae erant in Christo

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:23** In fact, the only thing they heard from time-to-time [vague rumour] was that the one [Saul the Judaizer] who used to persecute them is now preaching the gospel of the faith [Christian doctrine] which he formerly tried to destroy.

^{KW} **Gal. 1:23** Indeed, they only kept on hearing, The one who used to persecute us at one time now is announcing the glad tidings of the Faith which at one time he was ravaging.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:23** But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Even the rumor mill around Syria and Celicia was rather vague about Paul. The only thing people heard about him from time-to-time (Iterative Present tense) was that he used to persecute them for being Christians (Historical Present tense), but now he preaches the very faith (Iterative Present tense) he formerly tried to wipe off the face of the earth (Conative Imperfect tense). The first use of the imperfect tense points to the rumors they heard about him as being vague and incomplete. There wasn't a lot to be said, because very little was known about him. He disappeared for a few years and then came back as a friend instead of an enemy. The second imperfect tense points to his previous efforts to destroy the Christian faith; all those efforts came to nothing. Instead of destroying Christianity, he became a follower of Christ himself. Instead of destroying what he perceived as a threat to Judaism, he started a new life in which he preached the gospel of the Christian faith, i.e., the body of doctrine that Christians believe.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Would that there were more such contentment among Christians today – the contentment to be unknown! Too often those in prominent places within the church seek their own glory in Christian service rather than the glory of God. (F. Gaebelein) The Gospel is called the word of faith, the mystery of faith, the faith of the Gospel, common faith, most holy faith, the faith once delivered to the saints; it contains things to be believed; it proposes and directs to the great object of faith; and is the means of implanting and increasing that grace, and without which the ministry of it is of no use: it takes in all articles of faith. (J. Gill) Here there is another plain example of “pistis” used in the objective sense: “the faith” = the gospel = the doctrine. (R. Lenski)

By faith which is used here as the object of the preaching the content of faith is presumably

intended. (H. Ridderbos) We have here the early beginnings of that objective sense in which afterwards the word “faith” got to be so commonly used in the Church to denote the Christian doctrine. (E. Huxtable) The word “faith” can mean trust or confidence in God, faithfulness, a body of truth, or intellectual assent. (R. Zuck) Used as a metonym, faith is put for the thing believed, the doctrine which he had now believed. (E. Bullinger) Faith is here put by metonymy for the Gospel. (J. Calvin) “Pistis” here means that which is believed. (J. Bligh) In Galatians 1:23 we find “pistis” (the Christian faith) objectified as the direct object of proclaiming ... the content of what is preached and believed. (R. Hays)

Gal. 1:23 In fact (emphatic), the only thing (adv.) they heard from time-to-time (ἀκούω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Circumstantial; vague rumour) was (εἰμί, Imperf.AI3P, Iterative) that (introductory conj.) the one (Subj. Nom.; Paul) who used to (disj. particle; formerly) persecute (διώκω, PAPtc.NMS, Historical, Substantival; chase after) them (Acc. Dir. Obj.) is now (temporal) preaching (εὐαγγελίζω, PMI3S, Iterative) the gospel of the faith (Acc. Dir. Obj.) which (Acc. Appos.) he formerly (disj. particle) tried to destroy (πορθέω, Imperf.AI3S, Conative).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:23** μόνον δὲ ἀκούοντες ἦσαν ὅτι Ὁ διώκων ἡμᾶς ποτε νῦν εὐαγγελίζεται τὴν πίστιν ἣν ποτε ἐπόρθει

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:23** tantum autem auditum habebant quoniam qui persequabatur nos aliquando nunc evangelizat fidem quam aliquando expugnabat

^{LWB} **Gal. 1:24** And they kept on glorifying God for me.

^{KW} **Gal. 1:24** And they were continually glorifying God [for that which they found] in me.

^{KJV} **Galatians 1:24** And they glorified God in me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The imperfect tense means they did not understand how the chief persecutor of Christians could suddenly become one of them, but they nevertheless praised God (Iterative Imperfect tense) for what He had done to Paul. They not only praised God for changing a former enemy of the cross into a friend, but they praised God that he was now spreading the gospel to others in the land. Every time the story was brought up in conversation, all those present praised God for the conversion and subsequent ministry of Paul.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A notable miracle had taken place. The wolf had become a sheep! They could hold their meetings without having to post sentries and be afraid of spies. It was not just that the persecution had

stopped; the persecutor had been saved! He was now a Christian, one of them, a believer, a brother, a fellow member of the body of Christ. And it was not just that the persecutor had been saved; he was now preaching the faith that once he destroyed. (J. Phillips)

Gal. 1:24 And (continuative) they kept on glorifying (δοξάζω, Imperf.AI3P, Iterative; praising) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.) for me (Dat. Adv.).

^{WHO} **Galatians 1:24** καὶ ἐδόξαζον ἐν ἐμοὶ τὸν θεόν

^{VUL} **Galatians 1:24** et in me clarificabant Deum

CHAPTER 2

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:1** Then, after fourteen years [living in the region around Syria and Celicia], I went again to Jerusalem, accompanied by Barnabas and having brought along Titus as a companion.

^{KW} **Gal. 2:1** Then, after the space of fourteen years, again I went up to Jerusalem, accompanied by Barnabas, having taken along also Titus.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:1** Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

After living in the region around Syria and Celicia for fourteen years, Paul decided it was time to go to Jerusalem again (Constative Aorist tense). This time, he was accompanied by Barnabas, as well as a traveling companion named Titus. The preposition “accompanied by” leads us to believe that Barnabas was now a veteran in the Christian ministry with Paul. He was coming along “for business purposes,” so to speak. The participle used to describe Titus leads us to believe that he was still in training, a new believer at the time. Perhaps they recognized that Titus has the gift of pastor or teacher and as an uncircumcised Gentile, he would be a perfect example of God working through a man without the ceremonial Jewish law. Barnabas may have an opportunity to speak when necessary, as a back-up to Paul. But Titus was there as a traveling companion and was to watch and learn, rather than participate in the communication part of their ministry.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Fourteen years after that visit means seventeen years after Paul's conversion. These fourteen years include the eight Paul spent in Tarsus, regarding which we know nothing definite; the years spent in Syrian Antioch, working there with Barnabas in the great church which was chiefly Gentile; the period of the first missionary journey when Paul and Barnabas founded the Galatian churches; their return to Antioch and Paul's further stay in that city until he went to attend the Jerusalem conference. (R. Lenski) The final decision of the council is located in Acts 15:23-31. It was an endorsement of Paul's message of grace – salvation for Jew and Gentile by grace – without the works of the law. (M. DeHaan)

Paul on this journey was the principal person, Barnabas being in a subordinate, and Titus in a still inferior relation. (J. Eadie) Paul advances to the time of the great apostolic convention at Jerusalem when he came into fullest contact with the other apostles, yea, with all the leaders and with the church officially assembled. This was the decisive occasion when the first Judaizers were publicly and officially discredited and their Judaistic claims rejected. They were disowned, Paul was most fully acknowledged. The Galatians know all about this convention. When he recalls this convention to the minds of the Galatians, Paul needs only to touch the points he deems vital; he does not need to tell the whole story over again. (R. Lenski)

Gal. 2:1 Then (temporal; next), after fourteen (numeral) years (Gen. Extent of Time; living in the region around Syria and Celicia), I went (ἀναβαίνω, AAI1S, Constative) again (adv.) to Jerusalem (Acc. Place), accompanied by Barnabas (Gen. Assoc.) and (connective) having brought along Titus (Acc. Dir. Obj.) as a companion (συμπαλαμβάνω, AAPtc.NMS, Constative, Circumstantial).

^{WHO} **Galatians 2:1** Ἐπειτα διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν πάλιν ἀνέβην εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα μετὰ Βαρναβᾶ συμπαλαβῶν καὶ Τίτον·

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:1** deinde post annos quattuordecim iterum ascendi Hierosolyma cum Barnaba adsumpto et Tito

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:2** So I went up according to a revelation [a sign of God's will], and I presented the gospel to them which I continue to preach to the Gentiles, but by means of a private conference to those [such as Peter, John and James] who are recognized as being experts in such spiritual matters, so that I would not in some way [while in Jerusalem] exert myself in vain [run up against unnecessary barriers] nor rush into things too quickly [catch the local church leaders by surprise].

^{KW} **Gal. 2:2** And I went up in accordance with a revelation. And I laid before them for their consideration the gospel which I am preaching among the Gentiles, but privately to those of recognized eminence, lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:2** And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul did not need anyone's permission to preach the gospel, but he didn't go out of his way to be rude towards other ministers or pastors in a community he was visiting. In this case, he went up to Jerusalem (Constative Aorist tense) according to a revelation that God gave him. The nature of this revelation is not elaborated on, but it served as a sign to Paul that he had divine backing in this journey. There were plenty of apostles in Jerusalem already, so there was no lack of gospel preaching in that town. And because there were so many apostles there, Paul gave them a private hearing of the gospel he preached every day (Durative Present tense) to the Gentiles. Instead of entering the city and having his preaching precede him, he went to the recognized leaders of the Christian community first. Peter, John and James were among the apostles living in Jerusalem. They were recognized by the people as being experts in Christian doctrine, especially the gospel message. Even though Paul did not need their permission to preach in town, he was courteous and respectful towards them.

He let them hear his message before entering the public square and synagogues to preach to the general population. It would have been disrespectful to begin preaching without letting them know he was in town. After all, there were only a few apostles to begin with! He did not want to make a supreme effort to preach the gospel (Pictorial Present tense) and have the other apostles interfering with him. He might have irritated them by showing up in town and preaching without paying them a visit. Paul didn't need the other apostles mad at him and creating any barriers to his preaching. He had enough trouble from angry unbelievers and false apostles! Nor did he want to rush right into public speaking (Ingressive Aorist tense) without telling them he was in town. He was not showing deference to his message or his authority, but was being respectful of the other ministers in the local community. How would it look if the other apostles heard of his presence second hand? It would have been disrespectful to the local apostles to snub them. By meeting with them first and sharing his message, there would be no surprises; everyone would be "on the same page," so to speak.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The purpose of the meeting was to make quite clear to these men exactly what it was that he preached. He had not come to learn the gospel from them. He already knew what the gospel was. He had received it directly from the Lord. He had absolutely no doubt that what he preached was the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. He did not need for them to tell him so. But it would be to everyone's advantage if they could be brought to see that this was so ... Paul certainly needed for them to do something about their home-grown Judaizers who were trailing after him, rendering his ministry and his efforts vain by subverting his converts to Judaism. For the Jerusalem leaders to be able to act intelligently and spiritually in this critical situation, they would need to know,

understand, and appreciate not only what he preached but also its divine source and authority. Unless the Jerusalem leaders repudiated the false teachers, it was evident that there would soon be such a breach between Jerusalem and the Gentile churches as would be irreconcilable, and that would be disastrous. It would deny the great truth of the oneness of the body of Christ and would lead to denominationalism of the very worst kind. (J. Phillips)

His work would have been in danger of being spoiled if the Gentile churches as planted by himself had been disowned or discountenanced by the Mother church, or if they had split up into factious parties by the intervention of persons coming from James. To guard against this danger, he was led by Christ Himself to seek a formal recognition of his doctrine by the apostles of the Jerusalem church. (E. Huxtable) Paul saw that in the existing situation, there was danger that his work would be rendered ineffectual by the opposition of the Jerusalem church; that the disapproval of the Twelve would have such repercussions in the Church that his work would be seriously handicapped. (K. Wuest) Revelations were frequently made to the apostle, both to communicate important truths and to direct or encourage his proceedings. They appear to have been made in different ways: as through dreams or visions, through prophets, often no doubt, through a strong impulse borne in upon his spirit, prompting him to, or debarring him from, some particular line of conduct. (E. Huxtable) Paul insists here that the conference was unofficial and private, a consultation simply with the “would-be authorities,” as he calls them, with a touch of irony perhaps, taking up the catchword of the Judaizers who had made out Paul an insignificant nobody in comparison. (J. Dow)

The object of his private exposition was to have a more thorough discussion, with a view to a mutual understanding in the interests of peace and the gospel. A private conversation admits of greater freedom and discursiveness in dealing with difficult or contested points. (T. Croskery) Paul uses the word “run” (treko) in Gal. 2:2 with reference to his apostolic ministry with all the spiritual effort it involves. (J. Piper) Paul’s method in Jerusalem seems to have taken into account the low spiritual state and prejudices of the Jewish believers. It would have been practically impossible to impress the whole company with the character and divinity of his commission to the nations, so he singles out the leading brethren and seeks to show them how God has committed a distinct work to him. Peter and James seem to have grasped the essential points which he wished to impress upon them. Peter had had some preparation for this change, through the vision given him in connection with the proselyte Cornelius in Acts 15:7-11. (A. Knoch) The decision reached by this group would shape the decision of the public conference in the adjourned meeting. So far as we know Paul had not met John before, though he had met Peter and James at the other visit. (A. Robertson)

Gal. 2:2 So (continuative) I went up (ἀναβαίνω, AAI1S, Constative) according to a revelation (Adv. Acc.; a sign of God’s will), and (continuative) I presented (ἀνατίθημι, AMI1S, Constative) the gospel (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to them (Dat. Ind. Obj.) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) I continue to preach (κηρύσσω, PAI1S, Durative) to the Gentiles (Dat. Adv.), but (adversative) by means of a private conference (Acc. Means, Manner) to those (Dat. Ind. Obj.) who are recognized as being experts in such spiritual matters (δοκέω, PAPtc.DMP, Descriptive, Substantival; such as Peter, John and James), so that

I would not (ellipsis: disjunctive) in some way (disjunctive; while in Jerusalem) exert myself (τρέχω, PASubj.1S, Pictorial, Purpose & Potential; make an effort, run) in vain (Acc. Manner; foolishly, to no avail, without result) nor (disjunctive) rush into things too quickly (τρέχω, AAI1S, Ingressive).

^{WHO} **Galatians 2:2** ἀνέβην δὲ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν· καὶ ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ κηρύσσω ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς δοκοῦσιν μὴ πως εἰς κενὸν τρέχω ἢ ἔδραμον

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:2** ascendi autem secundum revelationem et contuli cum illis evangelium quod praedico in gentibus seorsum autem his qui videbantur ne forte in vacuum currerem aut cucurrissem

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:3** But not even Titus who was with me, although he was a Greek [Gentile], was compelled to be circumcised;

^{KW} **Gal. 2:3** But not even Titus who was with me, although he was a Gentile, was compelled to be circumcised.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:3** But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Titus was not forced or even encouraged by Paul (Constativ Aorist tense) to be circumcised (Dramatic Aorist tense), even though he was a Greek (Latin: Gentile). It is a completely irrelevant ritual for a Christian, and Paul was not about to let some legalistic, Judaistic practices infiltrate the gospel of pure grace.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Titus had no interest, concern or desire to go through the Jewish rite of circumcision. He was a cultural descendant of Aristotle, not of Abraham. He did not see why Moses had to come between him and Christ. He resented becoming a Jew before he could become a Christian. (R. Stamm) They apparently believed that while law-keeping was not necessary, it brought a higher perfection. Paul's contention was that law-keeping was not only unnecessary, but was now at an end and could add nothing to the perfect work of Christ. (H. Vos) It was a bold move on the part of Paul to bring with him to the Jerusalem council, an uncircumcised Gentile, introducing him as a test case. (K. Wuest)

Taking Titus to Jerusalem was a daring move. Because he was a Greek rather than a Jew, Titus was uncircumcised. And if anything was bound to enrage the Judaizers, it was bringing an uncircumcised man into their holy city! Circumcision meant everything to the Jews. It was the sacred mark of Jewish identity, the symbol of salvation ... Paul regarded circumcision as a synecdoche for the entire law; it represented law-keeping in general. Thus the apostle was fighting for something fundamental

to Christianity at all times and in all places. Every Christian is saved exactly the same way: by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Therefore, there can be no discrimination in the church. (P. Ryken) Sin does not work death in you; the law works death in you. (K. Lamb)

Paul is here distracted between the fear of saying too much and the fear of saying too little. He must maintain his own independence, and yet he must not compromise the position of the Twelve. How can he justify himself without seeming to condemn them? There is need of plain speaking and there is need of reserve ... From this shipwreck of grammar it is even difficult to extricate the main incident, on which the whole controversy hinges. Was Titus circumcised or was he not? On the whole ... many reasons seem to decide for the negative. (J. Lightfoot) We're trying to bring people to the knowledge of God by behavior, while the Holy Spirit is bringing about good behavior by the knowledge of God. "He satisfies the law and fills the hungry soul with goodness." (K. Lamb)

Gal. 2:3 But (adversative) not even (neg. adv.; neither) Titus (Subj. Nom.) who (Nom. Appos.) was (ellipsis) with me (Dat. Assoc.), although he was (εἰμί, PMPTc.NMS, Descriptive, Concessive) a Greek (Pred. Nom.), was compelled (ἀναγκάζω, API3S, Constative; forced) to be circumcised (περιτέμνω, APInf., Dramatic);

^{WHO} **Galatians 2:3** ἀλλ οὐδὲ Τίτος ὁ σὺν ἐμοί Ἕλλην ὧν ἠναγκάσθη περιτεμῆναι·

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:3** sed neque Titus qui mecum erat cum esset gentilis compulsus est circumcidi

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:4** For it [circumcision] was brought in under false pretenses by means of false brethren [those who pretend to be likeminded with us], who slipped in [through the back door] for the express purpose of spying on our liberty [freedom] which we have in Christ Jesus, for the ultimate purpose of enslaving us [to their laws];

^{KW} **Gal. 2:4** Now it was because of the false brethren who had been surreptitiously brought in, those of such a character that they sneaked in for the purpose of spying out our liberty which we are having in Christ Jesus, with the expectation of reducing us to abject slavery;

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:4** And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ did not teach Paul to preach the gospel of grace by adding the legal requirement of circumcision – neither for positional or experiential sanctification. Not only is it not part of the gospel message, it is absolutely contrary to everything the gospel stands for. The problem in Galatia was that certain legalists had slipped into the local assemblies who pretended to be grace-oriented believers. They believed in Christ, blended in with everyone else in the congregation, and appeared to be grace believers. But they were legalistic to the core and were not operating with honest *modus operandi*. They entered through the back door, so to speak, and

joined the local church for the express purpose of spying on grace believers. As legalists, they had a covert motive - spying on those who preached and lived by grace (Constative Aorist tense) and taking notes on how to subvert their message by adding legalism to it.

They watched those who enjoyed the grace which we have in Christ Jesus (Gnomic Present tense). They could not tolerate the fact that Gentiles could become believers without embracing the law. Their ultimate purpose was to enslave (Predictive Future tense) grace-oriented believers to their laws, of which circumcision was only the beginning. They followed grace believers, adding legalistic pressure to their life of liberty and freedom in Christ. When they could front-load the gospel with the law, they did. When they could back-load the gospel with the law, they did. Their lust for power over people exhibited itself in the desire to take over as much of a new believer's life as possible. Their goal was to force grace believers into living under the strict confines of the law (Latin: servitude). In this manner, they called all the shots and became rulers over the general population. A few commentators believe these are pseudo-Christians (not really believers), but I do not concur with that viewpoint.

I have a personal application that parallels this scenario in Galatia. When I was first hired at the corporation I work for, I discovered that I was brought in from the outside to destroy the careers of two individuals that the next two levels of management above me did not like. These two individuals, of course, were under my employ. One of them should have been promoted into my job, but he was deliberately passed-over in spite of his excellent qualifications and experience on the job because of a petty vendetta by those above him. My goal from the first day at work was to pretend to be their friend, but to document everything they did so they could be fired or transferred for some minor infraction. As their new manager, I was tasked with controlling every moment of their day – applying constant pressure for them to perform at 110% without error or incident. Without knowing it at the time, I had been hired as both a spy and a hit man.

My director and VP at that time were extremely ambitious individuals who did not care who they stepped on to get ahead. In order to get a lion's share of divisional funding, they agreed to some completely unattainable goals in a time frame that was about ½ of what was truly required to produce a quality product. Arrogance and inordinate ambition does not care who or what it harms as it pursues its agenda. The more I went along with my initial charter, the more I found that these two employees were hardworking, dedicated individuals who were being unjustly discriminated against because they knew the intricate realities of their daily job. What did I end up doing? I sided with my employees who were doing a marvelous job under adverse circumstances. Why? I did not agree with the revised definition of leadership in our department. Leadership certainly has goals and budgets to live by, but they must also take care of their people. Forcing your own employees into a form of servitude is not leadership. What happened?

Within a year I was demoted and transferred to another department. It was not pretty. However, not long after my transfer, the VP was forced into retirement and the director was fired. Both of my former employees have successful careers, one inside the company and the other for our main competitor! Another ironic thing about this scenario is that the shoe is now on the other

foot. I currently have a new boss from outside the company who has been tasked with the same thing I once was – to apply constant pressure, monitoring and documentation on my output because the SVP has agreed to some completely unattainable goals in a time frame that is about ½ of what is truly required to produce a quality product. Lust for power and inordinate ambition always exerts itself in a sphere of legalism, an additional demand for performance. In a totalitarian system, the dictator says, “Do it or die!” In a capitalistic system, pressure is brought to bear in a more subtle, backdoor manner (Latin: subintroduced).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Christian morality, Paul discovered, does not stem from rules or standards, or even from ideals, but from a personal relationship in Christ. He found through disillusion and defeat that moralism, which is obedience to precepts and rules, cannot give direction to a man’s life. His conversion ushered him into a new relationship, and with it came resources which he had not known before. (R. Stamm)
Here Paul borrows his vocabulary from the world of espionage. His opponents were conducting covert operations in the church. Like undercover agents, they had sneaked into the church to see what the Gentile Christians were up to. But they were more than informants; they were slave-traders. They were conspiring to hold the church hostage to the law ... Paul was a freedom fighter. He knew that people who want to keep their freedom in Christ have to fight for it. (P. Ryken)

In forming our estimate of the pseudo-brethren we should not forget Acts 15:5 and paint them too black. Luke calls them “Pharisees who believed” yet demanded “that it was needful to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses.” They were not disbelievers, but misbelievers, errorists, but such as had become fixed in their error. They accepted Christ yet added the Mosaic law to Christ and thus falsified Christ. (R. Lenski) They were not Jews who pretended to be Christians to gather evidence of disloyalty to Jewish customs, but more piquantly actual Christians who posed as brotherly and yet played the traitor ... Crafty scheming has ever been the method of ecclesiastical reactionaries. But there was no craven yielding, not for a moment, to these plotters. There are times when a Christian cannot bend. The freedom of life and conscience under the gospel had to be made good for all time. (J. Dow)

Gal. 2:4 For (explanatory) it (Acc. Gen. Ref.; circumcision) was brought in under false pretenses (Adv. Acc.) by means of (means) false brethren (Causal. Acc.; one who pretends to be likeminded with us), who (Nom. Appos.) slipped in (παραϊσέρχομαι, AAI3P, Ingressive, Deponent) for the express purpose of spying on (κατασκοπέω, AAInf., Constative, Purpose) our (Gen. Poss.) liberty (Acc. Dir. Obj.; freedom) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) we have (έχω, PAI1P, Gnomic & Durative) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.), for the ultimate purpose of (purpose) enslaving (καταδουλώω, FAI3P, Predictive; taking advantage of) us (Acc. Disadv.; to their laws),

^{WHO} **Galatians 2:4** διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους οἵτινες παρεισῆλθον κατασκοπῆσαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν ἣν ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἵνα ἡμᾶς καταδουλώσουσιν

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:4** sed propter subintroductos falsos fratres qui subintroierunt explorare libertatem nostram quam habemus in Christo Iesu ut nos in servitutem redigerent

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:5** To whom [false brethren] we did not yield [give in to their dirty tactics] for even an hour, so that the truth [doctrine] of the gospel might continue to abide with you.

^{KW} **Gal. 2:5** To whom not even for an hour did we yield with reference to the particular voluntary submission demanded, in order that the truth of the gospel might abide for you.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:5** To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul was adamant in not giving in to the underhanded, dirty tactics of the legalists (Culminative Aorist tense) for even one hour. In order for the truth of the gospel to remain pure and free in Galatia (Constative Aorist tense), they could not submit to the laws of the false brethren – whether it was front-loading or back-loading. If they gave in on circumcision, another law would immediately take its place. Once you step onto the slippery slope of legalism, it is difficult to extricate yourself from its grip. When legalism first presents itself, the option is there to reject it or embrace it (Potential Subjunctive mood). But once you are enmeshed in it, it becomes difficult if not impossible to abide (Latin: permanence) in the true doctrines of the gospel. Paul is warning the Galatians who have not succumbed to legalism to avoid it at all costs. And to those who have yielded to it initially - get out from under it before it destroys the doctrine in your soul.

I don't wish to belabor my work experience I shared in the last verse, but let me ask you a few questions by way of application. Should I have refused to go along with my initial job goal of monitoring my employees? Should I have refused to give in to the dirty tactics of my superiors? Where is the dividing line between serving your employer with distinction and refusing to submit to questionable tactics? As a new manager, I went along with my initial goal of monitoring my employees because there was the possibility (as far as I knew) that they were indeed slackers. Once I discovered they were not slackers, but instead I was working for unsavory characters, I switched my allegiance to protect my employees. Having yielded to their plan initially ("for an hour"), it was definitely more difficult to get out of its stranglehold. I've received a gamut of feedback on this situation, as you might imagine.

There have been some, primarily in the military, who think I should have been fired for not following my superior officer's orders regardless of what I thought about them. Their perspective is that I should have done my job without questioning the possible harmful effects on my employees. There have been others, primarily in business, that think I should have been promoted for notifying the company about the unsavory practices of some of its executives. Their perspective is that I was doing the organization a favor by standing up to unacceptable practices. Were my superiors operating under the principles of Stalin or Patton? The first point

I'm trying to make is that doctrine (truth) is B&W while the application of doctrine often enters grey areas. The second point I'm trying to make is that pastors are humans, too, and we don't always have easy solutions to every problem in life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul was not going to have a few narrow-minded ... carnal Jews, who could not keep the Law themselves, clamp it back either on him or his converts. Their concept of the gospel was false in precept, futile in practice, and fatal in purpose. It offered no salvation for the sinner and no sanctification for the saint. They could not fool Paul. Both before and after his conversion, he had tried their recipe and tasted the bitterness and poison of its brew. (J. Phillips) The truth was, in its negative aspect, the non-obligation of the Mosaic Law on Gentile believers; in its positive aspect, it is justification by faith. (J. Eadie) We defended for your sakes your faith and liberties, which you are now renouncing. (R. Jamieson)

Gal. 2:5 To whom (Dat. Disadv.; false brethren) we did not (neg. adv.) yield (έἴκω, AAI1P, Culminative; give in to their dirty tactics) obedience (Dat. Ind. Obj.; submission to their laws) for even an hour (Acc. Extent of Time), so that (result) the truth (Subj. Nom.; doctrine) of the gospel (Adv. Gen. Ref.) might continue to abide (διαμένω, AASubj.3S, Constative, Potential; remain) with you (Acc. Accompaniment).

^{WHO} **Galatians 2:5** οἷς οὐδὲ πρὸς ὥραν εἴξαμεν τῇ ὑποταγῇ ἵνα ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου διαμείνῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:5** quibus neque ad horam cessimus subiectioni ut veritas evangelii permaneat apud vos

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:6** But concerning these [Jerusalem apostles] who seem to have a reputation [among you] - Whatever kind of importance they once possessed [as spiritual leaders in the Jewish community], it makes no difference [it doesn't really matter], they are nothing to me [I'm not impressed]; God accepts [defers to] no man's reputation [outward appearance] - For those [legalistic brethren] who seem to have a reputation [among you] contributed nothing of value [spiritually] to me.

^{KW} **Gal. 2:6** But to be something at the hands of those who were of repute, whatever they were aforetime, is of no importance to me. God accepts not man's person. For those who were of repute imposed nothing on me.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:6** But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed *to be somewhat* in conference added nothing to me:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's sanctified sarcasm is in full swing. He pokes fun of the Galatians for showing an unusual level of devotion to human representatives. His use of the Greek word "dokeo" means they seem to have a reputation among you, but I can't figure out why. They were not preaching the gospel of pure grace like Paul was, so why were they treated with such deference and respect? Paul taught them the doctrines of grace which bring freedom; the Jerusalem apostles were teaching them the law and the commandments which bring slavery. Why were the Galatians treating the Jerusalem apostles with respect and treating the apostle Paul with disrespect? Whatever importance they once had as the spiritual leaders of the Jewish community (Historical Present tense), it didn't matter anymore because a change in dispensation has occurred. Jesus Christ came and fulfilled the laws and commandments they were still trying to impose on new believers.

Paul says it doesn't matter how important these individuals used to be (Dramatic Present tense). That's a rather bold statement for a man to make, unless you are the Apostle Paul. But he makes it clear that the Jerusalem apostles, in spite of their personal connection with Jesus during His earthly ministry, have nothing over him. Paul is not impressed by rank. Moreover, God accepts no man based on his alleged reputation among men (Customary Present tense). God does not show favoritism towards those who still try to keep the law - now that the dispensation of grace has begun. These men they held in such high esteem contributed absolutely nothing of value to Paul (Culminative Aorist tense). He listened to everything they taught and he heard nothing he didn't already know. Is Paul being arrogant in these claims? No, he is trying to correct the "impure" gospel that some of the Jerusalem apostles, and the false brethren who followed them, were spreading among Gentile converts.

As Jewish leaders, these former "somebodies" in the spiritual life are now in fact "nobodies" in the spiritual life. They are positionally on one side of the cross, but are trying to live experientially on the other side of the cross. Paul did not have to go to Jerusalem to get an update from the Jerusalem apostles or from any of the false brethren. He was trained in the law beyond any of the members of the "Christian Sanhedrin" there. The Lord had given him the gospel to the Gentiles, not the apostles in Jerusalem. If anything, Paul went to Jerusalem to inform them of the most recent revelations from Jesus Christ. He will go to Jerusalem and straighten out some of the very men the Galatians were holding in such high esteem. In a real sense, there was a new sheriff in town, and his name was the Apostle Paul. He was commissioned by the Lord personally to preach the gospel of grace to the Gentiles, and he didn't need the opinions of the Jerusalem contingency to complete his message.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul had respect for the other apostles, but he was not intimidated by them. He did not make a fuss over their credentials because he knew that "God shows no partiality." (P. Ryken) Although Paul accepts their office as apostles, he is not overawed by their person as it was being inflated by the Judaizers. (J. Stott) It made no difference to Paul who these men were, what position they were

holding, and what advantages they had had, so far as his receiving at their hands an apostolic commission was concerned. He had received his direct from God. (K. Wuest) The apostle admits that the brethren at Jerusalem seemed to the Galatians to be most important judges of such matters as were brought before them. He himself did not form the same extravagant opinion of their ability. Hence he states plainly that they imparted nothing to him in the conference. They simply confirmed him in the practice of Christian liberty. (R. Edgar) Tapeinosis: demeaning, a lessening of a thing in order to increase it. They seemed to be something, really they were nothing. (E.W. Bullinger)

Now what about the assertion: “there is no partiality with God?” To see the question in its proper light we must realize that, on the one hand, the impartiality of God is an essential feature of Jewish as well as Pauline theology, and on the other hand it was never seen (by the Jews or Paul) to contradict the election of Israel (“The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth.”) Holding the question in this light helps us see that impartiality must be defined with great precision lest it become a kind of 20th century egalitarian slogan that ends up forcing God to bless equal percentages of every class and race with identical blessings. It is crucial to notice that in the NT the impartiality of God is never a description of His election. In Gal.2:6 it is only a partial exception: Paul does not care about the rank of the pillar apostles; God does not make His judgments on the basis of rank either. (J. Piper) Paul means no disrespect, but he asserts his independence sharply in a tangled sentence with two dashes (in Wescott and Hort) or parentheses. (A. Robertson)

Gal. 2:6 But (adversative) concerning these (Adv. Gen. Ref.; Jerusalem apostles) who seem to have a reputation (δοκέω, PAPtc.GMP, Customary, Substantival; among you) - Whatever kind of (Subj. Nom.) importance (Compl. Acc.; respect) they once (adv.; formerly) possessed (εἶμι, PAInf., Historical, Temporal; as spiritual leaders in the Jewish community), it makes no difference (διαφέρω, PAI3S, Dramatic; it doesn't really matter), they are (εἶμι, Imperf.AI3P, Descriptive) nothing (Pred. Acc., Noncompl.; meaningless, worthless) to me (Dat. Adv.; I'm not impressed); God (Subj. Nom.) accepts (λαμβάνω, PAI3S, Customary; defers to, shows favoritism towards) no (neg. adv.) man's (Poss. Gen.) reputation (Pred. Nom.; outward appearance) - For (explanatory) those (Subj. Nom.; false brethren) who seem to have a reputation (δοκέω, PAPtc.NMP, Static, Substantival; among you) contributed (προσανατίθηναι, AMI3P, Culminative) nothing of value (Acc. Dir. Obj.; worthless, meaningless) to me (Dat. Adv.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:6** Ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι τι,- ὅποιοί ποτε ἦσαν οὐδέν μοι διαφέρει· πρόσωπον [ὁ] θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει- ἐμοὶ γὰρ οἱ δοκοῦντες οὐδὲν προσανέθεντο,

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:6** ab his autem qui videbantur esse aliquid quales aliquando fuerint nihil mea interest Deus personam hominis non accipit mihi enim qui videbantur nihil contulerunt

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:7** But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel to the uncircumcision

[Gentiles] had been entrusted [to me] just as Peter was entrusted with the circumcision [Jews] -

^{KW} **Gal. 2:7** But on the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with [the responsibility of preaching] the gospel to the uncircumcised as Peter with [the responsibility of preaching] the gospel to the circumcised -

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:7** But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision was unto Peter;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

When Paul made his trip to Jerusalem and preached his gospel to the apostles there (Temporal Participle), they perceived that the gospel to the uncircumcision had been entrusted to him (Intensive Perfect tense) just like the gospel to the circumcision had been entrusted to Peter. This doesn't mean there are two different gospels. It means there is one gospel that is presented to two completely different audiences: one to the Gentiles and one to the Jews. Both Paul and Peter had independent spheres of operation or influence. When Paul tried to preach to the Jews, he had mixed to poor results; when Peter tried to preach to Gentiles, he had the same mixed results. But when they preached the gospel in their respective spheres of responsibility given to them by God, they had great success.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is plain that this agreement was the result of the apostle's frank disclosures. They had confidence in his statements, and seeing that his was a divine stewardship for a special sphere of labour, they could not, they durst not, oppose it. It might not be in all points to their perfect liking, it might not quite tally with their ideas of becomingness, but they could not set themselves against it ... Nor is it implied by this language that there were two gospels, or even two distinct types of one gospel. (J. Eadie) It is to be observed that Paul never sought apostolic ordination. (R. Edgar) There is no diminishing of quality, only a difference in responsibility. (K. Lamb)

Gal. 2:7 But (adversative) on the contrary (Acc. Gen. Ref.), when they saw (ὁράω, AAPtc.NMP, Constative, Temporal; perceived, understood) that (conj.) the gospel (Subj. Nom.) to the uncircumcision (Gen. Adv.; Gentiles) had been entrusted (πιστεύω, Perf.PIIS, Intensive) to me (ellipsis) just as (comparative) Peter (Subj. Nom.) was entrusted with (ellipsis) the circumcision (Gen. Spec.; Jews) -

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:7** ἀλλὰ τοῦναντίον ἰδόντες ὅτι πεπίστευμαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας καθὼς Πέτρος τῆς περιτομῆς,

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:7** sed e contra cum vidissent quod creditum est mihi evangelium praeputii sicut Petro circumcisionis

LWB Gal. 2:8 Because He [God the Holy Spirit] Who effectively operated through Peter with respect to his apostleship to the circumcision [Jews] also effectively operated through me with respect to the Gentiles -

KW Gal. 2:8 For He who worked effectively for Peter with respect to his apostolate to the circumcision also worked effectively for me with respect to the Gentile -

KJV Galatians 2:8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul adds this parenthesis to further explain that the Holy Spirit effectively operated through both Peter and himself. He operated through Paul when he preached to the Gentiles, and He operated through Peter when he preached to the Jews. The Dramatic Aorist tenses point to the Holy Spirit's effective, energizing power when each man remained in his particular sphere of operation. Only when they crossed the boundary and tried to minister in the other man's sphere of operation did they get into trouble and have poor results from their ministry. That doesn't mean they were restricted from ministering to those outside their sphere when the opportunity presented itself, but they did understand there was a will of God for them to concentrate on their specific sphere. As a pastor, it is not your responsibility to correct the congregation of another man's ministry. The Greek word "energeo," from which we get our English word "energized," refers to the Holy Spirit pouring His power into them for the purpose of ministering the gospel.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There is no suggestion here that the Christian faith is a matter of subjective definition which may be made to conform to every man's taste or mood. Faith has to do with objective fact – and the central fact is not an open question ... Truth often emanates from minority groups and creative thinking from small bodies within a large fellowship. (R. Stamm) The two are closely paralleled. As Peter was placed in the Jewish work by God, so Paul was placed in the Gentile work. God wrought alike for Peter and for Paul by grace and by providence in the widest sense so that one came to work mostly among the Jews, the other among Gentiles. The credit for what was done by each is given wholly to God. (R. Lenski)

Conceding without reserve Peter's apostleship and its divine source, Paul justifies their recognition of his own claim to apostleship by appeal to his own equal and like experience of God. (E. Burton) The promises to Abraham, to Abraham's seed, and to "all the families of the earth" are to be distinguished clearly. It breeds utter confusion to ignore these Scriptural divisions and to muddle the whole by reducing it to a general promise ... The premillenarian recognizes that there is a spiritual as well as a natural seed of Abraham ... There is a contrast between those who inherit only the national promises and those who inherit the spiritual promises also. The line of national promises is narrowed to Isaac and his seed (Rom. 9:7), and the line of spiritual promises is narrowed to those

who believe. (J. Walvoord)

Gal. 2:8 Because (explanatory; for) He (Subj. Nom.; God the Holy Spirit) Who effectively operated (ἐνεργέω, AAPtc.NMS, Dramatic, Substantial) through Peter (Instr. Means) with respect to his (Gen. Poss.) apostleship (Acc. Gen. Ref.) to the circumcision (Gen. Adv.; Jews) also (adjunctive) effectively operated (ἐνεργέω, AAI3S, Dramatic) through me (Instr. Means) with respect to the Gentiles (Acc. Gen. Ref.; nations other than Israel) -

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:8** ὁ γὰρ ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ εἰς ἀποστολὴν τῆς περιτομῆς ἐνήργησεν καὶ ἐμοὶ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη,

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:8** qui enim operatus est Petro in apostolatum circumcisionis operatus est et mihi inter gentes

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:9** And when they came to understand [by listening to me preach] the grace which was given to me, James and Cephas [Peter] and John, who seemed to be recognized as pillars [of the church], gave to Barnabas and I the right hands of fellowship [shook hands with us, confirming our ministry], with the understanding that we should preach to the Gentiles and they should preach to the circumcision [Jews] -

^{KW} **Gal. 2:9** And having come to perceive the grace which was given to me, James, and Cephas, and John, those who in reputation were looked upon as pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, to the end that we should preach the gospel to the Gentiles and they themselves to the circumcision;

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:9** And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul picks up where he left off in verse 6, when the other apostles in Jerusalem (Temporal Participle) had listened to him preach and came to understand (Ingressive Aorist tense) that he had been given a special grace ministry (Dramatic Aorist tense) from the Lord. James, Peter and John, all of whom were considered to be the spiritual pillars of the church in Jerusalem (Static Present tense), gave the right hands of fellowship (“a visible hearty pledge of recognition”) to Paul and Barnabas (Culminative Aorist tense). Paul must have preached one dynamite sermon, because the apostles in Jerusalem shook hands with them and recognized them as fellow apostles (Latin: society). They also agreed among themselves that Paul obviously had a special grace ministry to the Gentiles while Peter had a special grace ministry to the Jews. When Paul and Barnabas departed, it was understood that they would preach to the Gentiles while the apostles in Jerusalem would preach to the Jews. There was no power struggle here. Each contingency recognized the other’s gift and sphere of operation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To introduce the works of the law and make our acceptance depend on our obedience to rules and regulations was to bring a free man into bondage again. (J. Stott) The agreement therefore was that Paul and Barnabas should go as apostles to the Gentiles, and the Jerusalem apostles were to go as apostles to the Jews, both groups taking the same gospel. Two nationally different spheres were to be evangelized with one and the same message. It was an acknowledgment of apostolic equality. However, this mutual understanding did not forbid Paul to minister to the Jews on occasion or prevent Peter from ministering to the Gentiles should the opportunity arise. (K. Wuest) The verdict of Jerusalem was not command, but approval. This historic verdict decided that Christianity was to be a world religion, not a sect, a gospel of personal faith in God through Christ, and not a bondage to legalism. (J. Dow) “The right hands of fellowship” expressed agreement between the chief apostles and Paul, as if to say, in doctrine we are companions and have fellowship together therein. (M. Luther)

Now who was right, Peter or Paul? This question can only be answered if we distinguish between the dispensation of the Law which ended at Calvary, and the dispensation of the grace of God which began after Pentecost. Peter was converted before the dispensation of the Law ended; Paul was saved after the dispensation of grace began. He called the revelation that he received the “dispensation of grace” (Eph. 3:2). Now many people throw their hands up in holy horror at the preaching of dispensational truth, but beloved, there is no other way to understand the Bible ... Peter had received the Kingdom message from Christ (Matt. 10). It was limited to Israel, and offered the Kingdom, upon condition of national repentance. But Israel rejected the offer and refused the Messiah, and so the Kingdom offer is temporarily withdrawn, the Kingdom is postponed, and the ministry of Peter and the apostles comes to an end, and God now reveals the new message of grace for the Church Age, the Body of Christ. He chooses Paul to be the instrument for this new message to the Gentiles. The apostles now fall out of the picture and Paul takes over. (M. DeHaan)

Divine grace, inwrought and imparted by the indwelling Spirit, results in a manifestation of the very graciousness of God in and through the heart of the believer. It is in no sense an imitation of God’s graciousness; it is a reproduction by the indwelling Spirit of that graciousness in the life and service of the believer. (L. Chafer) The compromisers and the Judaizers were brushed to one side when these five men shook hands as equals in the work of Christ’s Kingdom. (A. Robertson) The dispensation of the Hypostatic Union stands as a line of demarcation between Israel and the Church. Christ fulfilled the Mosaic Law on one hand and set the precedent for Church Age protocol on the other. This division is confirmed by numerous passages which state that the Mosaic Law does not define the Christian’s way of life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 2:9 And (continuative) when they came to understand (γινώσκω, AAPtc.NMP, Ingressive, Temporal; by listening to me preach) the grace (Acc. Dir. Obj.) which was given (δίδωμι, APpTc.AFS, Dramatic, Attributive) to me (Dat. Adv.), James (Subj. Nom.) and (connective) Cephas (Subj. Nom.) and (connective) John (Subj.

Nom.), who seemed to be (εἶμι, PAInf., Static, Result) recognized as (δοκέω, PAPtc.NMP, Static, Substantial) pillars (Pred. Nom.; of the church), gave (δίδωμι, AAI3P, Culminative) to Barnabas (Dat. Adv.) and (connective) I (Dat. Adv.) the right hands (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of fellowship (Gen. Assoc.; shook hands with them, recognizing them as apostles), with the understanding that (purpose) we (Subj. Nom.) should preach (ellipsis) to the Gentiles (Acc. Dir. Obj.; nations other than Israel) and (contrast; but) they (Subj. Nom.) should preach (ellipsis) to the circumcision (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jews) -

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:9** καὶ γνόντες τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι, Ἰάκωβος καὶ Κηφᾶς καὶ Ἰωάννης, οἱ δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι, δεξιὰς ἔδωκαν ἐμοὶ καὶ Βαρναβᾶ κοινωνίας, ἵνα ἡμεῖς εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, αὐτοὶ δὲ εἰς τὴν περιτομήν·

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:9** et cum cognovissent gratiam quae data est mihi Iacobus et Cephas et Iohannes qui videbantur columnae esse dexteris dederunt mihi et Barnabae societatis ut nos in gentes ipsi autem in circumcisionem

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:10** Only [asking as a special request] that we might keep on remembering the poor [because of the famine in Judea], which [remembrance] I myself have indeed made a diligent effort to carry this out [kept my promise].

^{KW} **Gal. 2:10** Only, that we should keep on remembering the poor, which very thing I have made a diligent and eager effort to do.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:10** Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Before they departed, the Jerusalem apostles asked a special favor of Paul. Even though it was agreed that he would minister to the Gentiles and Peter to the Jews, they wanted Paul to make one exception. They asked him to keep remembering (Iterative Present tense) the poor in Judea, since there was a severe famine there and Christians were in need of food. This request was not a problem for Paul. He made a personal effort (Constative Aorist tense) to remember the poor and sent them money whenever he could. He collected grace gifts from many cities where he preached and dispatched them to Jerusalem to be given to the poor (Latin: paupers). Because of his love for Israel, his kinsmen, he did not need to be reminded of this request.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul got the idea of such a great collection, the object of which was not merely material to help the poor but also to cement the fellowship between all his Gentile churches and the mother church in Jerusalem from which the gospel had first gone forth into the world. (R. Lenski) These brethren

were in chronic poverty, partly because of social and religious persecution and partly because of the generally low economy of the area. (H. Vos)

Gal. 2:10 Only (adv.; asking as a special request or exception), that (subordinating) we might keep on remembering (μνημονεύω, PAsubj.1P, Customary & Iterative, Potential) the poor (Gen. Disadv.; because of the famine in Judea), which (Acc. Gen. Ref.; remembrance) I myself (Subj. Acc.) have indeed (emphatic) made a diligent effort (σπουδάζω, AAI1S, Constative; taken pains) to carry this (Acc. Dir. Obj.) out (ποιέω, AAInf., Constative, Result; do it, fulfill it).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:10** μόνον τῶν πτωχῶν ἵνα μνημονεύωμεν, ὃ καὶ ἐσπούδασα αὐτὸ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:10** tantum ut pauperum memores essemus quod etiam sollicitus fui hoc ipsum facere

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:11** However, when Cephas [Peter] came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face [stood my ground and resisted him], because he was guilty and stood condemned [of promoting legalism].

^{KW} **Gal. 2:11** But when Cephas came to Antioch, to his face I opposed him, because he stood condemned.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:11** But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In spite of the general agreement that Paul would preach to the Gentiles and Peter would preach to the Jews, that did not mean Paul would allow doctrinal error or practices to go unchecked. When Peter came to Antioch (Ingressive Aorist tense), Paul had no choice but to oppose him to his face (Dramatic Aorist tense) because of a serious error. Peter was guilty of promoting legalism by his dining habits (Intensive Perfect tense) and was therefore condemned of a serious doctrinal error. This was unacceptable (Latin: reprehensible) behavior for an apostle who set the tone for all Jewish Christians.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul rebuked him to his face, not behind his back like a spying false brother in verse 4. (R. Stamm) Peter therefore being signalized as a condemned man, Paul was obliged to interfere on behalf of honesty, consistency, and spiritual freedom ... Private remonstrance, written correspondence, appeals against Peter or crimination of him in his absence, would not have proved Paul's conscious equality of status so truly as a face-to-face rebuke, and that publicly, of the apostle of the circumcision. (J. Eadie) Peter stood accused by his own conscience and in the sight of the whole Gentile church. Apostle or no apostle, Peter must be forced to face the carnality and consequences of

his two-faced behavior. (J. Phillips) As he knew Peter's character, it must have cost Paul a pang to confront him whose name stands first in all the catalogues of the apostles; but the claims of truth were paramount. (J. Eadie)

Paul found another use for this gift of power. He plainly and frankly says, I withstood him to the face. If the power to stand is positive and aggressive, the power to withstand is potential. Out of it comes such self-control that a man is able to keep his balance, his head, and his judgment in a world like ours ... At every turn there are bids for our allegiance: there is the appeal of propaganda; there is the pressure of social customs. If a man becomes the captain of his own soul in this century, as Paul did in his, if he refuses to surrender to public opinion, he must have the power to understand and interpret for himself. One of the superb gifts of Christ to mankind is the capacity to see life through. Paul stood and withstood because he understood. (R. Stamm) Peter's offensive behavior aroused the indignation of the Antioch Christians. Paul could not therefore keep silence, but was forced to rebuke Peter. (K. Wuest)

There was no controversy between the two apostles; there was no difference of opinion; it was only a case of indecision in acting up to one's unchanged convictions. Peter was self-condemned, for his conduct bore the broad mark of inconsistency. It was not a case of error in doctrine, but of inconsistency of conduct. Ministers may err and sin; follow them no further than they follow Christ. (T. Croskery) Apostles are fallible. If an apostle fails, who else will presume to be safe? (W. Adeney) Peter had been taught not to call anyone common or unclean who had the witness of the Holy Spirit, so that, when he first came to Antioch, he ate with the uncircumcised. But he was afraid of the Circumcisionists, and changed his attitude when they came down from Jerusalem. What prestige these men had, who could intimidate the very chief of the apostles! (A. Knoch)

Gal. 2:11 However (adversative; transitional: now), when (temporal) Cephas (Subj. Nom.; Peter) came (ἐρχομαι, AAI3S, Ingressive, Deponent) to Antioch (Acc. Place), I opposed (ἀνθίστημι, AAI1S, Dramatic; resisted, stood my ground against) him (Dat. Ind. Obj.) to his face (Acc. Opposition), because (causal) he was (εἰμι, Imperf.AI3S, Descriptive) he was guilty and stood condemned (καταγινώσκω, Perf.PPtc.NMS, Intensive, Causal; of promoting legalism).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:11** Ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν Κηφᾶς εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν, κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῷ ἀντέστην, ὅτι κατεγνωσμένος ἦν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:11** cum autem venisset Cephas Antiochiam in faciem ei restiti quia reprehensibilis erat

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:12** For before certain ones [a delegation of Jewish believers] from James arrived, he made it a habit to eat with Gentile believers. But when they [the Jewish delegation] arrived, he began to withdraw [from the Gentile believers] and separated himself [from his former dining habits], because he was afraid of those [the legalistic delegation] from the circumcision [Jerusalem].

^{KW} **Gal. 2:12** For before certain from James came, with the Gentiles it was his habit to eat meals. But when they came he began gradually to draw himself back, and began slowly to effect a final separation, fearing those of the circumcision.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:12** For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Before a particular delegation of Jewish Christians arrived in Antioch (Temporal Participle), Peter made it a habit to eat with Gentile believers (Iterative Imperfect tense); it was not a one-time slip-up on his part. This was a practice that correctly portrayed to all those around him that the legalistic practices from Judaism of not eating with Gentiles was no longer in effect in the new grace economy. But when the Jewish delegation arrived in Antioch (Ingressive Aorist tense), Peter began to slowly withdraw from his former dining habits with the Gentiles and eventually separated from them altogether (Inchoative Imperfect tense). This had the exact opposite effect on new believers than what the Lord has intended for Church Age believers. Because he was afraid of what the legalistic delegation from Jerusalem might think when they saw him eating with Gentiles, he compromised the very gospel of grace he was commissioned to preach. Paul saw what was happening and set himself against Peter to correct the situation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Mealtime was leisure for conversation more wholesome than alcoholic banter and persiflage. Eating together made men brothers who shared aspirations and thoughts of God ... All of the Jewish dining regulations were indeed evidences of a devout spirit and a sincere desire to do the will of God; but they could also become a tragic misdirection of religious energy. By themselves, all they were certain to accomplish was to make obvious that Jews were different in these respects from their pagan neighbors, in whose eyes such peculiar customs were absurd, superstitious, and downright rude. Instead of allaying hard feelings, they heightened the tension and kept alive the hatreds which rent society ... In Christ, Paul saw that obedience to all these laws was irrelevant to God's original intention to deal with all men on the basis of grace alone, and that they were obsolete in a changed and changing order of society ... One can hardly imagine Paul refusing to eat with Titus at any time. With Peter it was different. Only slowly and with doubts and hesitations was he led to recognize the rightness of Paul's position, and become coming to Antioch he probably did not realize all its implications. Hence he wavered, fearing the conservatives who insisted that no one could become a good Christian without first becoming a Jew. (R. Stamm)

James, even after the decision of the council at Jerusalem regarding the relation of the law to Gentile converts to Christianity, still held to the view that the Jewish converts were under the law. James was the occasion of Paul's lapse when the apostle at his request took upon himself a Jewish vow to show the Jews in Jerusalem that he was still a strict Jew (Acts 21:18-26). Here he was the occasion of Peter's lapse when he sent this mission to Antioch with the purpose of enforcing the Mosaic law

so far as the Jewish Christians were concerned ... The whole incident is characteristic of Peter. He was always the first to recognize great truths and the first to draw back from these truths. Witness his great confession of the deity of the Lord Jesus, and so soon after, his repudiation of the prediction of our Lord to the effect that He would soon die at Jerusalem and be raised again (Matt. 16:13-23); also his call to preach (Matt. 4:18-20), and his action of returning to his fishing business (John 21:3) instead of fulfilling his commission of preaching the gospel. (K. Wuest)

Gal. 2:12 For (explanatory) before certain ones (Acc. Gen. Ref.; a delegation of Jews) from James (Gen. Source) arrived (ἔρχομαι, AAInf., Ingressive, Temporal, Deponent, Articular), he made it a habit to eat with (συνεσθίω, Imperf.AI3S, Iterative) Gentile believers (Gen. Assoc.). But (adversative) when (temporal) they (the Jewish delegation) arrived (ἔρχομαι, AAIP, Ingressive, Deponent), he began to withdraw (ὑποστέλλω, Imperf.AI3S, Inchoative; from the Gentile believers) and (continuative) separated (ἀφορίζω, Imperf.AI3S, Inchoative) himself (Acc. Separation; from his former dining habits), because he was afraid of (φοβέω, PMPTc.NMS, Descriptive, Causal) those (Acc. Gen. Ref.; legalistic delegation) from the circumcision (Abl. Source; from Jerusalem).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:12** πρὸ τοῦ γὰρ ἐλθεῖν τινὰς ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου μετὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν συνήσθιεν· ὅτε δὲ ἦλθον, ὑπέστέλλεν καὶ ἀφώριζεν ἑαυτὸν φοβούμενος τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:12** prius enim quam venirent quidam ab Iacobo cum gentibus edebat cum autem venissent subtrahebat et segregabat se timens eos qui ex circumcisione erant

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:13** In fact, the rest of the Jews joined in the hypocrisy with him, to the extent that even Barnabas [my grace-preaching companion] was carried away with their legalistic hypocrisy.

^{KW} **Gal. 2:13** And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite jointly with him, so that even Barnabas was swept along with their hypocrisy.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:13** And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Undoubtedly there were some people who thought Paul was wrong for standing up to Peter and “calling him on the carpet” for being a legalistic hypocrite. And perhaps if nobody had seen him, Paul would not have been so forward. But he saw the immediate impact of Peter’s about face from the grace of God. The rest of the Jews in Antioch watched Peter and then joined in the hypocrisy (Ingressive Aorist tense) of separating themselves from the Gentile believers. The situation became so bad, that even Barnabas, Paul’s grace-preaching companion, joined in the hypocritical practice (Culminative Aorist tense) of not eating with the Gentiles. That was all Paul

could stand; he could not tolerate anyone preaching grace and then living under legalism. So he defended the doctrines of grace in both word and deed and chewed Peter out for being a religious hypocrite.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The potential damage done by religious partisanship is measured by the fact that Paul was driven to make such a charge against a pillar apostle and to include Barnabas his best friend ... Men get into social jams when their fundamental thinking is at odds with the truth. (R. Stamm) Peter turned coward. Fear made him act against his own better judgment. His fear was that, on returning to Jerusalem, these friends of James' might report that he ate steadily with the Gentile Christians in Antioch, that the Judaizers would get to hear of it and be enflamed against him. This was the brave Peter who was thrown into a panic in the courtyard at the time of the trial of Jesus. Fear produces strange actions. Calm reason must declare that Peter was wrong, totally wrong. Many wrong acts are devoid of a sensible, reasonable explanation. So it is with Peter's action on this occasion. (R. Lenski)

Barnabas is a warning to us. The church is full of great names that are still constantly quoted in support of some false doctrine, false practice, false principle, false interpretation. Their very names stop lesser men from testing what they advocate, and so they, like Barnabas, are carried away. (R. Lenski) For a while all went well in Antioch. Such great love sprang up between Jewish and Gentile believers that they ate the agape, or love-feast, together. This practice was an emblem of Christian unity and the interruption of it was sure to harm the church. (H. Vos) Barnabas was Paul's chief colleague in the evangelization of the Gentiles, and now to have him play the hypocrite and deserter, was a bitter blow to the great apostle. (K. Wuest) So sometimes one man is able to do more in a council than the whole council besides. (M. Luther)

"Dissembled with him" means they acted in a manner which did not faithfully represent their own inward man. They were, in reality, convinced that Christ had made all those who believed in Him alike righteous before God with themselves, and alike meet to be admitted to Christian fellowship. But now, by practically siding with those who treated their Gentile brethren as more or less unclean, not fit for them to associate with, they disguised their real sentiments from "fear" of forfeiting the confidence and good will of those narrow-minded Jews. (E. Huxtable) It is not impossible that this incident, by producing a temporary feeling of distrust, may have prepared the way for the dissension between Paul and Barnabas which shortly afterwards led to their separation. From this time forward they never again appear associated together. But on the other hand, whenever Paul mentions Barnabas, his words imply sympathy and respect. (J. Lightfoot)

Gal. 2:13 In fact (emphatic), the rest of (Nom. Measure) the Jews (Subj. Nom.) joined in the hypocrisy (συμμοκρίνομαι, API3P, Ingressive, Deponent) with him (Dat. Assoc.), to the extent that (result) even (ascensive) Barnabas (Subj. Nom.) was carried away with (συναπάγω, API3S, Culminative; swept along by) their (Poss. Gen.) legalistic hypocrisy (Dat. Disadv.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:13** καὶ συνυπεκρίθησαν αὐτῶ [καὶ] οἱ λοιποὶ Ἰουδαῖοι, ὥστε καὶ Βαρναβᾶς συναπήχθη αὐτῶν τῇ ὑποκρίσει.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:13** et simulationi eius consenserunt ceteri iudaei ita ut et Barnabas duceretur ab eis in illa simulatione

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:14** But when I saw that they were not walking correctly [according to divine protocol] with reference to the truth of the gospel [doctrines of grace], I asked Cephas [Peter] in front of everyone: If you, being a Jew, are making it a practice to live like a non-Jew [like the rest of the Gentile world] and not according to Jewish customs, why are you compelling the Gentiles to live according to Jewish customs?

^{KW} **Gal. 2:14** But when I saw that they were nor pursuing a straight-forward course in relation to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of everybody, If you, being a Jew, habitually are living after the manner of the Gentiles, and not after that of the Jews, how is it that you are compelling the Gentiles to live after the Jewish manner?

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:14** But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul was not oblivious to the things around him. He was always observing his new converts to see how they were doing. In this case, he saw (Constative Aorist tense) that they were not always walking (Greek derivative: orthopedic) according to the precisely correct protocol of the Church Age (Gnomic Present tense). In their own homes and in the work place, they were living according the truth of the gospel, but at least during their dining experience, they were abandoning the doctrines of grace for some imposed Jewish traditions. Paul knew they didn't impose these ritualistic practices on themselves, so he observed them for awhile to see where they had picked it up. That led him to the apostles, and in this case, the apostle to the Jews, Peter. When he saw the hypocrisy Peter was exhibiting to the Gentile believers, he immediately began questioning Peter (Constative Aorist tense) in front of everyone present.

If Peter himself was a Jew, and he was (Descriptive Present tense), and he was making it a practice to live like a Gentile (Iterative Present tense), why was he strongly recommending (Iterative Present tense) that the Gentiles live like a Jew? Peter was being inconsistent in his walk with the Lord, living by grace before the Jerusalem delegation arrived, but then switching back to Jewish tradition when they entered the city. When this delegation was not present, he was trying to walk according to the doctrines of grace, but when they arrived he began walking like a legalistic Jew again. Not only that, but it appears that he was forcing the Gentiles (Iterative Present tense) to live according to the very Jewish customs that he was trying to abandon in his own life. Paul wants to know why he is doing this? What is his purpose? This was, of course, a well-crafted question which did not have an answer that would be advantageous to Peter. He will

find himself embarrassed and guilty of promoting legalism.

The use of the gnomic present tense means the Gentiles were not constantly trying to live according to Jewish customs, but only under some rather uncertain circumstances – such as when a Jewish delegation came to town. The use of several iterative present tenses means there was a precisely correct protocol they were supposed to be living by, and they were making it a habit to live according to these doctrines of grace. The truth of the gospel for the Church Age believer is to walk according to the doctrines of grace. Any attempts to live under Jewish or any other forms of legalistic customs are a step backwards in the spiritual life. Peter himself would make progress according to grace, and then he would stumble back into the familiar Jewish customs he was delivered from by Christ Jesus. Paul nails him both coming and going, but it had to be done. As an apostle, he had to set the proper standard and he was failing to do so at this time.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Religion, education, and politics have a strange way of tying issues to personalities. Funerals are often required to settle some questions; but the issue with regard to the relation of Christians to the Jewish law could not and did not wait for any funerals. It is one thing to attack an opponent at a distance in his absence; it is quite another to come to grips with him face to face. Thus Peter and Paul proved to be the sharpest tests for each other. Men are tested in their depths by their attitude not toward superiors and inferiors but toward equals. Strong men are tested by other strong men. Obviously in many ways Peter was no match for Paul. He was battling against a man of very superior mental gifts, one who had the best formal education of that day. Yet Peter had the advantage of his daily companionship with Christ, having been present at all the major events of his Saviour's life. (R. Stamm) The controversy was for the maintenance of pure doctrine, and the truth of the gospel, and in this dispute Paul did not care for the offence of any. (M. Luther)

These extremists were Christians, of course, but as former Pharisees (in all likelihood) they were very traditional in their faith. They still followed the rituals of Moses, especially circumcision. The first thing they noticed was how lax Peter was when it came to the old traditions. He was behaving practically like a pagan! There he was, sitting down to have table fellowship with unwashed, uncircumcised heathens. He might as well have gone whole hog and hosted a pig roast for the singles fellowship! (P. Ryken) The "truth of the gospel" is not the true gospel, but the truth which it contains or embodies – evidently the great doctrine of justification by faith, implying the non-obligation of the ceremonial law on Gentile converts, and the cessation of that exclusiveness which the chosen people had so long cherished. (J. Eadie) Paul is left alone as the champion of the truth. He has far more cause to fear Peter than Peter has to fear his misguided subordinates, but he does not flinch. He exposes Peter's inconsistent conduct. Paul's logic is unanswerable. (A. Knoch)

The apostle was more concerned on behalf of the truth which he was contending for than on behalf of their sincerity or consistency. The "truth of the gospel" is the truth which the gospel embodies, with especial reference to the doctrine of justification by faith. Peter and Barnabas were acting in a manner which both was inconsistent with their holding of that truth, and contravened its

advancement in the world ... Put into words, their conduct said this: “If you will Judaize, I will hold fellowship with you; if you will not, you are not qualified for full fraternal recognition from me.” The withholding of Christian fraternization, short of formal Church excommunication, is a powerful engine of Christian influence. But its use, when not clearly justified, is not only a cruelty to our brethren, but an outrage upon what Paul here calls the truth of the gospel. (E. Huxtable) One is a bit curious to know what those who consider Peter the first pope will do with this open rebuke by Paul, who was in no sense afraid of Peter or of all the rest. (A. Robertson)

Gal. 2:14 But (adversative) when (temporal, 1st class condition, “and they were not”) I saw (ὁράω, AAI1S, Constative) that (conj.) they were not (neg. adv.) always walking correctly (ὀρθοποδέω, PAI3P, Gnostic; making progress, following correct protocol) with reference to the truth (Acc. Gen. Ref.) of the gospel (Adv. Gen. Ref.; doctrines of grace), I asked (λέγω, AAI1S, Constative) Cephas (Dat. Disadv.; Peter) in front of everyone (Prep. Gen.): If (interrogative) you (Subj. Nom.), being (ὑπάρχω, PAPtc.NMS, Descriptive, Attributive) a Jew (Pred. Nom.), are making it a practice to live (ζάω, PAI2S, Iterative) like a non-Jew (Adv. Manner; like the rest of the world, as Gentiles) and (adversative) not (neg. adv.) according to Jewish customs (Adv. Manner), why (interrogative) are you compelling (ἀναγκάζω, PAI2S, Iterative; forcing) the Gentiles (Acc. Disadv.) to live according to Jewish customs (Ἰουδαίζω, PAInf., Iterative, Purpose)?

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:14** ἀλλ’ ὅτε εἶδον ὅτι οὐκ ὀρθοποδοῦσιν πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, εἶπον τῷ Κηφᾷ ἔμπροσθεν πάντων· εἰ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων ἐθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆς, πῶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαῖζειν;

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:14** sed cum vidissem quod non recte ambulant ad veritatem evangelii dixi Cephae coram omnibus si tu cum Iudaeus sis gentiliter et non iudaice vivis quomodo gentes cogis iudaizare

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:15** **We who are Jews by nature [Paul, Peter & Barnabas], and not sinners of Gentile origin,**

^{KW} **Gal. 2:15** As for us, we are Jews by nature, and not sinners of Gentile origin;

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:15** We *who* are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul, Peter and Barnabas were Jews by birth, and therefore would not be classified as Gentile sinners. Paul concedes this point at the outset. They were brought up trying to be justified by the law, but they learned the hard way that it was an impossible goal to perform. To a great extent, they were still trying to live in the kingdom of heaven, while Paul was trying to get them to live in the kingdom of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Gentile believers were not under the law, but were saved by grace, sanctified by grace, and kept by grace. (M. DeHaan) Paul has already made it painfully clear that he sees no distinction between the Judaizer and Peter. But now he makes no distinction because to him there is no distinction. Jewish believers had all alike believed in Christ with a view to being saved. (R. Cole) Because of justification, you have been brought into the kingdom of Heaven and that is righteousness and you stand in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. This I have by faith – believe to righteousness. But He wants to bring you into the kingdom of God. This I have by pursuit – having a heart for the Lord. Coming into the kingdom of God is coming through the resurrection life of Jesus Christ into the kingdom power of God ... The wilderness is the kingdom of Heaven, while Canaan is the kingdom of God. The kingdom of Heaven is like Jesus on the earth; the kingdom of God is like Christ in the heavens. The kingdom of Heaven was inaugurated at the rending of the veil of the temple; the kingdom of God was inaugurated at Pentecost. (K. Lamb)

Gal. 2:15 We (Subj. Nom.) who are (ellipsis) Jews (Pred. Nom.) by nature (Dat. Origin; Paul, Peter & Barnabas), and (explanatory) not (Neg. Adv.) sinners (Pred. Nom.) of Gentile origin (Gen. Origin),

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:15** ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἐθνῶν ἁμαρτωλοί·

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:15** nos natura Iudaei et non ex gentibus peccatores

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:16** And knowing that a man is never justified out from the source of works through the law, but by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, even we [Paul, Peter & Barnabas] placed our trust on Christ Jesus, in order that we might be justified out from the source of the faithfulness of Christ and not by works through the law, because by works through the law no flesh [human being] shall be justified.

^{KW} **Gal. 2:16** And knowing that a man is not justified by law works but only through faith in Christ Jesus, we also placed our trust in Christ Jesus, in order that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by law works, because by law works there shall be no flesh justified.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:16** Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul, Peter and Barnabas were Jews, and because of their lifelong pursuit of Jewish laws, customs and traditions they knew for a fact (Intensive Perfect tense) that a man is never justified (Gnomic Present tense) out from the source of works (preposition: ek) of the law. No human being, including the most faithful and obedient of legalistic Jews, ever kept the law to perfection.

Therefore, no man was ever justified out from the source of works through the law. Paul often contrasts grace and faith with works and law. They are mutually exclusive concepts. Salvation is by grace through faith, not by works through the law. But in this verse, Paul is contrasting works through the law with the faithfulness of Christ Jesus. No man has ever kept the law, but Jesus Christ, the God-Man, was faithful to keep it for us. Our own efforts did not measure up, but His faithfulness did. So Paul, Peter and Barnabas decided to toss their efforts (works) to keep the law aside and instead trust in the faithfulness of Christ (Ingressive Aorist tense) to keep the law and pay the ultimate penalty for them. If justification was possible out from the source of human works through the law, what was the point in believing in Christ in the first place? What would they need Him for?

The only way any man is ever justified is out from the source of (preposition: ek) the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. When Paul, Peter and Barnabas discovered this truth, they immediately abandoned their self-effort and rested in Christ's efforts. What was the result? They were justified out from the source of the faithfulness of Christ and not out from the source of works through the law. And because justification came to Jews without the law, it makes absolutely no sense to add the law to Gentiles – because they don't need it either! Paul is also logically explaining how useless it is to try to live by works through the law. The law never justified anyone, nor will it ever sanctify anyone. It does not have the authority or power to justify (Gnomic Future tense) anyone, ever. Those who think they need to keep the law in addition to the faithfulness of Christ are wasting their time and effort. It was finished on the cross; we do not add anything from ourselves to complete a finished work. In essence, believers of Arminian persuasion replace the words "It is finished" with the words "It is unfinished." They are not content to allow God to exert His free will in accomplishing redemption. They insist on adding their free will to the "unfinished" work on the cross to make it a "finished" work.

My translation of this verse may seem to belabor "source" and "faithfulness." I have a small bone to pick with the traditional translation of this verse by many Reformers. While it is quoted as one of the key verses to support the doctrine of "justification by faith," a more accurate statement of the doctrine in this verse is "justification by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ." If there is an element of "justification by OUR faith" in this verse, it would be the phrase "we placed our trust on Jesus Christ." The "we" in the context refers to Paul, Peter and Barnabas, but it could be extended to all believers. The doctrine of "justification by faith" is true, but it should not eclipse the doctrine of "justification by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ." Our one-time exercise in faith (Ingressive Aorist tense) is the instrument for justification, but the origin, source and cause of our "faith" and our "justification" is ultimately Jesus Christ. In other words, Jesus Christ got there first. A soul that is out of union with Christ is faithless; Jesus Christ must provide our faith ("it is a gift of God") in order for us to believe. A lifeless person cannot exercise faith and be justified until the Spirit of Christ gets there first." Since the "faithfulness of Jesus Christ" is so different from our "faith in Jesus Christ," I have supplied more relevant opinions than usual below.

I'm also adding a diagram in the Greek to show that in spite of many English translations, the

Τουδαῖοι

ἡμεῖς | (ἐσμεν) |

καί

φύσει

ἁμαρτωλοί

[δὲ]

οὐκ

ἐξ

ἐθνῶν

ἡμεῖς

ἐπιστεύσαμεν

καί

εἰς | Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν

ἄνθρωπος

δικαιοῦται

εἰδότες

ὅτι

ἐάν μή

ἐξ

ἔργων

οὐ

νόμου

(X)

δικαιωθῶμεν

(X)

(X)

ὅτι

σὰρξ

δικαιωθήσεται

πᾶσα

οὐ

ἐξ

ἔργων

νόμου

καί

ἐξ

ἔργων

οὐκ

νόμου

ἐκ

πίστεως

διὰ

πίστεως

Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

Now look at the other contrasts in this verse. There are four “ek” prepositions which are best translated as “out from” when used with either the Genitive of Origin or Ablative of Source. If these prepositions were “en” (in) or “eis” (on) we could definitively say Paul is talking about our faith “in” or “on” Jesus Christ. The case might even change to the Dative or Locative to make things clean in that respect. And as a matter of fact, in another part of this verse, there is the preposition “eis” which means our believing “on Christ.” This part of the verse is translated “even we placed our trust or believed on Christ Jesus.” This is the how the traditional “justification by faith” can be seen. But the other contrasting phrases in this verse refer to the “faithfulness of Jesus Christ” rather than our faith in Christ. It is a form of the reductionist error

to take phrases with different wording and prepositions and make them say the same thing. How can I explain this important concept for my English readers?

Justification is either:

- (a) Out from the source of works through (our keeping) the law
- (b) Out from the source of the faithfulness of Christ

The answer is (b), because as Paul declares, “no human being shall be justified out from the source of works through (keeping) the law.” Our efforts are eliminated. This is the primary contrast in this verse. One is based on our performance, the other on Christ’s performance. So far, the contrast has absolutely nothing to do with the traditional doctrine of “justification by faith” as espoused by Martin Luther and others. But sandwiched in the middle of this verse is Paul’s statement of “believing on Christ Jesus.” Because Paul knows that justification is “out from the source of the faithfulness of Christ” (divine initiative) and not “out from the source of works through the law” (human initiative), he can parlay his understanding of the faithfulness of Christ and then believe on Him. The faithfulness of Christ provides the springboard for our faith in Him.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is important to observe the care which Paul takes to underscore the fact that we are not saved by our faith but by Christ’s faithfulness. It is well known to Greek scholars that the word “pistis” has a dual meaning: faith or faithfulness. The point is an important one. If we are saved by our faith it is obvious that we might lose that faith and with it our salvation. But Scripture does not say we are saved by our faith even though we constantly presume this to be so. The Word of God is remarkably explicit on the matter, though the fact has tended to be blurred by most of our translations. (A. Cushman) In accordance with the Greek feeling for language, “pistis” can denote not only the confidence one has but also the confidence one enjoys, i.e., trustworthiness ... Concretely “pistis” means the guarantee which creates the possibility of trust, that which may be relied on, or the assurance of reliability ... This leads on the one side to the sense of certainty, trustworthiness, on the other to that of “means of proof” ... In particular “pistis” denotes the reliability of persons, faithfulness. (Bultmann, TDNT, Vol. VI) Paul usually denotes the object in which one places one’s faith with “en,” especially when the verb “pisteuo” is used. (D. Moo)

It seems almost impossible to trace the subtle process which has led to the change of prepositions here ... Faith is strictly speaking only the means, not the source of justification. The one preposition (dia) excludes this latter notion, while the other (ek) might imply it. (J. Lightfoot) In the Harvard Theological Review for 1967, George Howard brings forward further evidence of scholars favouring a “pistis” which is in some sense Jesus’ own “pistis” rather than the believer’s faith in Him. Apparently Gerhard Kittel in 1906 argued that, since Paul certainly uses the subjective genitive in Romans 3:3 in reference “to the faith of God,” and again in 4:16 in reference to “the faith of Abraham,” he is confusing his readers unless he intends the same grammatical construction in 3:22 and 26 to refer to “the faith of Christ.” What is the force of the

genitive after “pistis” and is it objective (faith in Christ) or subjective (Christ’s exercise of faith)? What is the meaning of the word “pistis” and is it here the noun corresponding to the active and transitive force of the verb (pisteuo) “I believe” or “I trust?” Or does it mean, as more usual in Greek, “that which can be trusted,” “reliability,” “faithfulness,” perhaps even “a pledge” or “an assurance.” The predominant use of “pistis” in ordinary Greek was not to indicate what we indicate by the word “faith” or “trust” directed to someone, but rather what we indicate by the word “reliability” or “fidelity,” or, in a more concrete way, “an assurance or pledge.” (D. Robinson)

The translation “through faith in Christ” here and elsewhere in Paul has been disputed from time to time, and in recent times there has been a flurry of publications arguing against it. In particular it has been pointed out that every other Pauline use of “pistis” with the genitive is certainly to be understood as a subjective genitive; note, for example, “the faithfulness of God” (Rom. 3:5) and “the faith of Abraham” (Rom. 4:12). Now it is certainly possible, in principle, that Paul could have used the expression “pistis Iesou Christou” in reference to Jesus’s own faith/faithfulness; it is also true that Jesus’s obedience plays a central part in Paul’s theology. (M. Silva, though he disagrees with R.B. Hays) An alternative interpretation has been gaining favor. In this view, Paul asserts not that God’s righteousness is attained “through faith IN Jesus Christ,” but “through the faithfulness OF Jesus Christ,” or “through the faithfulness shown by Jesus Christ.” Advocates of this interpretation argue that it is the more likely linguistically and that it makes better sense in the context. The subjective rendering of the genitive when it follows “pistis” is, it is argued, typical in Greek, and makes it a priori likely that Jesus Christ is also a subjective genitive ... Only context can determine the force of the genitive. (D. Moo)

And, if we have thought it necessary to seek justification by the faith of Christ, why then should we hamper ourselves with the law? What did we believe in Christ for? Was it not that we might be justified by the faith of Christ? And, if so, is it not folly to go back to the law, and to expect to be justified either by the merit of moral works or the influence of any ceremonial sacrifices or purifications? And if it would be wrong in us who are Jews by nature to return to the law, and expect justification by it, would it not be much more so to require this of the Gentiles, who were never subject to it? (M. Henry) In order to win the debate with the rival evangelists Paul must rely on that which such a reading has him denying – the sovereign steadfastness of God. Paul’s ability to persuade his hearers rests on proving that his gospel and not that of his rival evangelists demonstrates the sovereign steadfastness of God. The inclusion of uncircumcised gentiles into the people of God is right because it is the fulfillment of the promise of the God who can be trusted and Who is in charge. (B. Fisk) “Pistis” should be understood in several instances in the NT (Rom. 3:22, 1:17, 3:26, Gal. 2:16, 3:22, Eph. 3:12, Phil. 3:9, Col. 2:12) as referring, not to our faith, but to the faithfulness of God and of Christ. (G. Herbert) There need be no question but the faithfulness of Christ is eminently relevant to the subject of justification. (J. Murray)

The two prepositions (ek and dia), used in this passage are designed to mark, respectively, source or cause and instrument. Strictly speaking, Scripture never says that faith justifies, but that we are justified by faith. Faith is not the ground of our justification. Yet it is said, “Abraham

believed God, and it was counted to him for (eis) righteousness.” This does not mean that faith is the graciously admitted ground of justification. For we are never said to be justified on account of faith (dia pistin), but through (dia) faith or of (ek) faith. This view of the relation of faith to justification is not consistent with those passages which affirm that the ground of our justification is not anything in us or done by us; for faith is a work done by us, quite as much as prayer or repentance. It is not consistent with those passages which make Christ’s merits, His blood, His death, His cross, the ground of our acceptance. Faith cannot, therefore, be at once the ground and the instrument of our justification. (T. Croskery) It is to be regretted that most translations work too hard to make the Greek readable and consequently gloss over, if not underestimate, a most profound truth. Paul literally means that God is just in justifying us by the faith of Jesus. That is what lay behind our Lord’s keeping of the Law. A perfect faith produced a perfect obedience. What is put to our credit, then, is the very righteousness of Jesus Christ ... It is ultimately Christ’s faith that saves and such faith is not only to be seen in the vicarious life He lived on earth but also in the quality of His own faith in His very prayer for us at God’s right hand. (R. Kendall)

Biblical justification is perfect and a finished work of God. “It is God that justifieth.” Justification is God’s work alone to show His righteousness and the fact that He alone saves ... The Gospel is not a process. They type of witnessing that states, “If you will do this and that or take these steps, then God will save you,” is a false gospel, a return to the lie of Satan which implies that God can be manipulated. The Gospel does not do this. It declares historical facts ... Biblically, receiving the Gospel has two main points. First, all men are commanded to believe on the Lord Jesus. Second, while the faith to believe is a free gift of God, yet without God’s grace, no person can believe. The Lord put the command to believe in a nutshell when He said, “If you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins.” Every person is commanded to believe, but without God’s grace, a person cannot believe. This must be clearly evident in witnessing to unbelievers ... The Apostles proclaimed the Lord’s commandment to believe. There are no invitation systems in Scripture. Such a method, flagrantly setting aside the sovereignty of God, presupposes that man has within himself the power to accept or reject salvation as he so wishes ... Two extremely great offenses to God and His Gospel are 1) the attempt to negate His power by so-called free decisions of the unsaved, and 2) the unbiblical idea that justification, which is an act of God, is located in the believer’s heart rather than in Christ alone and in the heavenlies. When full credit is given to God and His grace, when His Word, which is powerful, is used, HE saves the sinner; and the one through whom the Word has been given is humbled by a demonstration of the might and mercy of Holy God. (R. Bennett)

A story about Jesus Christ is presupposed by Paul’s argument in Galatians, and his theological reflection attempts to articulate the meaning of that story. It is not simply a matter of the subjective versus objective genitive, but has more to do with the narrative substructure of Galatians and Paul’s epistles ... In Gal. 2:16 the verb “justify” points not merely to a forensic declaration of acquittal from guilt but also to God’s ultimate action of powerfully setting right all that has gone wrong. Does God make things right through the works of the law? No! Does He make things right through our personal faith in Christ? Yes! Does He make things right through

Christ's faithful death in our behalf? Yes! (R. Hays) Faith is the means of justification, not the grounds of it. We are not justified on account of faith, but through faith. Faith is not, taken as itself, a virtue serving just as works of Law were supposed to serve. The one ground of forgiveness and renewal is the grace of God in Christ. (W. Adeney) Even if you understand this as Christ's faithful death in our behalf, our faith in Christ still stands at the center of the chiasm in the main clause of 2:16: "so we also have believed in Christ Jesus." To interpret this genitive as Christ's faithful death in our behalf allows the atonement for sin, God's apocalyptic invasion and rescue, to be that which is contrasted to the observance of the law as the means through which God is making things right. (J. Martyn)

I want to make clear that I am suggesting no more than that there is a good case for considering [these all] to refer to the "pistis" of Christ, and for considering that this "pistis" of Christ is His firmness, exhibited in His self-giving and His passion ... We are justified, in my opinion, in giving first option to the view that the genitive after "pistis" is not objective, on the ground of general Greek usage. No case of "pistis" with an objective genitive is cited in the 9th edition of Liddell and Scott. No case is cited in Mouton and Milligan's Vocabulary. There is no case of such a usage in the Septuagint. Where "pistis" is clearly an active relation to an object (i.e. = "faith" or "belief"), this is expressed with "eis" or "en." "Pisteuo" in its transitive form is never used with an objective genitive, but always with the prepositions "eis," "en" or "peri," or with "tini," or occasionally with the accusative object. Howard claims that "pistis" followed by a genitive of a person or of a personal pronoun occurs 24 times not counting the places where "pistis Christou" and its equivalents appear, and that in all 24 cases the phrase refers to the faith OF the person, never faith IN the person. It is not man's faith but Christ's faithfulness. (D. Robinson) The subjective genitive is fundamentally right. It is all about Christ's faith, that is, Christ's faithful death in our behalf where He died faithfully for human beings while looking faithfully to God. (J. Martyn)

The very faith through which he accepted God's grace in Christ was the work of God's grace within him. To keep this clear it is better to say that men are saved by God's grace through faith in Christ than to say that they are saved by faith. (R. Stamm) The relation indicated by "ek" in the former clause is indicated in this clause by "dia" – the reference being to source or cause in the former, in the present to means or instrument. It is the apostle's manner to exhibit relations in various connected phases by a change of prepositions. The "dia" is changed again into "ek" in the next clause, showing that they indicate the same relation with a slight difference of view – "pistis" being taken as cause or instrument in connection with – that is, originating or bringing about, the same result. (J. Eadie) I add this note because the change in prepositions is ignored by most commentators. There is only one "dia" which would be translated "by" while there are four cases of "ek" which should be translated as "out from." Most commentators translate them all as "by," which is a poor effort in my opinion. In addition, the genitives could be translated as either subjective or objective. There are scholars on both sides of the question at hand. In my opinion, it should be translated as the subjective genitive, the faith or faithfulness of Christ. (LWB) Paul never grounds the "electing purpose of God" in man's faith. The predestination and call of God precede justification and have no ground in any human act, not even faith. (J. Piper)

Faith is both the means and source of justification. The latter should not be more startling than the former unless we still have a synergistic conception of faith. The Scriptures attribute everything to faith because they know only a faith that is filled with Christ, only a faith that is wrought by Christ. (R. Lenski) The preposition “ek” may be supposed to mean “does not derive righteousness from works of the Law;” does not get to be justly regarded as holy, pure from guilt approvable, in consequence of any things done in obedience to God’s positive Law ... We have in Philippians 3:9, “That which is (ek nomou) of the Law (derived from the Law), but that which is (dia pisteus) through faith of Christ.” Faith is strictly speaking, only the means, not the source of justification. The one preposition (dia) excludes this latter notion, while the other (ek) might imply it. (E. Huxtable) The Savior appears in this passage under three names – Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus, and Christ; as if the apostle meant to emphasize at one time the loving humanity, at another the official work, at another simply the Saviour in whom Jew and Gentile alike have their meeting-place. The “faith of Christ” includes a reference alike to His person and His work. (T. Croskery) What is important to Paul here is not his faith in Christ, but Christ’s faithfulness in giving up His life on the cross. Thus the life he now lives is Christ’s life because Christ lives in him. (R. Hays)

Whatsoever is not grace, is the law, whether it be judicial, ceremonial, or the ten commandments. (M. Luther) It is not even our faith that saves, but the faith of Jesus Christ – not the faith in Jesus Christ as some translators would like it to be and interpret it accordingly (and again in Galatians 3:22). So much importance has been attached to the exercise of faith as the basis of salvation that this has become our contribution, as though a dead man could exercise faith in his own resurrection sufficient to guarantee it. Man is not saved by his own faith any more than he is saved by his own decision not to resist the Holy Spirit. Because the moment we allow such a thing, we give credit to those who have this ability in distinction to those who do not. And the fortunate ones achieve salvation simply because they are in some way different in themselves. They would have every right to boast in heaven. But boasting is excluded. We are saved by grace through faith – and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God. We do not even contribute our own saving faith. And so boasting is excluded indeed. (A. Cushman) Though traditionally translated “faith in Jesus Christ,” an increasing number of NT scholars are arguing that this phrase is a subjective genitive meaning “Christ’s faith” or “Christ’s faithfulness.” The faith or faithfulness of Christ is not a denial of faith in Christ as a Pauline concept, but implies that the object of faith is a worthy object, for He Himself is faithful. Though Paul elsewhere teaches justification by faith, this presupposes that the object of our faith is reliable and worthy of such faith. (R. Hays)

It is never suggested that Christ is interposed as an intermediate authority between God and man which may be set in motion by human acts. The basic assumption is always that God takes the initiative through His action in Christ and thus makes all human achievement superfluous and excludes any intermediate authority. (TDNT: Vol. II, Oepke) At this point Paul has to use I rather than We because he sees more plainly and acts more consistently than Peter. He thus draws the conclusion in an I sentence. Nevertheless, this is not because we have here his own

private concern or personal way. It is rather that he takes seriously the situation of salvation history which must be expressed in his life, and has taken a way which Peter and the rest must also tread. (TDNT, Vol. II, Stauffer) Since the time of J. Haussleiter (1891), the question has been put whether the genitive with “pistis” is a subjective genitive. H.W. Schmidt (1962) considers this possibility with Haussleiter. Since Paul speaks of faith in the way he speaks of God’s righteousness or of Christ, and finds the whole of being a Christian in it, it is probable that faith in Jesus has its basis in the faith of Jesus, just as Paul can speak of the obedience of Jesus in Phil. 2:8 and Rom. 5:19. (TDNT, Vol. IX, Grundmann) The whole context portrays Christ as the active agent and Paul as the instrument through which and/or for whom Christ’s activity comes to expression. Indeed, this unrelenting emphasis on the priority of Christ’s (or God’s) willing and doing over any human will or action is the theological keynote of the whole letter. (R. Hays)

Biblical faith is not concerned with recommending techniques, whether mystical or ethical, whereby salvation may be ordained for that is the burden of all false religion. Rather the Bible proclaims the fact that God has in concrete historical fact saved all His people from destruction. The gospel “by which you are saved” (1 Cor. 15:1-4) is the finished and complete work of the Lord Jesus Christ ... In the Bible justification is God’s gift to the believer, which is imputed on Christ’s finished work on the cross. Quite simply, justification is God’s righteous judgment of the believer, declaring him both guiltless in regard to sin, and righteous in regard to his moral standing in Christ before the Holy God. This judgment by God is legally possible because of the substitutionary death and resurrection of Christ Jesus in the place of the believer. What is declared is not human works righteousness of any kind, but rather it is God’s righteousness in the Lord Jesus Christ that is revealed ... Justification is found in and of Christ. It is the demonstration of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, even unto death. Such perfect rectitude is of God, and from God, “even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ.” There are several passages in which faithfulness of the Lord is mentioned. In each case, the name of Jesus Christ is in the genitive case indicating that faithfulness is a character quality which He possesses. Galatians 2:16 is an example of this usage. Knowing that the law must be fulfilled for God to declare a person righteous, the faithfulness of Christ must be also understood as applying specifically to this context. Because imputed righteousness is so unfamiliar to many Evangelicals, there are grievous errors in translation in most modern texts, and like two drunks, the wrong gospel and wrong translations hold each other up. (R. Bennett)

Philo uses “pistis” in two different senses in the same sentence: it refers first to Abraham’s faith/trust towards God and then, immediately thereafter, to God’s faithfulness in keeping His promise to Abraham. This example nicely illustrates the multivalence of “pistis” and the need to interpret it contextually. If Philo can pivot about in this way in a single sentence, we should hardly be surprised that Paul can similarly speak in the same breath both of our faith in God and of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ ... The argument of my book is that the conventional judgments of lexicographers and commentators since the Reformation have been mistaken, precisely because they have focused narrowly on the apparent semantic equivalence established in Gal. 2:16 and failed to see the larger context provided by Paul’s narrative Christology ... The whole point of the sentence is to juxtapose futile human activity to gracious divine initiative ...

There is a sense in which all of Galatians 3 and 4 can be read as Paul's 'exegesis' of the concise authoritative formulations of 2:16. If it is true that phrases such as "ek pisteus Christou" are "formulaic summaries," then we must seek to unfold their meaning by seeing how Paul uses them in his exposition. Otherwise, we run the risk of merely reading our preconceptions into them. (R. Hays)

Gal. 2:16 speaks clearly and unambiguously of faith IN Christ (eis Christon Jesoun episteusamen), of an act of believing/trusting directed toward Christ as "object." Paul does in fact speak of Jesus Christ as the object of faith. The question is whether this observation determines the meaning of Paul's expression "pistis Jesou Christou" so that it must be read as equivalent to "pistis eis Jesoun Christon." Is there any significance to the fact that Paul uses a different grammatical construction here? Is it possible that some distinction is intended? Is it possible that in Paul's thought the faith OF Jesus Christ may play some role as well as our faith IN Christ Jesus. (R. Hays) The whole verse may be taken as relating Paul's believing to Christ's firm adherence to the will of God in the work of atonement and redemption: "a man is not justified by performing the law, but only by means of the faithfulness of Christ. So even we Jews believed on Jesus Christ so that we might be justified in Christ, i.e., as a result of His faithfulness to God's will, and now as a result of our lawkeeping. (D. Robinson)

The view that the different grammatical construction must signal some distinction in meaning between "pisteuein eis Christon" and "pistis Jesou Christou" is championed by G. Howard, "On the Faith of Christ," and supported now also by S.K. Williams. (R. Hays) The preposition "ek" cannot bear the meaning that RSV forces upon it. The sentence, when so translated, is redundant. Paul could have omitted either "ek pisteus Jesou Christou" or "tois pisteuosin" without changing the meaning. It is necessary to ask whether the genitive construction "pistis Jesou Christou" can in fact legitimately be translated as "faith IN Jesus Christ." Faith IN Jesus Christ is not the most natural translation. (R. Hays) Another way of understanding this verse is "we placed our trust in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified on the basis of Christ's faithfulness." (D. Robinson)

Hebert and Torrance appealed to the fact that the word "pistis" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "amonah." For them, the question was, as Hebert posed it, "whether the word 'faith' as Paul uses it, carried a Hebrew rather than a Greek meaning," the meaning, that is, of "faithfulness" as opposed to "believing." This understanding of "pistis" was important because both men wanted to interpret "pistis Christou" to mean "the faithfulness of God manifested in Christ's human faithfulness," an interpretation which is possible only if "pistis" does not primarily mean "believing." Neither one of these scholars wanted to deny the reality or importance of human faith in Christ. The place of "faith in Christ" in Torrance's understanding is spelled out in his conclusions: "In most of these passages the "pistis Jesou Christou" does not refer only either to the faithfulness of Christ or to the answering faithfulness of man, but is essentially a polarized expression denoting the faithfulness of Christ as its main ingredient but also involving or at least suggesting the answering faithfulness of man, and so his belief in Christ, but even within itself the faithfulness of Christ involves both the faithfulness of God and

the faithfulness of the man Jesus ... Jesus Christ is not only the incarnation of the divine “pistis,” but He is the embodiment and actualization of man’s “pistis” in covenant with God. (R. Hays)

Gal 2:16 And (continuative) knowing (οἶδα, Perf.APTc.NMP, Intensive, Circumstantial) that (conj.) a man (Subj. Nom.) is never (neg. adv.) justified (δικαιόω, PPI3S, Gnomic) out from the source of works (Gen. Origin, Abl. Source) through the law (Adv. Gen. Ref.), but (conj./neg. particle) by the faithfulness (Abl. Means) of Jesus Christ (Subj. Gen.), even (ascensive) we (Subj. Nom.; Paul, Peter & Barnabas) placed our trust (πιστεύω, AAI1P, Ingressive; came to believe) on Christ Jesus (Acc. Dir. Obj.), in order that (result) we might be justified (δικαιόω, APSubj.1P, Ingressive, Potential or Result) out from the source of the faithfulness (Gen. Origin, Abl. Source) of Christ (Subj. Gen.) and (contrast) not (neg. adv.) out from the source of works (Gen. Origin, Abl. Source) through the law (Adv. Gen. Ref.), because (explanatory) out from the source of works (Gen. Origin, Abl. Source) through the law (Adv. Gen. Ref.) no (neg. adv.) flesh (Subj. Nom.; human being) shall be justified (δικαιόω, FPI3S, Gnomic & Predictive).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:16** εἰδότες [δὲ] ὅτι οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεῦσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:16** scientes autem quod non iustificatur homo ex operibus legis nisi per fidem Iesu Christi et nos in Christo Iesu credidimus ut iustificemur ex fide Christi et non ex operibus legis propter quod ex operibus legis non iustificabitur omnis caro

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:17** But if while we are seeking to be justified by Christ, we ourselves [as Jews] also were judged to be sinners [just like Gentiles], is Christ therefore an official minister of sin? May it not be true!

^{KW} **Gal. 2:17** But if, as is the case, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we [Jews] ourselves also were found to be sinners, is Christ therefore a promoter of sin? Away with the thought;

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:17** But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks a rhetorical question that compares the situation of Jews to Gentiles. If during the process (Temporal Participle) of seeking to be justified by Christ (Ingressive Aorist tense), Jews are declared to be sinners (Culminative Aorist tense) just like Gentiles, does that mean Christ is a promoter of sin? The law promotes sin; the law does not take sin away. The law destroys the spiritual life of a Christian; the law does not help a believer grow in grace. Did Christ fulfill the

law for us, or did He reinstitute the law as part of the justification process? He did not add the law to any phase of salvation – not positional, not experiential, and not eternal. But by eliminating the law from the picture, He did not suddenly decide that sin was acceptable. Sin is still sin; transgression is still transgression. Jews and Gentiles alike are all sinners. Jews and Gentiles alike are justified by the faithfulness of Christ Jesus, not out from works through the law. Jesus Christ did not give the law to Church Age believers in order that they might combat sin with it. The filling of the Spirit does that in this new dispensation. The law has been replaced by the indwelling ministry of the Spirit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Will it not follow that He is a minister of sin if He engages us to receive a doctrine that gives liberty to sin, or by which we are so far from being justified that we remain impure sinners, and unfit to be conversed with?" This, he intimates, would be the consequence, but he rejects it with abhorrence: "*God forbid*," says he, "that we should entertain such a thought of Christ, or of His doctrine, that thereby he should direct us into a way of justification that is defective and ineffectual, and leave those who embrace it still unjustified, or that would give the least encouragement to sin and sinners." This would be very dishonourable to Christ, and it would be very injurious to them also. (M. Henry) You can get along with the Judaizers if you preach the cross plus law. They didn't like the Gentiles anyway, so they attempted to put their legalistic corruption on new believers. (K. Lamb)

The Judaizers were thoroughly alarmed by Paul's teaching that all is of grace. They feared that people seeking cheap admission to God's kingdom would trifle with righteousness and sin boldly, while deluding themselves that God would accept them by mere profession of faith. It was an objection that Paul had to meet time and time again ... The opponents of Paul accused him and his doctrine of promoting loose morality; they maintained that he made faith and forgiveness so simple that men sin again and again, turning each time to Christ for the forgiveness which is always available. Such a setup would make Christ a minister of sin if it were the whole truth. But forgiveness is not that simple, and faith is not that superficial. (R. Stamm) Demands that are placed on the believer don't give them liberty. (K. Lamb)

The right use and end of the law is to accuse and condemn as guilty such as live in security, that they may see themselves to be in danger of sin, wrath, and death, and be brought to trembling and desperation ... We are condemned and killed by the law, but by Christ we are justified and restored to life. (M. Luther) The Jew who calls the Gentile a sinner, and then seeks to be justified by faith in Christ, is forced to admit that he is a sinner also, and that Christ is a promoter of sin – because He causes the Jews to abandon the law as a means of justification, whereas violation of that very law is a sin in itself. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The Christian revolts from so shocking a conclusion. The whole sin lies, not with Christ, but with him who necessitates such a blasphemous inference. (R. Jamieson) You can perform many wonderful works and deeds, and think yourself to be maturing spiritually, but still remain a babe. A legalizer still walks by sight and looks to people to see their deeds and actions. (K. Lamb)

Paul's entire discussion makes much better sense if he is interpreted as presupposing that Jesus Christ, like Abraham, is justified "ek pisteus" and that we, as a consequence, are justified IN Him as a result of His faith(fulness). The justification of man cannot take place upon the ground of an immediate relationship between the believer and God ... The means of justification is Jesus Christ Himself in HIS relationship to God and to man. He alone brings us into the right with God ... by His faithfulness He is the true representative of men ... When Paul elaborates on justification, the faith of Christ is the means and the faith of men in Christ is the purpose and response. (M. Barth) Christians are justified precisely because they participate in the crucified and justified Messiah, whose destiny embodies theirs. Here in this verse justification and participation in Christ are merged ... They do not belong to divergent theological spheres; for Paul, they belong together because he understands salvation to mean our participation in Christ's justification. (R. Hays)

The tragic flaw of the Galatians was legalistic reversionism. They were trying to vindicate themselves by following the works of the Mosaic Law rather than by the grace system outlined by Paul. Although they had been saved by grace, they were now utterly confused about salvation, spirituality, and how to live the Christian life. They were now adding the works of the Law to the nonmeritorious gift of salvation and equating the Law with the spiritual life of the Church Age. The Judaizers had slipped into town behind Paul and sold the Galatian believers a fraudulent bill of goods ... Ultimately all reversionism is rejection of grace. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) We (Jews) look down upon the Gentiles as sinners, and yet, in order to be justified, we must put ourselves on a level with them. What irony! (J. Eadie) Fruit comes naturally from a man's character. Works are what believers do; motive is the question. (K. Lamb)

Gal. 2:17 But (adversative) if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and we are") while we are seeking (ζητέω, PAPtc.NMP, Pictorial, Temporal; deliberating, considering) to be justified (δικαιόω, APInf., Ingressive, Result) by Christ (Instr. Means), we ourselves (Subj. Nom.; as Jews) also (adjunctive) were judged to be (εὐρίσκω, APIIP, Culminative; found, proved to be) sinners (Pred. Nom.; just like Gentiles), is Christ (Subj. Nom.) therefore (interrogative) an official minister (Pred. Nom.; servant, author) of sin (Obj. Gen.)? May it not (neg. particle) be true (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Dramatic, Prohibition; Hell no; Don't even think that; certainly not; perish the thought)!

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:17** εἰ δὲ ζητοῦντες δικαιωθῆναι ἐν Χριστῷ εὐρέθημεν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἁμαρτωλοί, ἄρα Χριστὸς ἁμαρτίας διάκονος; μὴ γένοιτο.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:17** quod si quaerentes iustificari in Christo inventi sumus et ipsi peccatores numquid Christus peccati minister est absit

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:18** For if I build up again that [the law and its works] which I have demolished, I make myself a transgressor [taking back the sins that Christ bore on the cross].

^{KW} **Gal. 2:18** For if the things I tear down, these again I build up, I exhibit myself as a transgressor.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:18** For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ fulfilled the law and freed us from its authority and power. Why would any Christian want to bring himself back under its harsh declaration of guilt? That is exactly what some misguided believers have done and are still doing. The law was demolished; it was destroyed (Dramatic Aorist tense). If a believer restores the law to a place of prominence (Iterative Present tense) in the spiritual life (Latin: edifice), either positionally or experientially, he makes himself a transgressor all over again (Dramatic Aorist tense). The believer who tries to add the law to his spiritual life is in theory eliminating the work Christ did on the cross. By placing himself under the law, he is once again condemned for the very sins that Christ took upon Himself. This ignorant believer is tossing aside the good news and replacing it with bad news. Why would anyone want to do that?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If I (or any other), who have taught that the observance of the Mosaic law is not necessary to justification, should now, by word or practice, teach or intimate that it is necessary--*I make myself a transgressor*; I own myself to be still an impure sinner, and to remain under the guilt of sin, notwithstanding my faith in Christ; or I shall be liable to be charged with deceit and prevarication, and acting inconsistently with myself." Thus does the apostle argue for the great doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law from the principles and practice of the Jewish Christians themselves, and from the consequences that would attend their departure from it, whence it appeared that Peter and the other Jews were much in the wrong in refusing to communicate with the Gentile Christians, and endeavouring to bring them under the bondage of the law. (M. Henry) If a Jewish Christian should fall below the moral standard set forth in the Torah, he would be a worse sinner than the Gentiles because the law had taught him to know better. (R. Stamm)

What Paul had torn down was not merely certain statutes of the ceremonial law, but the whole law, both ceremonial and moral, considered as a necessary substructure for faith and a way of salvation by merit. In the eyes of the Judaizers that made him a transgressor, one who "steps across" the bound, a deliberate, highhanded violator of God's will. Paul turned the argument around. His unexpressed premise is that whatever is not of faith is sin. Obedience to the law with the intention of building up merit for salvation is what makes man a transgressor! The Christian freeman who wavers and goes back to slavery to the law is the sinner. (R. Stamm) At first, Peter had destroyed the law by welcoming Gentiles into the church as full-fledged Christians. But then he allowed himself to be pressured into separating himself from them. In effect, Peter was rebuilding with one hand what he had destroyed with the other. First he told the Gentiles that

they were saved by faith, not by works, but then he made the works of the law a test of Christian fellowship. Not only is this what Peter did, but it is also what the Galatians were tempted to do. Some Jews had come to urge them to rebuild the law in place of the gospel. If the Galatians did that, they would become lawbreakers all over again. The law's purpose is to show that we are sinners, so the more of it that gets rebuilt, the more sinful we become! (P. Ryken)

Anyone who, having received justification through faith in Christ, therefore reinstates law in the place of Christ, makes himself a sinner all over again. (J. Stott) To die to the law is to renounce it and to be freed from its dominion, so that we have no confidence in it and it does not hold us captive under the yoke of slavery. (J. Calvin) The law cannot promise life; it can only threaten death. Thus it is through the law that one dies to the law ... Once the law had exacted its death penalty, there was nothing else it could do. A man can be executed only once, and once he had been executed, the law has no further claim on him. Perhaps this is why Paul considered himself dead to the law: because the law had already put him to death. Now as far as the Christian is concerned, the penalty of the law has already been carried out. The law's demand of death was satisfied in the death of Christ. It was the law that put Christ to death on the cross. When Christ died, Paul died too, at least as far as the law was concerned. He died to the law in the death of his Substitute. (P. Ryken) The very moment we impose a legalistic stipulation on the believer, we have built again the same system we had destroyed and so make ourselves transgressors. (K. Lamb)

Gal. 2:18 For (explanatory) if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it's true") I build up (οἰκοδομέω, PAI1S, Iterative; erect, restore) again (adv.) that (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the law and its works) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) I have demolished (καταλύω, AA11S, Dramatic; torn down, destroyed), I make (συνίστημι, PAI1S, Dramatic; show, demonstrate) myself (Acc. Appos.) a transgressor (Pred. Acc.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:18** εἰ γὰρ ἃ κατέλυσα ταῦτα πάλιν οἰκοδομῶ, παραβάτην ἑμαυτὸν συνιστάνω.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:18** si enim quae destruxi haec iterum aedifico praevaricatorem me constituo

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:19** **For I through the law died to the law, in order that I might enter into life with God [experiential sanctification].**

^{KW} **Gal. 2:19** For, as for myself, I through the intermediate agency of the law died to the law, in order that I might live with respect to God.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:19** For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As a Jew, Paul was under the law. The Mosaic law, as well as the customs and traditions of Judaism, was taught to him from birth. But the law was never meant to provide justification or salvation. Its purpose was to convict its listeners of sin. The law introduced him to the Messiah,

Christ Jesus, and convicted him of sin. The law, therefore, killed him and encouraged him to find his Saviour. After believing in Jesus Christ, he died to the law (Culminative Aorist tense) which formerly had a hold on his life. As a Christian, he now walks by grace in the filling of the Holy Spirit. The law could not bring him to Christ, nor could the law provide him with fellowship with God. God does not have a relationship with anyone under the law. If you are living under the law, you are not communing with the Lord. Fellowship with God is predicated on grace, not law, therefore the law has to be done away with in order for you to enter into experiential life with God (Ingressive Aorist tense).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul found that the law, instead of enabling him to keep in right relation with God, suspended a curse over the sinner. Living to law was in reality living to self; living to God meant dying to self and bearing another's burdens. (R. Stamm) In the 7th chapter of Romans, the apostle shows the powerlessness of the law to sanctify as well as to justify. Yet the law is not in itself to blame, for it is "holy, and just, and good;" and it has its own functions – to reveal sin in the conscience, to irritate it into activity, and to show its true nature as being "exceedingly sinful." (J. Eadie) He found that what the law did was to reveal sin, to provoke sin, in a certain sense, to create sin, for where there was no law, sin was not reckoned. He found that it provided no remedy for sin, but rather condemned him hopelessly, for no one can fulfill its requirements. It exercised a double power over him, for it made him a sinner and punished him for being one. (K. Wuest) Paul appeals to his personal experience, his decided break with the law in contrast with Peter's vacillation. (M. Vincent)

Don't miss those three words, THROUGH THE LAW. Yes, Paul is indeed dead to the law, but it was the law itself which executed him and put him to death. The believer is not under the law, but grace. (Rom. 6:14) As God looked down upon Jesus on the cross, He saw the Body of Christ, He saw every member of that Body. He saw Paul, He saw me, He saw you if you are a believer, and He reckoned that what happened to that Body happened to all the members of that Body, for we are members of His Body. (M. DeHaan) It is only when through the law we die to all legal hope, we can live unto God. When legal hope had died within us, Christ has room to live and be the source of our spiritual energy. Legalism must die within us before we get into the large place of new obedience. Among the many purposes of our Lord's death upon the cross was to wean us away from all idea of winning life by law-keeping, that we may gratefully receive it as the gift of free grace. For life by the Law is life for self; whereas when we die to all legal hope, we are delivered from the self-life, and enabled to live the life of consecration to God. (R. Edgar)

The law prophesied that we were going to die. It simply was a vehicle whereby God revealed our sinful condition and let us know what He would do to establish righteousness. When God had finished everything the law called for, it became obsolete ... God built into the law a self-destructive feature, so that when it was finished, or accomplished, it no longer stood over the believer. Righteousness has no foundation or part in the law. The law will not work to make one righteous now any more than it did before the cross. (K. Lamb) While the United States was founded upon these fundamental truths, Mosaic legislation was never given to anyone but the Jews (Ex. 19:3; Lev.

26:46). The Law was never intended for the Gentiles. Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law in every detail, and now that Law is abrogated for the Church. Since Christ is the end of the Law where believers of the Church Age are concerned, the Christian, both Jew and Gentile, is subject to a higher law – the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) In a mysterious way, Jesus has enacted our destiny, and those who are in Christ are shaped by the pattern of His self-giving death. He is the prototype of redeemed humanity. Thus, for Paul, the “faithfulness of Jesus Christ” has an incorporative character. (R. Hays)

The logic of the gospel story requires that the deliverance of “those who believe” depend not upon their knowing or believing but upon the action of Jesus Christ, Who faithfully discharges the commission of God. As Paul puts the matter in 2 Cor. 5:18 - “Everything is from God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ.” Does this mean that the human faith-response to God’s action in Christ is insignificant for Paul? By no means! It does mean, however, that “faith” is not the precondition for receiving God’s blessing; instead, it is the appropriate mode of response to a blessing already given in Christ. As such, it is also the mode of participation in the pattern definitively enacted in Jesus Christ: as we respond in faith, we participate in an ongoing reenactment of Christ’s faithfulness. This point must be spelled out carefully, because it is an elusive one. The gospel story is not just the story of a super-hero who once upon a time defeated the cosmic villains of Law, Sin and Death and thus discharged us from all responsibility; it is also the enactment of a life-pattern into which we are drawn. This is why Paul can say, “I have been crucified with Christ.” Because Jesus Christ is the prototype of the new humanity, those whom God calls are conformed to the pattern defined by Him, and the characteristic mark of this pattern is precisely “pistis.” (R. Hays)

Gal. 2:19 **For** (explanatory) **I** (Subj. Nom.; as a Jew) **through the law** (Abl. Means) **died** (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI1S, Culminative) **to the law** (Dat. Adv.), **in order that** (purpose) **I might enter into life** (ζῶω, AASubj.1S, Ingressive, Potential; experiential sanctification) **with God** (Dat. Assoc.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:19** ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον, ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:19** ego enim per legem legi mortuus sum ut Deo

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:20** **I have been crucified together with Christ in the past with the result that I will keep on being crucified with Him forever [retroactive positional truth]. And I [as a Jew] no longer live [in the sphere of the law], but Christ keeps on living in the sphere of me [indwelling of Christ]. And that [life] which I am now [since the beginning of my Christian life] living in the flesh [my human body], I am living by means of the faithfulness of the Son of God [as opposed to my works through the law], Who loved me [in eternity past] and gave Himself [in time] for me.**

^{KW} **Gal. 2:20** With Christ I have crucified, and it is no longer I who live, but there lives in me Christ. And that life which now I live in the sphere of the flesh, by faith I live it, which faith is in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself on my behalf.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:20** I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Fellowship with God is through crucifixion, not adherence to the law. You must believe in Jesus Christ and be born again in order to have fellowship with God. And after entering that fellowship, you must maintain it through the filling of the Holy Spirit, not the law. So Paul states quite frankly that he was crucified with Christ in the past, and that state of crucifixion will continue to exist forever (Intensive Perfect tense). He will always be positionally in Christ; He will never lose that judicial relationship. That is what we call retroactive positional truth. And because of this new relationship in Christ, he now approaches God in fellowship through the Spirit, not human works through the law. The law didn't bring him to God and the law doesn't sustain him before God. Grace brought both of these things. Therefore leave the law in the sphere where it belongs, the sphere of convicting unbelievers of sin. Do not give it a fictional power to save your soul or enable you to commune with the Lord experientially.

Historically, the Jews were under the law. At the new birth, however, all Jewish believers cease to live (Customary Present tense) in the sphere of the law. The law is no longer needed, because Jesus Christ indwells every believer and continues to live in them forever (Durative Present tense). The concept of "spheres" is important here. The Jewish unbeliever lives in the sphere of the law; Jesus Christ lives in the sphere of the Jewish believer. The Jewish unbeliever lives in the sphere of something external; the sphere of the Jewish believer has changed from something external to having Christ permanently indwelling him. Don't skim over this statement; it is absolutely miraculous and marvelous! And please don't forget that Gentiles never lived in the sphere of the law. The law was given to Moses for the nation Israel; it was not given to Gentiles. Some Gentiles may have placed themselves under the law, but even that is a historical mistake – since the law was never given to them in the first place.

After Paul became a Christian, the life he lived in his human body from that point forward (Static Present tense) switched from his attempts to be faithful in keeping the law to Christ's faithfulness in fulfilling the law for him. Paul uses the customary present tense to contrast the principle or lifestyle he once lived (under the law) with the new principle he lives under – Christ Jesus, the Son of God. And his attempts to be faithful to the law, which were futile, have now been replaced by Christ's faithfulness on his behalf. It no longer depends on Paul's efforts; it depends on Christ's finished work. Jesus Christ loved him in eternity past (Constative Aorist tense) and gave Himself on the cross for him (Constative Aorist tense) in time. This profound change from the sphere of trying to keep the law in the energy of the flesh to Christ fulfilling the law on the cross has been totally and deliberately undermined by the Latin Vulgate (Roman Catholicism). Notice the personal term "me." If you are a believer, you can substitute your name in place of the "me." Christ loved you and died for you on the cross – not for an unknown, indiscriminate blob of humanity.

The original Greek points to the faithfulness of the Son of God for you - which is good news. The Vulgate throws the faithfulness back on the believer for ultimate performance, which is both heretical and bad news. There is no preposition “en” nor is there a Dative or Locative case to point the faith back on us. The case is Genitive or Ablative, which means the faithfulness comes from or is provided by the Son of God. Some commentators have ignored the Greek, and using the corrupt Latin translation have placed faithfulness back on our shoulders. That in effect takes the law and places it right back on us (frustrating the grace of God in verse 21), which is exactly the opposite of what Paul is trying to teach us here. Other commentators who ignore the Greek and follow the corrupted Latin try to make an experiential verse from this phrase. It is true that we live experientially by means of faith (Bible doctrine), but it is not true in this verse. The passage before this phrase and the passage after this phrase are about positional truth, not experiential truth. Some of you may object, saying: “But aren’t you attacking justification by faith?” Not at all. Go back and reread my notes in verse 16. There is a “justification by faith” which involves our believing in Christ by faith (as opposed to keeping the law), but there is also a “justification by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ” which places redemption back where it belongs – in God’s hands.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is necessary to look at this passage with care in order to establish the point we are making so that it may be recognized in many other parts of Scripture. The words that need close scrutiny are, “I live by the faith of the Son of God.” The reason we need to pause in reading these words is that habit of thought prompts us to read them as though Scripture were really saying, “I live by faith in the Son of God.” In point of fact Paul is saying that we do not live by faith IN the Son of God but by the faith OF the Son of God. And if we remember that the word rendered “faith” may just as properly be translated “faithfulness,” then we see that our life is not dependent upon our faith in Christ but upon Christ’s faithfulness. This truth is underscored by Paul in many places. In Galatians 2:16 he wrote: “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but through [Greek *dia*, followed by the genitive] the faithfulness OF Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by means of [Greek *ek*, followed by the genitive] the faithfulness OF Christ.” And again in Galatians 3:22: “The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise through [Greek *ek*, followed by the genitive] the faithfulness OF Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” In each case it is the faithfulness OF Jesus Christ and not the perseverance of the believer which is the basis of his eternal security. (A. Custance)

The NT is full of this principle. Note that in Romans 3:22 the righteousness of God which is imputed to us is not described as being the result of our faith in Jesus Christ. Rather, the correct rendering is: “The righteousness of God which is through [*dia*] the faithfulness OF Him ...,” that is through His faithfulness. And then again in Philippians 3:8,9: “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ... [that I may] be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through

[dia] the faithfulness OF Christ, the righteousness which is of God founded upon faith.” We have customarily read these familiar passages as though they were speaking about OUR faith IN Jesus Christ. Although many translations have not followed the lead provided by the King James Version and have interpreted the words as “in Jesus Christ,” a number of modern versions have been faithful to the original, especially those which set out to be as literal as possible. On the correctly rendered phrase “the faithfulness of the Son of God,” see Dana and Mantey, *A Manual of Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 1955, Macmillan, section 122, rarely used for agency. Any Greek grammar will serve to elucidate the matter. Any translation which is unfamiliar may seem contrived at first, but it is surely comforting to know that even when our faith does fail us, His faithfulness stands firm. (A. Cushman)

One of the tragedies of the Christian life is the acceptance of the conclusions of others without going through the study, growth, and experiences that produced those conclusions. Many so-called convictions are like that. They are rather assertions with no understanding of the intellectual or moral content involved ... There are common beliefs which many churches hold necessary for the fellowship of kindred minds. Some require not much more than an acceptance of the spirit and leadership of Jesus and a desire to share common causes. Others demand for active membership a clean-cut acknowledgment of Christ as Lord and Saviour. Still others insist upon the acceptance of extended statements of belief and doctrine. One cannot say how far complete agreement at this point is possible. Clearly no two minds are absolutely alike. If no two fingerprints are alike, and no two leaves on a tree are alike, how can one expect to find two minds that are exactly alike? To what extent is it possible to have perfect agreement on anything? “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3) But agreed on what? If agreement on every minute definition is demanded, with the crossing of every t and the dotting of each i, the result would be a collection of small minds. (R. Stamm) Just as in Romans 5:15 the life-giving grace is specified as the grace “of Jesus Christ,” so here the life-giving faith of which Paul speaks is specified as the faith “of the Son of God.” And since Paul immediately follows Gal. 2:20 with a reference to grace, it is fair to conclude that “Grace is embodied in Christ’s faithful death for our sake.” (R. Hays)

He knew that the moral law denounced a curse against all that continue not in all things written therein, to do them; and therefore he was dead to it, as to all hope of justification and salvation that way. And as for the ceremonial law, he also knew that it was now antiquated and superseded by the coming of Christ, and therefore, the substance having come, he had no longer any regard to the shadow. He was thus dead to the law, *through the law itself*; it discovered itself to be at an end. By considering the law itself, he saw that justification was not to be expected by the works of it (since none could perform a perfect obedience to it) and that there was now no further need of the sacrifices and purifications of it, since they were done away in Christ, and a period was put to them by his offering up Himself a sacrifice for us; and therefore, the more he looked into it the more he saw that there was no occasion for keeping up that regard to it which the Jews pleaded for. (M. Henry) We cannot help but wonder what Peter said to that explanation. Paul’s inspired logic must have overwhelmed him. Surely the petty quibbling and shibboleths of James and the legalists must have suddenly seemed silly and the very epitome of error itself. (J.

Phillips) The “faith of Christ” in no way suggests that our faith in Christ is not a significant issue for Paul, but it is not the overarching one. (R. Hays)

It is a true principle that one must grow in the knowledge of Christ or his faith will gradually wither and eventually die. A growing faith is rooted in awareness of Christ as a living contemporary. He is not like a statue, a nostalgic memory, or only a figure in history. A man cannot maintain a living faith in Christ who is but a childish recollection. The only God a man will never outgrow, and therefore never lose, is the God he knows in a present tense experience, a God larger than his world ... When “faith” develops into a body of truths, convictions, and doctrines, it becomes a rational effort to explain what a Christian believes and why. Trust is first concerned with the “whom,” belief with the “what.” When a man begins to give the reason for his faith, and to love Christ with his mind, he is in the realm of “belief.” (R. Stamm) The doctrine of union with Christ explains why the Christian is dead to the law. We were united to Christ in His crucifixion. As far as God is concerned, we were really and truly nailed to the cross with Christ. It was on the cross that the law carried out its death penalty against us. Therefore, as far as the law is concerned, we are now dead. There is nothing the law can do to improve our standing with God. We can live for Christ because we are dead to the law. (P. Ryken)

The principle of the old life in legalism has passed away, and a new life is implanted within me. This new life was not himself or his own, but it was Christ living in him. His life to God was no natural principle – no vital element self-originated or self-developed within him; it sprang out of that previous death with His Lord in whom also he had risen again; nay, Christ had not only claimed him as His purchase and taken possession of him, but had also entered into him – had not only kindled life within him, but was that Life Himself. Christ not only gives the life, but He is the life – not as mere source, or as the communicator of vitalizing influence, but He lives Himself as the life of His people. (J. Eadie) Christ, the Life, lives in Paul. By faith Christ fills Paul’s heart, soul, being. That means, first of all, Christ as Paul’s righteousness. His expiation on the cross became Paul’s own when he was crucified with Christ, and this expiation gave him God’s verdict of acquittal. Thus Christ lived in him. Secondly, Christ lives in him to that his mind and will ever respond to Christ in thought, word, and deed. The former is justification, this latter is sanctification. (R. Lenski) Our crucifixion with Christ of Gal. 2:20 refers to our legal death with Christ at Calvary, thus guaranteeing our regeneration by the Holy Spirit at God’s appointed time. Some uninformed in Biblical doctrine may ask how non-entities could have been crucified with Christ 2,000 years ago. The only Scriptural answer is that apart from the doctrine of election and the representative nature of Christ’s death it can never be understood. (W. Best)

Christianity is not a matter of some legalistic form of carefully checking off a list of dos and don’ts. It is a life. Because I have been raised to newness of life, I live. (H. Vos) All life finds its nurture or support in sources external to itself, which it assimilates to its own inner growth. It is not faith that supports this life. Faith is nothing apart from its object. (T. Croskery) When we keep in mind the biblical teaching of the power and completeness of Christ’s atonement we can see in these passages the particularity that is so vehemently denied by the Arminian. How can we not see the particularity in these words? Consider for a moment how precious it is that the

Christian can say, “I have been crucified with Christ.” This is personal atonement, personal substitution. We revel in the awesome love of our Saviour who loved us as individuals and gave Himself for us. For me! Me, the hate-filled sinner who spurned Him and His love! How much less glorious is the idea, “Christ loved a generic group and died so as to give them the opportunity to possibly join the group and hence receive certain benefits.” Particular redemption means personal redemption. Christ died in my place, not generically, but individually. (J. White)

In all the Christian’s knowledge of God’s gracious giving Luther’s “pro me” – the “for me” of Galatians 2:20 is central. This is knowledge that brings overwhelming gratitude and joy. Such glorying is in truth mainstream biblical Christianity – an immeasurably richer reality than can ever emerge from any account of the love of God that stops short at general goodwill and that drops the personal, individualizing “pro me” of sovereign grace. (T. Schreiner) Now that God has taken my salvation out of the control of my own will, and put it under the control of His, and promised to save me, not according to my working or running, but according to His own grace and mercy, I have the comfortable certainty that He is faithful and will not lie to me, and that He is also great and powerful, so that no devils or opposition can break Him or pluck me from Him. No one. (M. Luther) Paul is talking about how the Christian life is continued, that is, about the process of sanctification. Thus this verse would have only an incidental implication for justification, that is, for how a person initially becomes converted. Sanctification is by faith alone and not other sources. We scorn the cross of Christ if we make living the Christian life a matter of works that are not impelled simply by faith. The basic problem Paul was addressing in Galatians was sanctification and not justification or how to be saved. (D. Fuller)

Dr. Gabriel Hebert’s special interest was in attempting to establish that the meaning of “pistis” in these phrases was “faithfulness” rather than “faith.” His argument was that “pistis” was fundamentally something pertaining to God, not man, and that God’s faithfulness was always part of the connotation of the word “pistis.” Karl Barth, in his famous commentary on Romans, took the “pistis” of Jesus Christ in 3:22 to be the faithfulness of God manifested in Jesus Christ, and “from faith to faith” in 1:17 to mean “from God’s faithfulness to man’s faith.” Hebert and Torrance remain as scholars who have expressed their preference for seeing “pistis” in a number of passages as Christ’s “pistis” rather than as the believer’s “pistis” in Christ, and for regarding the noun “pistis” as patient of the meaning “faithfulness” rather than “faith” in these cases ... The genitive is subjective not objective, like the “faith of Abraham” in Romans 4:16 it denotes the faith (in God) which Christ Himself maintained even through the ordeal of the Crucifixion, that his faith is here put forward as the central fact of the Atonement, and that it is to be grasped or appropriated by the Christian in the same manner to that in which he reproduces the faith of Abraham. (D. Robinson)

The indwelling of Jesus Christ as the Shekinah Glory is a guarantee of the believer’s security, spiritual riches, and sanctified position that make attainable the purpose of the spiritual life. The purpose is the glorification of God in our bodies. But for the reversionist the indwelling of Christ has no effect. The reversionist is incapable of reflecting the virtue and integrity of the indwelling Shekinah Glory. While the invisible Shekinah Glory is invisible, His reflected glory is seen

through the Church Age believer who advances to supergrace ... God the Son indwells us for a number of reasons, one of which is as motivation for continued momentum when facing the three categories of suffering for blessing: providential preventative suffering, momentum testing, and evidence testing. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) If “*pistis christou*” (faith of Christ) means only faith in Christ, as some modern translators have led us to believe, then Paul is speaking redundantly in Romans 3:22 and Galatians 2:16. This is equally true of Galatians 2:20 and 3:22. For Jesus had a perfect faith, a concept that has not been taken seriously by some. When it was written, “I will put My trust in Him” (Hebrews 2:13), the writer was affirming the very faith of Jesus. When Paul speaks of the faith of Jesus Christ he uses an all-embracing term that means the complete and utter righteousness of the very person of God’s Son – His obedience, His death and even His intercessory work at God’s right hand. (R. Kendall)

As a result of Jesus’ faithfulness, the life that we now live in Christ we live “by the faith of the Son of God.” We are taken up into His life, including His faithfulness, and that faithfulness therefore imparts to us the shape of our own existence ... Christ became what we are in order that we might become what He is. Consequently, “*pistis Jesou Christou*” should be understood as a concentric expression, which begins, always, from the faith of Christ Himself, but which includes, necessarily, the answering faith of believers, who claim that faith as their own. In short, the soteriological logic of Galatians is participatory. (R. Hays) Even our faith is not ours in its origin: but is the faith of the Son of God gratuitously communicated to us. Insofar as Christian life may be summed up as a “life of faith,” the individual Christian’s faith is a participation in the fidelity of Christ. (J. Janzen) The Messiah is “*ho dikaios*,” the Righteous One who shall live “*ek pisteus*,” whose faith becomes the means whereby others may live ... Galatians 2:20 makes much better sense if we take the genitive “*tou viou tou theou*” either as a subjective genitive or as a “*genitivus auctoris*,” producing the following sense: “The life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith, i.e., by the faith of the Son of God ...” or “... by the faith which comes from the Son of God.” Paul is provocatively denying his own role as the acting “subject” of his own life and claiming that he has been supplanted in this capacity by Christ: “the faith of the Son of God” is now the governing power in Paul’s existence. (R. Hays)

The whole context portrays Christ as the active agent and Paul as the instrument through which and/or for whom Christ’s activity comes to expression. Indeed, this unrelenting emphasis on the priority of Christ’s (or God’s) willing and doing over any human will or action is the theological keynote of the whole letter. Thus, a strong case can be made for taking “*tou huiou tou theou*” in 2:20 as a subjective genitive or at least a genitive of author. This fits the context more satisfactorily than the objective genitive interpretation, “faith in the Son of God.” (R. Hays) Because justification hinges upon the action of Jesus Christ, upon an event “*extra nos*,” it is a terrible and ironic blunder to read Paul as though his gospel made redemption contingent upon our act of deciding to dispose ourselves toward God in a particular way. The “grammar” of Paul’s gospel – more precisely, of the gospel’s topical sequence – places humanity in the role of “receiver.” Paul is saying neither that we are saved by believing in Christ nor that we are saved by believing as He did; rather, he is saying that because we participate in Jesus Christ, Who lived “*ek pisteus*” we also live “*en pistei*.” (R. Hays) Wilder’s rendering of Gal. 2:20b is noteworthy:

not, as in nearly all modern translations, “I live by faith in Him ...” but “I live by the faith of Him.” (A. Wilder)

Redemption occurs in the topical sequence. The human action of faith-obedience in the final sequence does not complete an unfinished redemption; it is both the response to a completed redemption and the purpose for which the redemptive action was initiated by God. Christ’s faithfulness is enacted in His giving Himself up, His becoming a curse, and His taking the form of a servant. The Spirit given as our Helper effects a mysterious personal union with Christ. Thus the story does not simply shift from Christ as the Subject in one sequence to humanity as Subject in the next. Instead, there is a complex overlay of two Subjects, so that Paul can attribute his own life and activity to “Christ in me.” (R. Hays) In Romans 5:15, the grace of God is manifested in the grace of Jesus Christ; in Gal. 2:20, the life of God is manifested in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. The subjective and/or christological interpretation of the genitive in Gal. 2:20 brings this theological parallelism into sharper focus: in both texts, Jesus’ death is interpreted as the means through which God’s lifegiving power is made effective in those for whom Jesus died ... As a result of Christ’s faith, his people are given life. This, as we have seen in the previous chapter, is precisely the meaning of Gal. 2:20b: I live by (“en” instrumental) the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.” We suggest that “oi ek pisteus” carries not primarily the connotation of “those who have faith” but rather the connotation of “those who are given life on the basis of Christ’s faith.” (Howard)

Gal. 2:20 I have been crucified together with Christ (Dat. Assoc.) in the past with the result that I will keep on being crucified with Him forever (συσταυρόω, Perf.PI1S, Intensive; retroactive positional truth). And (continuative) I (Subj. Nom.; as a Jew) no longer (neg. adv.) live (ζάω, PAI1S, Customary; in the sphere of the law), but (contrast) Christ (Subj. Nom.) keeps on living (ζάω, PAI1S, Durative) in the sphere of me (Loc. Sph.; indwelling of Christ). And (continuative) that which (Acc. Gen. Ref.; life) I am now (temporal; since the beginning of my Christian life) living (ζάω, PAI1S, Static) in the flesh (Loc. Sph.; my human body), I am living (ζάω, PAI1S, Customary, Progressive) by means of the faithfulness (Instr. Means) of the Son (Abl. Source) of God (Adv. Gen. Ref.; not by means of my own works), Who (Gen. Appos.) loved (ἀγαπάω, AAPtc.GMS, Constative, Substantial) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in eternity past) and (continuative) gave (παραδίδωμι, AAPtc.GMS, Constative, Substantial; delivered) Himself (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in time) for me (Gen. Adv.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:20** Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι· ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός· ὃ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:20** Christo confixus sum cruci vivo autem iam non ego vivit vero in me Christus quod autem nunc vivo in carne in fide vivo Filii Dei qui dilexit me et tradidit se ipsum pro me

^{LWB} **Gal. 2:21** I do not thwart [cancel, void] the grace of God. For if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain [for no purpose].

^{KW} **Gal. 2:21** I do not thwart the efficacy of the grace of God. For if through the law comes righteousness, then Christ died to no purpose.

^{KJV} **Galatians 2:21** I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul states unequivocally that he does not thwart the grace of God (Static Present tense) by pursuing the law. They are mutually exclusive spheres of operation. If he tries to be justified by keeping the law or experientially sanctified by adhering to the law, he declares the grace of God invalid. He cancels the work of Christ by his erroneous actions. What does he mean by this? Does he mean he has lost his salvation? No, don't be silly. No matter what you might do in life after being regenerated and believing in Christ, you will never, ever lose your salvation. That concept is not only heretical, but blasphemous! Paul continues with a protasis of a 2nd class condition, which means his hypothetical case is not true. It is not true that righteousness, either positional or experiential, can be obtained through the law. If it could, then Christ would have died (Culminative Aorist tense) in vain. There would have been no purpose for His death on the cross.

Anyone who pursues the law is in effect abandoning Christ. You can't pursue both Christ and the law; which one do you want in control of your life? "The law may stop bad behavior, but does nothing to the heart. It is the heart which is important – that's Canaan. Paul always appealed to their position in Christ, not to the law." (K. Lamb) If you insist on pursuing the law for righteousness, what do you need Christ for? If keeping the law can bring you salvation, what do you need Him for? There's no reason to believe in Him. There was no reason for Him to die on the cross. As a matter of fact, if we can be saved by our own works through adherence to the law, then Jesus Christ was not even the true Messiah. He was a false Messiah who died on the cross for no beneficial reason at all. This is, of course, the opposite teaching of the gospel. "When you are preaching the Gospel and the people come to you and accuse you of preaching license to sin – rejoice! That is the expected outcome of the Gospel of the truth of grace." (M. Lloyd-Jones)

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The whole point of Paul's letter is that there is no law of any kind, whether of Moses or of any other lawgiver, that can give life. (R. Stamm) The apostle felt that the one source of justification was grace, and that the medium of it was grace embodied in the incarnate Son. In trusting in Christ, and in Him alone, he was magnifying the grace of God; while Peter, on the other hand, by his reactionary dissimulation, was in effect putting aside that grace. (J. Eadie) Both the grace of

God and the death of Christ become redundant, if we are masters of our own destiny and can save ourselves. (J. Stott) Be careful that you do not limit this discussion of law to the law of Moses. It applies to any law. (K. Lamb) To teach that righteousness may be acquired by any other means than by Christ alone, is a horrible blasphemy, and yet it commonly reigns ... And here with this thunder-clap falleth down all the orders of monks and friars, with all such superstitious religions. (M. Luther)

It seems to Paul that anyone to whom Jesus Christ has been portrayed as crucified should not need to be dragged along to see the implications of that portrayal; he takes it as a sign of the Galatians' incorrigible dullness that they fail to understand the point. To Paul, the message of Christ's death carries with it as a corollary the negation of the Law: "for if righteousness is through the Law, then Christ died gratuitously." To put the matter another way, we can have recourse to Northrup Frye's terminology. The "dianoia" of the gospel is embodied in the phrase "Jesus Christ crucified." This summary phrase recalls the "scene of exceptional intensity" that stands at the center of Paul's recollection of the story of Jesus Christ. The allusion, therefore, which would be meaningless outside the frame of reference provided by the Gospel story, stands for the whole story and distills its meaning. (R. Hays)

Paul rejects the Law not because of an empirical observation that no one can do what it requires, but because its claim to give life, explicitly articulated in Lev. 18:5 is incompatible with the gospel story, which says that Christ had to die in order to give life to us ... Christ died in order to redeem us and give us life; thus the Law must have been incapable of offering life and redemption. (R. Hays)

Gal. 2:21 I do not (neg. adv.) thwart (ἀθετέω, PAI1S, Static; declare invalid, nullify, cancel, make void) the grace (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of God (Abl. Source). For (explanatory) if (protasis, 2nd class condition, "but it's not true") righteousness (Subj. Nom.) comes (ellipsis) through the law (Abl. Means, Gen. Source), then (inferential; consequently) Christ (Subj. Nom.) died (ἀποθνήσκω, AA13S, Culminative) in vain (adv.; without reason, for no purpose).

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:21** Οὐκ ἀθετῶ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ· εἰ γὰρ διὰ νόμου δικαιοσύνη, ἄρα Χριστὸς δωρεὰν ἀπέθανεν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 2:21** non abicio gratiam Dei si enim per legem iustitia ergo Christus gratis mortuus est

CHAPTER 3

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:1** Oh foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you? Jesus Christ, who lived before

your very eyes, was publicly proclaimed [well advertised] when He was crucified.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:1** O, unreflecting Galatians, who bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was placarded publicly as the Crucified One?

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:1** O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Galatians 3:1 – 4:11 is a long argument contrasting the promise and the law. Closely related to this long argument is the underlying contrast between grace and works. A key to proper understanding of this passage is the central focus upon God and Christ, not man. It is therefore theocentric and christocentric, not anthropocentric. This emphasis was discussed late in chapter 2, regarding “the faithfulness of Jesus Christ” rather than our “faith in Jesus Christ.” This is not the traditional understanding of this portion of Galatians. Although the essence of “justification by faith” as understood by Martin Luther is true, it is better found in Romans 4 than here – in spite of the fact that most commentators believe these are parallel passages. Justification by faith, our “believing” in Christ, in passages such as Romans 4 is more anthropocentric – our act of believing. Justification by the faith(fulness) of Christ in Galatians is more Christocentric – His act of remaining faithful to the Father’s plan. The center of the entire passage is that Christ was faithful and believers are justified by participating in His faithfulness.

Paul addresses the Galatian believers in a most sarcastic manner, calling them foolish and senseless. He brought them to Christ through the gospel of grace and now they are turning to legalism. Who has hypnotized them (Dramatic Aorist tense) with such nonsense? He knows who has bewitched (Latin: fascinated) them – legalistic Jewish believers. He is absolutely beside himself, in that it has been such a short time since he shared Christ with them. Jesus Christ lived before the very eyes of some of the Galatians he is addressing. They met Him personally during His three year ministry, probably on one of their journeys to Jerusalem. He was publicly proclaimed far and wide (Dramatic Aorist tense) through His teachings and miracles. He was especially well advertised when He was crucified (Dramatic Perfect tense) for claiming to be the Son of God (Temporal Participle). His death, burial and resurrection was not a secret. How could they possibly forget Him and turn to the law?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Although there is general agreement that this section of the letter is intended as Paul’s exposition and defense of his doctrine of justification by faith, it is not at all easy to follow the logic of the argument that Paul has constructed. This problem was partly obscured by the tendency of many older commentaries to read Paul within the grid of a predetermined dogmatic-confessional system and/or to work through the text verse by verse with little attempt to grasp the function of larger sense-units ... In Galatians, the gospel message is manifested in a kind of shorthand through allusive phrases such as “Jesus Christ crucified.” My thesis is that these allusive phrases are intended to

recall and evoke a more comprehensive “narrative” pattern and that we may learn something new through a fresh attempt to delineate this pattern, tracing its structure through Paul’s various allusions to it ... Paul is operating in the mode of recapitulation, elucidating the significance of something that is already so familiar to his readers that he need not recount it in detail. Furthermore, the impatient tone of his recapitulation betrays his incredulity that such recapitulation should be necessary at all. (R. Hays)

Paul’s opening question in 3:1 strongly implies that the image of Christ crucified, rightly understood, ought to make the Galatians immune to bewitchment and wandering from “the truth of the gospel” (2:14). In this single image, the “*dianoia*” of the gospel is so fully comprehended that Paul finds it astonishing that he is now forced to go back and spell out for the Galatians what the image signifies. But that is exactly what he must now do. My own view is that Paul is genuinely exasperated with the Galatians and that he plays upon his own exasperation to good rhetorical effect ... They saw, as it were, with their own eyes Christ crucified (presumably through Paul’s vivid proclamation, or narration, of the gospel). Thus the real thrust of this opening argument is to establish the efficacy and sufficiency of the gospel message as the basis for beginning and sustaining Christian existence ... I am seeking to highlight a dimension of Paul’s thought which has heretofore received insufficient emphasis by suggesting that a gospel story is foundational for the explicitly theological portions of Paul’s discourse. (R. Hays)

The narrative structure is not “behind” the text; it is in the text, and its ‘shape’ and ‘sequence’ were determined through the analysis of specific passages in Galatians 3 and 4. The ‘sequence’ argument is employed to show that the Law came later than the promise, that it has now been rendered obsolete by the coming of Christ, and that it is absurd for the Galatians to revert to practices proper to an earlier sequence in the story. The ‘shape’ argument is closely linked to the text’s participatory soteriology: the action of Jesus Christ in the gospel story defines the pattern of justification and life (*ek pisteus*). This pattern is employed to show that Gentiles are included in the promised blessing (= adopted as God’s children) apart from adherence to Law, that divisions among God’s people are dissolved in Christ, that righteousness and life are gifts of grace in which Christians participate because of Christ’s “*pistis*,” and that “*pistis*” is consequently the distinguishing mark of the life given to those who live “in” Him. The argument of Gal. 3:1-4:11 finds its point of coherence in the story of the Messiah Who lives by faith. (R. Hays)

In the course of Paul’s defense he alludes to his previous communication of the gospel to them and employs as “clinchers” at various key points in the argument compact christological-soteriological formulations that give the appearance of being traditional or authoritative summaries of the gospel message. These formulations, however, are interwoven with scriptural quotations and Paul’s own exposition in a very confusing manner. Because of the dense and allusive texture of the argumentation, Galatians is a challenging text, full of exegetical puzzles. There is agreement among exegetes that Paul’s argument in this section is extremely difficult to follow (D. Betz). The long-dominant “Lutheran” interpretation of Paul has been called fundamentally into question by Krister Stendahl, Markus Barth, and others, but there has not yet been any satisfying full-scale reexamination of this central section of Galatians, which was, after all, Luther’s favorite epistle and

the foundation stone of his teaching. (R. Hays)

Men are bewitched, said Paul, when they get their eyes off the Cross as the center of the Christian life ... “Foolish” carries overtones of stupidity, whereas the Galatians’ trouble was failure to use their power of perception, or as we say, “to put two and two together.” (R. Stamm) The Galatians had been hypnotized by the clever arguments of the text-juggling legalists ... Something is very subtle about appealing to the Bible itself in support of error. It is the old cultic trick of “interpreting” a Scripture without regard to its context, without regard to the scope and purpose of the book in which it is found, and without regard to the people to whom the particular passage was addressed. We must always find out under what circumstances and by whom a passage was written. We must regard the culture, the history, and the geography that form the background of the passage. We must consider the usual rules of grammar that apply and consider also the dispensation to which the passage belongs. Ever since Pentecost, with its radical change in God’s administration of human affairs, any sound interpretation of OT Scriptures must take into account the change of dispensation. Those who are either ignorant of these things or choose to ignore them end up distorting the Scriptures. (J. Phillips)

The Greek term “ebaskanen” means “to give someone the evil eye, to cast a spell over, to fascinate in the original sense of holding someone spellbound by an irresistible power.” It was as if a sorcerer had cast an evil spell on them, or as if a magician had them under his hypnotic influence ... One of the devil’s favorite stratagems is to distort the truth so that people can no longer tell the difference between the one true gospel and all the false alternatives. Doctrinal error has two primary sources: human ignorance and demonic malevolence. The church in Galatia faced both problems. (P. Ryken) The old word “baskano” means to bring evil on one by feigned praise or the evil eye, hoodoo. (A. Robertson) The clause “that you should not obey the truth” does not belong to the text of this verse, but was added under the influence of 5:7. (R. Stamm) The word “anoetos” denotes the stupidity that arises from deadness and impotence of intellect. It means lacking in the power of perception, one who does not reflect. The Galatians were not using their heads. (K. Wuest)

Gal. 3:1 Oh (interjection) foolish (Voc. Descr.; senseless) Galatians (Voc. Address), who (Subj. Nom., interrogative) has bewitched (βασκαίνω, AAI3S, Dramatic; hypnotized) you (Acc. Disadv.)? Jesus Christ (Subj. Nom.), who (Dat. Appos.) lived (ellipsis; existed) before your very eyes (Prep. Acc.), was publicly proclaimed (προοράφω, API3S, Dramatic; well advertised, presented) when He was crucified (σταυρόω, Perf.PPtc.NMS, Dramatic, Temporal).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:1** Ὡ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ’ ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος;

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:1** o insensati Galatae quis vos fascinavit ante quorum oculos Iesus Christus proscriptus est crucifixus

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:2** I want to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the [indwelling of the]

Spirit from the law [obviously not, because as Gentiles they had never heard of the law] or from the message of the faith [the gospel message]?

^{KW} **Gal. 3:2** This only am I desiring to learn from you. By means of law works did you receive the Spirit or by means of the message which proclaims faith?

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:2** This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul ratchets his sarcasm up another notch! He wants to know (Ingressive Aorist tense) just one thing from them. In other words, he asks them to answer this one question so he is clear about where they are coming from. Did they receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Dramatic Aorist tense) from adherence to the law or from the gospel message? Well, this question has an obvious answer, since the Gentile believers had never even heard of the law. They received the gospel by listening to and believing the gospel message, not by keeping the law. They received the indwelling of the Spirit through the gospel message, totally apart from any legalistic effort on their part. Paul can be so mean when he is trying to get his point across, correct? No, this sort of sarcasm is God-breathed; it was exactly what the Galatians needed to hear to snap them out of their sinful, forgetful state.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Christians are justified/redeemed not by virtue of their own faith but because they participate in Jesus Christ, Who enacted the obedience of faith on their behalf. Abraham is understood by Paul not as an exemplar of faith in Christ but as a typological foreshadowing of Christ Himself, a representative figure whose faithfulness secures blessing and salvation vicariously for others ... The Spirit is conceived as a gift rather than as a prize acquired through human volition and action ... Paul's emphasis does not lie upon the salvific efficacy of the individual activity of "believing." Nowhere in Galatians 3 does Paul speak of Jesus Christ as the object toward which human faith is to be directed. The logic of Paul's argument depends on a story in which Jesus Christ acts by the power of faith to bring salvation to humanity ... Gal. 3:2 is actually the linchpin of Paul's argument, because he appeals here to evidence that he considers irrefutable: the Galatians' own experience of having received the Spirit. Paul appears willing to rest his case on this one item of evidence. If the Galatians fail to concede Paul's point here, then the argument is lost; if, however, they grant him this one point by answering "by the gospel message" of course, then the outcome of the argument is clinched. Paul's assumption that the Galatians received the Spirit "ek akoes pisteus" is of central importance in the argumentative logic of Galatians. (R. Hays)

The exegetical difficulty lies in knowing what Paul means by the phrase "ek akoes pisteus." The problem is caused not only by the ambiguity of the genitive case but also by the fact that both "akoe" and "pistis" have at least two possible meanings. "Akoe" can mean either the action of hearing or that which is heard (report, message); "pistis" can mean either the act of believing or trusting or that

which is believed (the gospel). “Pistis” has other possible meanings, of course: reliability, pledge, proof, faithfulness, etc. This general categorization enables us to distinguish four possible meanings for the phrase as a whole: (1) by hearing with faith, (2) by hearing the faith or gospel, (3) from the message that enables faith, or (4) from the message of the faith or gospel. It is probably fair to say that translation/interpretation #1 accurately reflects the general Protestant understanding of Paul’s message. In spite of its widespread acceptance, this interpretation is problematical, and it has not gone uncontested. Option #2 is the interpretation of Calvin, who remarks simply, “faith is here put by metonymy for the Gospel.” When “akoe” for Paul means report or message and “pistis” is taken to designate the human response to the preached message, option #3 is chosen. Option #4 unavoidably shifts the emphasis from the hearing to the preaching of the message. On the basis of the evidence provided by Romans 10:16-17 and 1 Thess. 2:13, it seems likely that “akoe pisteus” in Gal. 3:2 means “the message of faith,” i.e., meaning either option #3 or #4 above. (R. Hays)

The whole passage makes better sense if we suppose that Paul’s primary intention is not at all to juxtapose one type of human activity (works) to another (believing-hearing), but rather to juxtapose human activity to God’s activity, as revealed in the “proclamation.” The antithesis would then lie between human “works” and God’s message. The prepositional phrases are intended as modifiers of God’s action ... We are justified in translating “akoe” as “message” rather than “hearing.” Perhaps the truth of the matter is that Paul’s compressed language will not answer all the questions that we would like to put to it and that he did not intend a clear distinction: “akoe pisteus” means simply “the faith-message,” and the attempt to distinguish between “the message that evokes faith” and “the message of the faith” is our problem rather than Paul’s ... Even if “pistis” here means “believing,” Paul’s emphasis lies not upon the individual act of believing as the means of receiving the Spirit, but upon the proclaimed message (akoe) which calls forth faith, as the means by which the Spirit is given. It is at least possible that “pistis” here, as in other texts in Galatians, functions as a collective designation for “that which is believed” and does not refer explicitly to the Galatians’ act or attitude of faith. (R Hays)

The Spirit took the place of the Torah as the life element of the Christian. (R. Stamm) The Law said, “Do!” Grace says, “Done!” The Law said, “Try!” Grace says, “Trust!” The Law said, “Behave!” Grace says, “Believe!” Law points to the commandments; grace points to the Christ. The weakness of the Law is the flesh; the wonder of grace is the Holy Spirit ... The Law could not give life. It could only point out a standard of behavior that God would accept, but one that we are incapable of producing in the flesh. The flesh can only go on reproducing itself. It might present itself as religious flesh, as respectable flesh, as resourceful flesh, or as self-righteous flesh, but it is still flesh. God calls it “sinful flesh” (Rom. 8:3) because the flesh is never more sinful than when it is seeking to pass itself off as good. (J. Phillips) The noun “akoe” denotes sometimes “what is heard” or “report” as describing the doctrine or message which they heard respecting faith. (E. Huxtable) The word “akoes” translated “hearing” refers either to the act of hearing a message or to the message that is heard. The second meaning agrees more with the context since Paul is contrasting his message of grace with the preachments of the Judaizers. The phrase “of faith” defines or describes the message. (K. Wuest) Religious flesh always wants to work for God. (J. Piper) The Spirit inspired the Word and therefore he goes where the Word goes. The more of God’s Word you know and love, the more

of God's Spirit you will experience. (J. Piper)

Gal. 3:2 I want (θέλω, PAI1S, Static) to learn (μανθάνω, AAInf., Ingressive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; find out by inquiry) just (Acc. Spec.; only) one thing (Acc. Dir. Obj.) from you {Abl. Source}: Did you receive (λαμβάνω, AAI2P, Dramatic, Interrogative Ind.) the Spirit (Acc. Dir. Obj.; indwelling) from the law (Gen. Origin, Abl. Source; obviously not, because as Gentiles they had never even heard the law) or (conj.) from the message (Gen. Origin; report, proclamation, distinctive doctrine) of the faith (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the gospel message)?

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:2** τοῦτο μόνον θέλω μαθεῖν ἀφ' ὑμῶν· ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:2** hoc solum volo a vobis discere ex operibus legis Spiritum accepistis an ex auditu fidei

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:3** **Are you that foolish? Having begun in the Spirit [entrance into the spiritual life], are you now trying to finish in the flesh [attain maturity by keeping the law]?**

^{KW} **Gal. 3:3** Are you so unreflecting? Having begun by means of the Spirit, now are you being brought to spiritual maturity by the flesh?

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:3** Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul really had more than just one question for the Galatians. He was using it as a rhetorical device to both humiliate them and get them to change directions. He asks them again how they can be so foolish (Latin: stultified). Then he asks another sarcastic question. Did they begin the spiritual life in the sphere of the Spirit (Ingressive Aorist tense) only to try to attain spiritual maturity (Conative Present tense) in the flesh? The spiritual life is always as it is named: spiritual. There is no such thing as a spiritual life lived in the flesh; that would be a fleshly or carnal life. There is no spiritual life whatsoever in keeping the law. The law might clean you up on the outside and make you look like you are making progress spiritually, but it is nothing but dead works. Trying to live the spiritual life by following the law is nothing but carnality. The precisely correct protocol plan of God begins with grace, continues daily by grace, and ends (Latin: consummation) with grace. Works of the flesh are totally excluded.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Judaizers, fearing the effect of these activities of the Spirit upon the purity and perpetuation of their ancestral religion, insisted that they must be kept under strict control by the law of Moses ... The verb “epiteleo” (to end) is used frequently in the sense of performing religious rites and duties, but it expresses exactly the legalists’ contention that law must be added to faith in order to make

faith mature and trustworthy as a basis of salvation. Paul says this would not be progress but retrogression, not perfection but a concession to human nature as it was before the Christian was made a new man by the Spirit. Those who cannot see this he calls unreasonable, foolish. Possession by the Spirit and life under His constant personal guidance constitute the highest conceivable spiritual state. Why then be so foolish as to try to confirm and enrich the higher by the lower? Why seek perfection by recourse to the imperfect? (R. Stamm)

On the one hand, you have a man who wants to walk with the Lord. He's having difficulties, but he really wants to walk with the Lord. If you put law on him, you haven't improved him. You're only telling him what happens if he doesn't walk with the Lord. You haven't made him better. On the other hand, you have a man who doesn't want to walk with the Lord. You can put law on him, but if he improves, you haven't changed his heart. He's still under condemnation and death. What he usually does is kick-off the law you gave him anyway. The law has no positive effect to change a man or his circumstances. (K. Lamb) Christianity today often begins in simple faith and ends in ritual and denominational refinements. (J. Dow) The clause points to the stage of underdeveloped spiritual life through which converts from heathenism had passed, the spiritual childhood which had been the lot of earlier generations before the time of the Advent. (W. Nicoll)

In harmony with the whole program of divine grace, no other manner of life could be imposed on the believer than the one in which God alone undertakes and accomplishes. To be true to His own purposes in grace, He must not only create the motive and choice of the heart but He must provide the sufficient power for its execution. (L. Chafer) Sometimes people demonstrate this lack of trust by relying on their own religious activity or moral effort to live a life pleasing to God. In fact, this self-reliance is the common failure of most sincere church members. They made a start "in the Spirit," as Paul says, but now are foolishly attempting to live the Christian life in their own strength. (S. Gundry) There is no suggestion here that any subsequent ceremony or new experience had anything to do with the gift of the Spirit to the Galatians; it is associated directly with belief in the gospel and the initial response of faith ... Are you trying to finish by natural means some process that began supernaturally? What Paul means is that the whole Christian way is supernatural from start to finish, but the Jewish path has become thoroughly naturalistic. (R. Cole)

Gal. 3:3 Are you (εἰμί, PAI2P, Descriptive, Interrogative Ind.) that (adv.; so) foolish (Pred. Nom.)? Having begun (ἐνάρχομαι, AMPtc.NMP, Ingressive, Temporal, Deponent) in the Spirit (Loc. Sph.), are you now (temporal) trying to finish (ἐπιτελέω, PAI2P, Conative; perform, complete) in the flesh (Loc. Sph.)?

BGT **Galatians 3:3** οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε, ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελείσθε;

VUL **Galatians 3:3** sic stulti estis cum Spiritu coeperitis nunc carne consummamini

LWB **Gal. 3:4** Have you suffered so much [trials and tribulations for being a Christian] for no apparent reason? If, as a matter of fact, it appears to be indeed [as hard as it is for me to believe it, it appears to be true] for no apparent reason.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:4** So many things did you suffer in vain? If indeed they really were in vain?

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:4** Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Galatian believers were persecuted for becoming Christians. They suffered many trials and tribulations (Dramatic Aorist tense) by accepting the gospel message. If they are suddenly going to turn their back on Christ and pursue the law instead, what was the purpose for enduring all that suffering? They could have followed any number of moral and ethical codes and nobody would have harassed them for believing in the death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. They could have avoided ridicule for believing in the Trinity and other difficult to explain doctrines. If they are going to embrace the law now, their longsuffering served no purpose. With an unusual 1st class conditional clause, and with an emphatic particle and an emphatic conjunction, Paul concludes that they must have suffered in vain. He can't believe it, but the evidence points to that inevitable result. By now, Paul's tone is gradually changing from ridicule to sarcasm to an entreaty with questions that are designed to make them think. If they will remember what he taught them previously, he hopes they will abandon their pursuit of legalism and return to a grace-oriented life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul's Galatian converts had dared much, had risked much, and had suffered much by becoming Christians. By dropping back into the life pattern in which they had been reared they had suffered in vain. (R. Stamm) The persecutions endured by the Galatian converts had all been due to the jealous animosity of the Jews: if they were not to accept the Law after all, they would proclaim their former resistance to have been wanton caprice on their part, which had led them to provoke persecution to no purpose. (W. Nicoll)

Gal. 3:4 Have you suffered (πάσχω, AAI2P, Dramatic, Interrogative Ind.) so much (Acc. Measure; trials and tribulations for being Christians) for no apparent reason (adv.; without cause, in vain)? If (protasis, 1st class condition, "it appears to be true"), as a matter of fact (emphatic), it appears to be (ellipsis) indeed (emphatic) for no apparent reason (adv.).

^{BGM} **Galatians 3:4** τοσοῦτος@adanpn πάσχω@viaa2p εἰκῇ@b εἰ@cs γέ@x καί@b εἰκῇ@b

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:4** τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῇ; εἰ γὰρ καὶ εἰκῇ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:4** tanta passi estis sine causa si tamen sine causa

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:5** He [Jesus Christ], therefore, Who graciously provided the Spirit to you [indwelling of the Spirit which begins at regeneration] and keeps on working in you with

supernatural power [the filling of the Spirit empowers you for the spiritual life], *does He do this through the works of the law or through the message of the faith [gospel message]?*

^{KW} **Gal. 3:5** Therefore, the One who is constantly supplying the Spirit to you in bountiful measure, and constantly working miracles among you, by means of law works is He doing these things, or by means of the message which proclaims faith?

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:5** He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ graciously provided (Historical Present tense) the indwelling of the Holy Spirit for every believer at the moment of regeneration. He also continues to work in us (Durative Present tense) with supernatural power by the same Holy Spirit. The filling of the Spirit empowers us for the Christian life. We cannot live the Christian life without the filling of the Spirit. We cannot be filled with the Spirit unless we have acknowledged our sins to the Father through Jesus Christ as commanded in 1 John 1:9. Does the Lord provide us with this continual power of the Spirit through works of the law or through the message of the faith (the gospel, Bible doctrine)? The works of the law did not provide us with initial salvation, nor will it assist us in any way in the experiential, spiritual life.

We entered into salvation through the message of the faith (gospel) by means of the grace of God. And we utilize His grace provision daily (1 John 1:9), also through the message of the faith (Bible doctrine) message, in order to remain in fellowship and grow to maturity. Paul is piling up example on top of example of what Jesus Christ did, what the Holy Spirit does, and how the law is opposed to our fellowship with God. He is doing his best to destroy any tendencies of a believer to rely on his works, regardless of how good they look on the outside, instead of relying on God's grace. He is continually contrasting the futility of works and law as opposed to the Church Age protocol of the gospel message and Bible doctrine. At the center of Galatians is the work of the Father, the Son and the Spirit, not the works of man.

Verse 2 is the initial receiving of the Spirit at regeneration, i.e., positional sanctification. This verse takes that same Spirit and parlays it into the Christian life, i.e., experiential sanctification. God provides the Spirit in both cases, through the message of the faith. The "message of the faith" in the first instance is the gospel message; the "message of the faith" in the second instance is Bible doctrine. The emphasis in both passages is on the work of God, not man. The emphasis is on the proclamation of the message, not on works. This entire section of Galatians is Christocentric, not anthropocentric. Before you read Romans 4 into Galatians 3, try to keep your focus on God and not on man. Verse 5 asks us what kind of God we are dealing with. Are we dealing with a God who operates through the law or through the message of faith? Verse 6 begins to answer this question by pointing to the relationship between God and Abraham, which began with promise, not law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Faith brings Christ into the picture. Law brings me into the picture. (K. Lamb) The accent of verse 5 falls heavily upon the action of God ... and “ek akoes pisteus” must therefore be understood to mean “through the proclamation of the faith.” The primary point of comparison must be God’s working ... rather than the faith of the Galatians ... The purpose of Paul’s appeal to experience is to establish his claim that the foundation for this experience was the gospel message. The Galatians were enabled to have these experiences because of one and only one thing: Paul’s proclamation of the gospel message, whose content is precisely the story to which 3:1 alludes: Jesus Christ crucified. Thus the real thrust of this opening argument (1-5) is to establish the efficacy and sufficiency of the gospel message as the basis for beginning (3:2) and sustaining (3:5) Christian existence. (R. Hays) A Christian, to be spiritual, must be filled and kept filled by the Spirit. An experience may or may not accompany the first entrance into the Spirit-filled life; but, even when there is an experience, the Bible knows nothing of a “second blessing,” or “second work of grace.” (L. Chafer)

Since these participles are in the present tense, and since Paul means that the Spirit was being supplied to the Christians not only at the beginning but throughout their whole life, the present tense is required. The action is going on right under the eyes of the observer: a continuous, never-ending, ever-increasing supply of God’s own Spirit. (R. Stamm) When we first preached the gospel, there were very many that favored our doctrine, and had a good and reverend opinion of us: and after the preaching thereof, followed the fruits and effects of faith. But what ensued? Some light and brain-sick heads sprang up, and by-and-by destroyed all that we in long time and with much travel had planted, and also made us so odious to them which before had loved us, and thankfully received our doctrine, that they now hate nothing more than our name. But of this mischief the devil is the author, working in his members contrary works, which wholly fight against the Holy Spirit. (M. Luther) “The hearing of the faith” refers to the report which faith believed. (E. Bullinger)

Gal. 3:5 He (Subj. Nom.; Jesus Christ), therefore (inferential), Who graciously provided (ἐπιχορηγέω, PAPtc.NMS, Historical, Substantival; at regeneration) the Spirit (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to you (Dat. Adv.) and (continuative) keeps on working (ἐνεργέω, PAPtc.NMS, Durative, Substantival) in you (Loc. Sph.) with supernatural power (Acc. Manner), does He do this (ellipsis) through the works (Gen. Origin) of the law (Adv. Gen. Ref.) or (conj.) through the message (Gen. Origin; report, proclamation) of the faith (Adv. Gen. Ref.; gospel message)?

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:5** ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:5** qui ergo tribuit vobis Spiritum et operatur virtutes in vobis ex operibus legis an ex auditu fidei

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:6** Just as [for example] Abraham trusted God [in what He promised], and it [trusting in the promise of God] was credited [imputed] to him for righteousness [forensic

justification].

^{KW} **Gal. 3:6** Just as Abraham believed God, and his act of faith was credited to him, resulting in righteousness.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:6** Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Judaizers were telling the Gentile Christians in Galatia that they would become part of the “sons of Abraham” if they became circumcised. Paul argues here that the Galatian Christians were already “sons of Abraham” by faith. Abraham believed (Ingressive Aorist tense) God. He rested in God’s faithfulness, not his own faithfulness. The law did not exist when Abraham believed God and was made righteous, so obviously the law was not needed during the Church Age. Abraham believed 400 years before the law was given. Neither was there anything uniquely “Jewish” about the gospel in Abraham’s time. It was for all nations and all peoples. And when you think about it, Abraham didn’t have much to go on. He had the “witness in the stars” that foretold of the coming Messiah. He had the promise of God that he would have an Heir. He believed the message, period; any works he performed came after justification. He didn’t even have to be circumcised to become justified. He was made righteous before he had even heard of circumcision. The emphasis is not on Abraham believing, but on God operating on the basis of the message of faith instead of the requirements of the law. If God operated on the basis of the law, Abraham would be required to do something (believe, act, do). But God operates on the basis of the message of faith, so Abraham merely “sits back” and trusts God will fulfill His promise.

Those who try to approach God by keeping the law are not the sons of Abraham. The grace of God provides us with saving faith at the moment of regeneration. Sovereign grace is the grounds of justification, faith is the instrument. Justification is through the message of faith, not works of the law. Abraham’s trust in the promise (message of the faith) was credited to his account (Culminative Aorist tense) for righteousness. This is both an accounting term and a legal term, depending on how you want to look at it. Both perspectives revolve around substitution (Christ on our behalf) and imputation (the Father providing us with something we could not obtain by our own efforts). The instrument He (the Spirit) used was the faith provided to us at the point of regeneration. Works of the law were totally eliminated from the picture, so that the entire process is by grace. It was true of Abraham in the past, and it remains true today. When you read this verse, please understand that Paul is contrasting the “the message of the faith” with “the works of the law” – he is not focusing on faith or belief as a work Abraham performed.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The reception of the Spirit implies justification, and is a blessing either dependent upon it or collateral with it. So related to each other are the two gifts, that the apostle binds them together in the

following illustration, which, after dwelling on law, curse, faith, righteousness, life, returns to the leading question answered in verse 14 ... The blessing of Abraham, or justification by faith, and the reception of the Spirit as the Worker of spiritual renewal, are regarded as collateral or as interconnected gifts ... Faith is indispensable only as instrument or condition, not for any merit in itself. The phrases “ek pisteous” or “dia pisteous,” or “en” or “epi ten pistei” are used, but never “dia pistin” – on account of faith. (J. Eadie) Abraham is the father of believers, Gentile as well as Jewish believers; faith alone makes them his sons ... The dative does not mean “in or on God,” but believed what God said, the promise made to him in Gen. 15:4, 5. He believed the promise about the Heir (Christ) who was to come out of his bowels via Isaac who was as yet unborn; he believed that through this Heir his (spiritual) seed would be in number like the stars of heaven. Abraham believed in Christ (John 8:56), in the gospel. (R. Lenski)

Notice that in both passages (Gal. 3:6 and Rom. 4:3) it is said that Abraham “believed God.” It does not say that he believed IN God, but he believed God. This is an infinity of difference between believing IN God and believing God. Even the devils believe IN God. A man may believe IN God, but unless he believes God, he is still lost. To believe God is to accept His Word, to trust His promise. Just believing in the existence of God is not enough. We must believe what He says. The only book which contains His promises is the Bible, so that believing God is believing His Word. Abraham believed what God said ... The gospel that God preached to Abraham centers about a promised son, Isaac; his birth, his death, and his resurrection. Isaac was a type of Jesus. He was a picture of His virgin birth, a picture of His death when Abraham took him to Mt. Moriah, and a picture of Christ in His resurrection when God called to Abraham to spare his son ... What was true of Abraham is true today. Salvation and justification still come by believing God’s Word concerning His Son, His miraculously conceived, supernaturally born, Son. The truth here is as clear as it can be stated: salvation is believing what God says about His Son Jesus Christ. God knows of no other way of redemption for lost humanity. (M. DeHaan)

The passage before us implies that Abraham had no righteousness, or was in want of righteousness which no law could provide for him, and that Jehovah reckoned faith to him as, or in lieu of, such a personal righteousness which he had not. A new principle was brought in by God Himself. The non-righteous Abraham stood before the divine tribunal acquitted and accepted as truly as if he had possessed a personal righteousness through uniform obedience. His faith, not as an act, but as a fact, put him into this position by God’s own deed, without legal fiction or abatement. He was lifted into acceptance with God, however, not on account of his faith, but through it laying hold of the promise. His faith rested on the promise, and through that faith he became its possessor or participant ... He who believes becomes righteous, not innocent as if he had never broken the law or had uniformly kept it, for he has sinned, and Omnipotence itself is unable to reverse a fact. But from all the penal effects of his sin he is graciously absolved, and is treated as righteous by God. It was faith, then, and faith alone, which was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. (J. Eadie)

The substitution is the perfection of justice. Christ’s merit and His righteousness are His own, but He wants them to be ours, makes them ours by faith, even Himself kindles that faith; and in the instant of faith this faith, because of the object it holds, secures the verdict of righteousness. The expression

used by Moses and by Paul is most exact: faith for righteousness. Abraham did not produce his faith nor any part thereof. "Abraham believed God" is as plain as that. God came to Abraham, and not he to God. God made a glorious promise to Abraham, made that promise shine into Abraham's heart with all its divine power of light, grace, and blessedness. So was he brought to believe. Abraham, indeed, believed, but God's Word and His promise moved him to believe. Nothing else and nothing less could do so. Nor was there a possibility that Abraham himself might add a little. There was no need to add anything, the promise and the grace were all-sufficient. God left nothing to be added for the simple reason that Abraham had nothing he could have possibly added. (R. Lenski)

The blessing came to the patriarch (Abraham) through simple trust in God. Those who hoped in Law-keeping, therefore, were not the true followers of Abraham. It was only those who trusted God for salvation and blessing who walked in the patriarch's footsteps. Consequently, all the ceremonialism which tried to shelter itself under the wings of Abraham was a simple imposition! (R. Edgar) Righteousness may be either a forensic term (denoting a right standing before the law) or a right relationship (in this case to God). If the latter definition is taken, then "faith" is the key factor, and Paul's point is that Abraham's trusting attitude toward God was accepted by God as righteousness. But if the forensic use predominates, then it must be God's own righteousness that is imputed to Abraham in place of his own, which was inadequate. (F. Gaebelin) The effectual call gives God His rightful place as the prime mover in the work of grace. If man were the prime mover, there would be no work of grace. (W. Best) "Kathos" refers back to verse 5, but the primary point of comparison must be God's working, rather than the faith of Abraham and the Galatians. (L. Gaston) "Kathos" is not strictly a comparative conjunction but a way of introducing a scripture quotation which will serve as the topic for the next phase of the argument. (Betz)

Something was accounted by God to Abraham as his righteousness, which could not be the act of his faith; for faith is not a man's righteousness, neither in whole nor in part; faith and righteousness are two distinct things, and are often distinguished one from another in Scripture: besides, **that which was accounted to Abraham for righteousness, is imputed to others also, which can never be true of the act of his faith.** The righteousness of Christ, whom he believed in, was accounted to him as his justifying righteousness; that is, by Christ, or by His righteousness imputed and received by faith; and if Abraham was justified this way, as he was, the apostle has his argument against the false teachers. (J. Gill) The life of faith is exemplified in Abraham. Some verses of Scripture appear to some to say that Abraham's faith was reckoned as righteousness upon which the patriarch was justified. If faith were the ground of Abraham's justification, Scripture would necessarily read, "On account of Abraham's faith, he was justified." A consideration of Romans 4, Galatians 3 and James 2 will prove that Scripture never uses such terms as "on account of faith" or "because of faith." The person who has been given the principle of faith does exercise that principle, but the ability to exercise it does not justify him before God. If it did, one would be justified by what he could do rather than what the Lord has done for him. (W. Best)

Galatians 3:6-9 must be read and interpreted in light of the discussion that follows it, which culminates in verses 26-19. To read this passage through the lens of Romans 4 is to misread it. (R. Hays) We would do well to begin by asking whether it is more intelligible to suppose that "believing

in Jesus Christ” is the basis upon which “the promise” is given to those who believe. Is this traditional view entirely satisfactory as an account of Paul’s thought? The apparent appeal to Abraham as the prototype of the justified believer has always created considerable difficulties for Christian exegesis and theology precisely because his faith was not directed toward Christ as object. (R. Hays) Faith is not the reason why God justifies some and not others, but the “response” of those who are justified. (Whiteley) This is one of the causes of the difficulty that the doctrine of justification by faith, as usually understood, is not integrally linked with Christology. If we are justified by believing in Jesus Christ, in what sense is Abraham’s theocentric faith a precedent for ours, or in what sense is our christocentric faith analogous to his? If Abraham could be justified by trusting God, why should we need to believe in Christ to be justified? Why not simply put our trust in God, as Abraham did? (G. Ebeling)

The linkage between 3:6 and 3:7 suggests that “oi ek pisteus” (those of faith) must, like Abraham, be those who have faith in God. Nothing is said in 3:7-9 about “faith in Christ.” There are no cases in Galatians where the noun “pistis” unambiguously denotes “human believing in Christ.” The fact that Paul repeatedly uses the noun without a specific object suggests that he is thinking primarily of the trust toward God that was prefigured by Abraham and definitively enacted by Jesus Christ in such a way that it now shapes the life of all who are “in Christ.” Gal. 3:8-9 presents Abraham as a representative figure “in” whom the word of Scripture blesses those who are his children. But those who are his children stand in this relationship to him precisely insofar as they share his orientation toward God in faith (3:6-7). Abraham is the biblical type to whom the promise was given, Christ the eschatological antitype through whom the promise becomes effectual for those who are “children of promise” (4:28), Abraham’s sons (3:7) ... Abraham’s theocentric faith is not properly analogous to christocentric Christian faith. In fact, on this understanding, both Abraham and Jesus are paradigms for Christian faith and Christian faith itself is – properly understood – theocentric. Abraham is a metaphor for the truth now disclosed in the faith of Jesus Christ. (R. Hays)

The justification of man cannot take place upon the ground of an immediate relationship between the believer and God ... The means of justification is Jesus Christ Himself in His relationship to God and to man. He alone brings us into the right with God ... by His faithfulness He is the true representative ... When Paul elaborates on justification, the faith of Christ is the means and the faith of men in Christ is the purpose and response. (M. Barth) This is representative Christology. (R. Hays) It is an interesting fact – not always appreciated by defenders of the objective genitive interpretation – that such passages are relatively rare in Paul; more characteristically, he speaks of God [Rom. 4:3, 5, 17, 24; Gal. 3:6; 2 Tim. 1:12; Tit. 3:8] or of the content of the proclaimed gospel [Rom. 6:8; 10:9, 16; 1 Cor. 15:11; 1 Thess. 4:14] as the object of faith, or he uses the verb absolutely, with no expressed object. Our interpretive decision about the meaning of Paul’s phrase, therefore, must be governed by larger judgments about the shape and logic of Paul’s thought concerning faith, Christ, and salvation. Indeed, rather than defining the debate as a dispute between subjective genitive and objective genitive readings, we would do better to speak – as some essays have suggested – of a distinction between the christological and anthropological interpretations of “pistis Christou.” The christological reading highlights the salvific efficacy of Jesus Christ’s faith(fulness) for God’s people; the anthropological reading stresses the salvific efficacy of the

human act of faith directed toward Christ. (R. Hays)

In Gal. 3:6-9 Paul seems to say that all who believe are ipso facto Abraham's children and heirs of the promise, but in 3:16-19 he clearly argues that Christ is the one "seed," the exclusive heir. How are these claims to be reconciled? Any attempt to demonstrate the coherence of Paul's argument must meet this problem squarely. (R. Hays) The argument has three phases that manifest distinct soteriologies. First, In Gal. 3:6-9, all who believe are, like Abraham, justified: they are "sons of Abraham" because, like him, they believe. Christ seems to have no role here at all. Second, in Gal. 3:10-14, Christ is the enabler of the blessing – because He enables the prior promise to Abraham to flow to the Gentiles by removing the curse of the law. Third, in Gal. 3:16-29, Christ is represented as the sole recipient and content of the promise ... Paul now states that faith did not become a reality until Christ came, and he seemingly ignores both the case of Abraham and the function of Christ as the enabler of the promise. The peculiar logic of the argument shows that the salvation-historical thrust of the Abraham story can be used by Paul against the Judaizers only if he centers the story Christocentrically (Christ as the exclusive seed) and therefore discontinuously. (Beker)

Protestant exegesis has tended to treat this material carelessly, assuming that the basic sense of the passage is contained in 3:6-9 and the rest of the argument must somehow conform to the idea presumably expressed there: just as Abraham was justified by believing in God, so also we are justified by believing in Christ. From this point of view, it has always been difficult to comprehend Paul's argument about Christ as the singular "seed" in verses 16 and 19, and there has been a strong tendency to disregard this latter conception as a peculiar and inessential quirk in Paul's thinking. Beker rightly perceives, however, that the idea of Christ as the one "seed" who is the sole heir of the promise governs verses 16-29, and that it is in fact the "center" of Paul's treatment of the Abraham story. The difficulty is then that verses 6-9 and 10-14 seem to stand as unintegrated remnants of other theological positions ... Our difficulty in grasping the argumentative coherence of the central section of Galatians is attributable in large part to a deeply entrenched but mistaken interpretation of the first half of Galatians 3. Christians are justified/redeemed not by virtue of their own faith but because they participate in Jesus Christ, Who enacted the obedience of faith on their behalf. Abraham is understood by Paul not as an exemplar of faith in Christ but as a typological foreshadowing of Christ Himself, a representative figure whose faithfulness secures blessing and salvation vicariously for others. (R. Hays)

Gal. 3:6 Just as (primarily introductory, not comparative; exactly, in this manner, for example) Abraham (Subj. Nom.) trusted (πιστεύω, AAI3S, Ingressive; believed) God (Dat. Ind. Obj.; in what He said: the promise), and (continuative) it (trusting in God) was credited (λογίζομαι, API3S, Culminative; counted, reckoned, legal element: imputed) to him (Dat. Adv.) for righteousness (Pred. Acc.; forensic, substitutionary justification).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:6** Καθὼς Ἀβραὰμ ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην·

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:6** sicut Abraham credidit Deo et reputatum est ei ad iustitiam

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:7** You know, therefore, that those out from the source of [Christ's] faithfulness, these are sons of Abraham.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:7** You perceive, therefore, that those who are of faith, these are sons of Abraham.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:7** Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Those who are “out from the source of faithfulness” is a reference to our connection with (participation in) Christ’s faithfulness, not our own faith. By resting in Christ’s faithfulness, we become sons of Abraham. To be sure, we have to believe in Christ to be justified; but the emphasis here is on His faithfulness. The faithfulness in this verse is a continuation of the theme of the faithfulness of Christ mentioned in Gal. 2:20. The historical “faithfulness of God” in 3:7 points to the eschatological “faithfulness of Christ” in Gal. 2:20. Keep repeating this phrase to keep things in perspective: Galatians is theocentric and christocentric, not anthropocentric. This portion of Galatians (3:1 - 4:11) is not about you or me; it is about the Father, Son and Spirit.

Galatians 3 may require a mental stretch for some of you. What I started presenting in Galatians 2 and will continue to present through the end of this epistle requires such a stretch. Putting new wine in an old wineskin is a difficult proposition. The old wineskin won’t stretch; it just breaks. There’s nothing wrong with old wine as long as it is in an old wineskin. But there’s a tremendous benefit of having new wine if you put it in a new wineskin. What am I talking about? The old wine is the traditional understanding (per Martin Luther) that Galatians primarily teaches justification by faith. The old wineskin is anthropocentric and evangelistic, with emphasis on “faith in Christ.”

The new wine is the understanding (per Richard Hays) that Galatians primarily teaches justification out from the source of Christ’s faithfulness. The new wineskin is christocentric and is a narrative or story of what He accomplished for His people on the cross. Its emphasis is on the “faithfulness of Christ.” As I have mentioned before, justification by faith is a true doctrine, but it is better represented in Romans. Galatians takes that “justification by faith” and encapsulates it with the “faithfulness of Christ.” So for many of you, the question is whether your wineskin is able to hold such truth.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The phrase “oi ek pisteus” occurs in Paul only here and in verse 9, a fact whose significance we would do well to ponder. Why has Paul formulated (or adopted) this rather awkward expression? Is it conditioned by something in the surrounding context? Does it function in some special way in his argument? Usually, the phrase is read as though it were equivalent to “the believers” or “those who believe,” and the thought of verses 6-9 is consequently treated as a condensed version of Romans 4: Christian believers are justified, like Abraham, because, like Abraham, they believe. As we have

repeatedly emphasized, it is not entirely clear what role Christ might play in relation to this justifying faith, and the soteriological schema that results from this interpretation of verses 6-9 stands in apparent contradiction to the latter half of Galatians 3 ... This is clearest in 3:22, in which, as we have seen, the promise is given “out of Jesus Christ’s faith” to those who believe. As a result of Christ’s faith, His people are given life. This, as we have seen, is precisely the meaning of Gal. 2:20b: “I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.” We suggest that “oi ek pisteus” carries not primarily the connotation of “those who have faith” but rather the connotation of “those who are given life on the basis of [Christ’s] faith.” (R. Hays)

It would be a mistake to attempt to exclude “those who believe” as one part of Paul’s meaning. However, this is not the exclusive or even primary meaning demanded by the context; Paul is not concerned here with developing the parallelism between Abraham’s faith and the faith of Christians. Instead, he wants to argue that a particular group of people – for whom he invents the designation “oi ek pisteus” – are Abraham’s “sons” and therefore share in the blessing that Abraham received. These people share the blessing not because their faith imitates Abraham’s faith, but because they participate in Christ, Who is Abraham’s seed. (R. Hays) His reasoning in Galatians is in terms of the Christian believer’s participation in Christ (3:26, 29), the one seed of Abraham in whom the promise went into fulfillment (3:16), as had been intended already at the announcement of the promise (3:8, 3:29). Christians, thus, have no direct relationship to Abraham. Their relationship to him is dependent on their belonging to Christ (3:29) ... He is the mediating point between Abraham and the peoples that are blessed in him. (Boers) Christ is not the object of Abraham’s faith; rather, Abraham’s faith is a foreshadowing of Christ’s. This interpretation hinges upon the claim that “ek pisteus” in verses 7 and 9 should be understood as an allusion to Hab. 2:4, understood messianically ... “the just shall live by His faith.” (R. Hays)

Circumcision and physical descent from Abraham were irrelevant. The men of faith were those who, like Abraham, believed God’s promises, entrusted themselves to His love and mercy, lived as His sons and friends, and so were in right relationship with Him. In this sense Abraham was the faith-father of the Christians ... So far from being an innovation and afterthought, the gospel of grace had been God’s way of salvation from the beginning, revealed through faith and to faith ... Possessing the inward presence of Christ brought to a man every worthwhile, permanent, enriching promise that any son of Abraham could possess. Paul’s heritage was not discarded in Christ, but was fulfilled and illuminated; he had gained, not lost. He has everything of lasting value which a true Jew could possess, plus a sonship that Abraham could not give ... God would thus not only declare a man righteous; He would also make him righteous. Paul was saying out of his own experience that there is a “power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness.” It is the source of the good life, a source not in moral precepts or legal requirements, but in a new relationship. (R. Stamm) In Galatians 2:20 (as here), Paul is putting the emphasis back on the Son of God. It is His faith, not mine, by which I survive. God never calls upon me to do something, to produce something in order to survive. It’s altogether His ... I do not, then, make void the grace of God. God will not have cooperation with man in the work of redemption. (K. Lamb)

Gal. 3:7 You know (γινώσκω, PAI2P, Static), therefore (inferential), that (introductory) those (Subj. Nom.) out from the

source of faithfulness (Abl. Source, Origin; Christ's), these (Subj. Nom.; same ones) are (εἰμι, PAI3P, Descriptive) sons (Pred. Nom.) of Abraham (Gen. Rel.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:7** γινώσκετε ἄρα ὅτι οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, οὗτοι υἱοὶ εἰσιν Ἀβραάμ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:7** cognoscitis ergo quia qui ex fide sunt hii sunt filii Abrahæ

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:8** And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles out from the source of [Abraham's] faithfulness, proclaimed the good news in advance to Abraham: In you all peoples [including non-Jews] will be blessed.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:8** And the scripture, foreseeing that on a basis of faith God justifies the Gentiles, announced the good news beforehand to Abraham, namely, All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:8** And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Before you start reading Romans 4 into this verse, by now you already know what I'm going to say next: Paul is emphasizing the faithfulness of Abraham, not our faith. Not only will God justify (Futuristic Present tense) Israel based on the faithfulness of Abraham, but He will also justify Gentiles. This is explained clearly in Genesis 22:18. All the nations will be blessed (Predictive Future tense) because of Abraham's faithfulness. And to be more specific, the Greek word "ethnos" refers to people, in this case non-Jewish people. The idea in this verse is Abraham-centric, not we-specific – in parallel to our justification being Christ-centric, not we-specific. According to the foretelling in scripture (Ingressive Aorist tense), Gentiles are not blessed "like" Abraham by our act of faith, but rather Gentiles are blessed "because" of the faithfulness of Abraham. Paul is painting a picture of vicarious, efficacious, representative blessing due to the faithfulness of another. Abraham is a type of Christ. There are plenty of other passages that emphasize "our believing," but in this case, let's give Abraham his due and not destroy the typology!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The linkage between 3:6 and 3:7 suggests that "oi ek pisteus" (those of faith) must, like Abraham, be those who have faith in God. Nothing is said in 3:7-9 about "faith in Christ." There are no cases in Galatians where the noun "pistis" unambiguously denotes "human believing in Christ." The fact that Paul repeatedly uses the noun without a specified object suggests that he is thinking primarily of the trust toward God that was prefigured by Abraham and definitely enacted by Jesus Christ in such a way that it now shapes the life of all who are "in Christ." (R. Hays) Christians have no direct relationship to Abraham. Their relationship to him is dependent on their belonging to Christ. He is

the mediating point between Abraham and the peoples that are blessed in him. (Boers) Christ is not the object of Abraham's faith; rather, Abraham's faith is a foreshadowing of Christ's ... Rather than discussing the salvific efficacy of faith as a mode of relationship to God, he appeals again to Genesis, this time producing a mixed quotation from Gen. 12:3 and 18:18 ... Gentiles are included in God's blessing of Abraham, not on the ground of their own faith, but on the ground of Abraham's faith, which is deemed to have a vicarious soteriological effect. (R. Hays)

It is God who sends the blessing of Abraham upon the Gentiles and God who gives the Spirit ... I still hold that Gal. 3:8-9 presents Abraham as a representative figure "in" whom the word of Scripture blesses those who are his children. But those who are his children stand in this relationship to him precisely insofar as they share his orientation (3:6-7) toward God in faith. Christ is Abraham's seed (sperma), and those who are Christ's are the seed of Abraham. Abraham is the biblical type to whom the promise was given, Christ the eschatological antitype through whom the promise becomes effectual for those who are "children of promise," Abraham's sons ... Abraham is a metaphor for the truth now disclosed in the faith of Jesus Christ ... These people share the blessing not because their faith imitates Abraham's faith, but because they participate in Christ, who is Abraham's seed ... It is very important to recognize that the blessing is given to the Gentiles not in consequence of their faith, but in consequence of Abraham's; the blessing that God confers upon Abraham is extended vicariously to all nations. The Gentiles are blessed not on the analogy of Abraham, but "in" him. (R. Hays)

Paul uses the Genesis citation in support of his argument that God justifies the Gentiles "ek pisteus." The action of justification is portrayed in this formulation as God's action done to the Gentiles. The crucial exegetical question concerns the meaning of "ek pisteus." Does the sentence mean that God justifies the Gentiles on the basis of their faith? Or does it mean that God, out of His faithfulness, justifies the Gentiles? Or does it mean that God justifies the Gentiles on the basis of Abraham's faith? The first of these interpretations is by all accounts the least likely. The most natural reading, from a syntactical point of view, would be to interpret "ek pisteus" as an adverbial modifier expressing the manner in which God performs His act of justifying the Gentiles, rather than the condition they must fulfill in order for Him to perform it. Paul equates the justification of Gentiles "ek pisteus" with the fact that they are blessed by God in Abraham, long before and apart from any "believing" on their part. This blessing is equated with justification. (R. Hays) One is justified before God by the righteousness of Jesus Christ which has been imputed to his account. This is not faith righteousness but righteousness out of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. In contrast with the righteousness out of the law that brings terror, the righteousness out of the faithfulness of Christ gives peace and forbids us to fear damnation. (W. Best)

Gal. 3:8 And (continuative) the scripture (Subj. Nom.), forseeing (προοράω, AAPtc.NFS, Constativē; see previously, in advance) that (introductory) God (Subj. Nom.) would justify (δικαίω, PAI3S, Futuristic) the Gentiles (Acc. Adv.; heathen) out from the source of faithfulness (Abl. Source), proclaimed the good news in advance (προεὐαγγελίζομαι, AMI3S, Ingressive, Deponent) to Abraham (Dat. Adv.): In you (Loc. Sph.) all (Nom. Measure) peoples (Subj. Nom.;

nations, non-Jews) **will be blessed** (ἐνευλογέω, FPI3P, Predictive).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:8** προῖδοῦσα δὲ ἡ γραφή ὅτι ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοῖ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεός, προευγγελίστατο τῷ Ἀβραάμ ὅτι ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη·

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:8** providens autem scriptura quia ex fide iustificat gentes Deus praenuntiavit Abrahae quia benedicentur in te omnes gentes

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:9** So then, those [Jews and Gentiles] out from the source of faithfulness are being blessed together with faithful Abraham.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:9** So that those who are believing ones are being blessed in company with believing Abraham.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:9** So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Verse 9 is a short recap on what has been said in verses 6-8. Those Jews and Gentiles who are out from the source of faithfulness are being blessed (Perfective Present tense) together with faithful Abraham. As mentioned in the prior verse, the emphasis is on Abraham's faithfulness, not our believing. We are not blessed "like" Abraham by our act of faith, but rather Gentiles are blessed "because" of the faithfulness of Abraham. Our representative union with Abraham is a type of our representative union with Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

What Paul has done in Gal. 3:6-18 is to bring a cluster of messianic themes (Righteous One, seed, inheritance) into conjunction with Hab. 2:4, interpreted messianically, so that the Messiah's faith becomes the key to his inheritance of life and the promises. If this interpretation is correct, then "oi ek pisteus" (Gal. 3:7, 9) must be those who "live" on the basis of the faith of the Messiah, or perhaps those who share the faith of the Messiah ... This interpretation offers the possibility of establishing greater coherence in Paul's rather confusing argumentation in Galatians 3, by identifying "the Righteous One" who will live by faith (3:11) with "the seed" who inherits the promises (3:16). Christ is the hero/subject in the drama of justification. From this point of view, Paul's repeated allusions in Galatians 3 to Hab 2:4 would serve as references not primarily to the individual believer's justifying faith but to the faith of Christ. (R. Hays)

The faithful Abraham receives from God a blessing that carries with it a promise that the Gentiles will be blessed "in" Abraham and/or "in his seed." This blessing is not said to be contingent upon anything that the Gentiles might do in the future. If it can be said to be contingent upon anything at all, other than God's grace, it is contingent, in the Genesis story, upon Abraham's obedient faith. That is why the Gentiles are to be blessed, in the words of the promise that Paul quotes, "in you." The traditional interpretation of Gal. 3:6-9 clashes not only with the latter part of Galatians 3 but also

with verse 8, which depicts Abraham not only as an exemplary paradigm for faith - but as a representative figure in and through whom others are blessed. Therefore, the curious expression “oi ek pisteus” must be interpreted in light of the rest of the chapter, especially verses 14, 16, 22 and 29 ... and not as Christians being justified because their faith is structurally analogous to Abraham’s faith. (R. Hays)

Gal. 3:9 So then (result), those (Subj. Nom.; Jews and Gentiles) out from the source of faithfulness (Abl. Source) are being blessed (εὐλογέω, PPI3P, Perfective) together with faithful (Dat. Ref., Instr. Manner; reliable, fidelity) Abraham (Dat. Accompaniment).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:9** ὥστε οἱ ἐκ πίστεως εὐλογοῦνται σὺν τῷ πιστῷ Ἀβραάμ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:9** igitur qui ex fide sunt benedicentur cum fideli Abraham

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:10** For as many as are out from the source of the works of the law are under the curse, for it stands written that: Cursed is everyone who does not persevere in [keep perfectly] all the things [not just a few commandments] which are written in the book of the law for the purpose of carrying them out [fulfilling them to the letter].

^{KW} **Gal. 3:10** For as many as are of the works of the law are under curse, for it stands written, Cursed is every one who is not remaining constantly in all things which stand written in the book of the law in order to do them.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:10** For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Every person who bases his life on the source of the works of the law is (Gnomic Present tense) under the curse of the law. The law has no power to give life; it only administers death. Works are not an agent of redemption; Christ is the only Agent of redemption. It is written (Intensive Perfect tense) that everyone who does not continue to fulfill the law (Durative Present tense) in every minute detail contained in the book of the law is cursed. If the purpose of an individual is to keep the law to perfection in order to obtain justification (Culminative Aorist tense), this individual is cursed. The only person who has ever successfully kept the law to perfection was Jesus Christ. As mentioned many times before, our goal (positionally) is not to live by our own faithfulness, but by His faithfulness. It is impossible for us to keep the law to perfection, but it was possible for our Representative to do so. We share or participate in His justification, rather than pursue our own justification by self-effort.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

With verse 10, Paul counterattacks with a blessing-curse polarity. Quoting Deut. 27:26, he seeks to

demonstrate that the Torah itself imposes a curse upon all who fail to abide scrupulously by its provision. (R. Hays) Great care is needed to understand Paul here. He does not say that the curse is God's curse. It is the curse of the law, and of law misconceived as a way of salvation. The law was not God's way of salvation, but only a codicil which angels added through Moses the intermediary. The curse lay in thinking about God according to the law court and the countinghouse, instead of according to Christ. (R. Stamm) The point of hanging a criminal in this way was to expose his capital crime to public shame. Hoisting his body onto a tree demonstrated that he was under God's curse ... Imagine, then, how offensive Christianity was to the Jews, because at the very heart of its message was a man hanging on a tree! The apostles almost went out of their way to call the cross a "tree." At the same time, they claimed that the crucified Jesus was also the Christ. To the Jews, this was absolute blasphemy: a cursed Messiah on a cursed cross. (P. Ryken)

The unexpressed premise of the argument is that no one does, in fact, continue in all the things that are written in the book of the law to do them. Paul's intention is to demonstrate the unfulfillability of the law as its intrinsic meaning. (Burton) Whether it is possible to keep all the commandments of the Law is beside the point, because in any case keeping the commandments cannot produce justification and life ... The Messiah Himself attains life and vindication not through the Law but "ek pisteus;" the same principle must therefore apply also to the Messiah's people. The Messiah defines the "pattern" for justification and life; consequently, since He lived and died and was raised "ek pisteus," justification through keeping the commandments must be in principle (not merely de facto) impossible. Paul rejects the Law not because of an empirical observation that no one can do what it requires, but because its claim to give life, explicitly articulated in Lev. 18:5 and Gal. 3:12, is incompatible with the gospel story, which says that Christ had to die in order to give life to us. (R. Hays) The "ek" is expressive, denoting origination and that dependence which it characterizes. (J. Eadie) The law demands practical obedience, personal obedience, perfect obedience and perpetual obedience. (E. Huxtable)

In these unmistakable words of the Holy Spirit, Paul asserts that any man who at any time, or in any measure has ever broken one of the laws of God, only once, is under the curse of the law and is lost, condemned and hopeless as far as the penalty of the law is concerned. It is well to ponder these words carefully, and to ask yourself the question, "Am I under the law?" Then if you have not kept the entire law in every detail all of your life without a single interruption, then according to these unmistakable words, you are under the curse of God and must suffer the penalty of the law which is eternal death and separation from the presence of your Creator. The Bible further states that no man lives, and that no man has ever lived (except Jesus), who has been able to keep the law of God perfectly. One single unclean thought, one hasty word, one little lie, one moment in life when we failed to love God with all our might and heart and strength makes us guilty of breaking God's law ... If, therefore, God had given us only His perfect law, we would all necessarily be lost, we should all be destined to an eternal Hell. But here God enters in with His wonderful message of grace. The law could not save, justify, or sanctify the sinner. It cannot make the sinner a saint, it cannot forgive sin, it cannot change the heart, it cannot teach us to live better, it cannot help us out of our predicament in any way whatsoever. All the law can do is demand punishment and justice, and pronounce our sentence, reveal our filthiness and unworthiness, and curse our disobedience with

eternal death. That is the sole ministry of the law. It was never intended to save. (M. DeHaan)

Gal. 3:10 For (explanatory) as many as (Subj. Nom.) are (εἰμι, PAI3P, Static) out from the source of the works (Abl. Source) of the law (Adv. Gen. Ref.) are (εἰμι, PAI3P, Gnostic) under the curse (Acc. Disadv.), for (explanatory) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.AI3P, Intensive) that (introductory): Cursed (Pred. Nom.) is (ellipsis) everyone (Subj. Nom.) who (Nom. Appos.) does not (neg. adv.) persevere in (ἐμμένω, PAI3S, Durative; stand true to) all (Dat. Measure) the things (Dat. Ind. Obj.) which are written (Perf.PPtc.DNP, Intensive, Attributive) in the book (Loc. Place) of the law (Adv. Gen. Ref., Spec.) for the purpose of carrying them (Acc. Dir. Obj.; all without exception) out (ποιέω, AAInf., Culminative, Purpose; keeping, accomplishing, doing).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:10** Ὅσοι γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου εἰσὶν, ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσὶν· γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτά.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:10** quicumque enim ex operibus legis sunt sub maledicto sunt scriptum est enim maledictus omnis qui non permanserit in omnibus quae scripta sunt in libro legis ut faciat ea

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:11** However, no one is justified by means of the law in the sight of God, since it is clear [in Hab. 2:4] that: The Righteous One [immediate reference: Jesus Christ; remote reference: the individual believer in Christ] shall live out from the source of faith(fulness).

^{KW} **Gal. 3:11** But that in a sphere of law no one is being justified in the sight of God is clear, because, The righteous man shall live by means of faith.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:11** But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is evident:* for, The just shall live by faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Some of you are going to think I won't make up my mind on this verse, because I'm going to interpret the difficult quote from Habakkuk 2:4 in two ways. But if you read the shortened version of Dr. Hay's explanation, you will see that it can be legitimately interpreted in two or three different ways. The first phrase of the verse is rather easy to understand: no one will ever be justified (Gnostic Present tense) by means of the law in the sight of God. Our old sin nature will prevent each and every one of us from keeping the law to absolute perfection for an entire lifetime. This pronouncement by Paul is reinforced by the multiple and simultaneous meanings of Hab. 2:4. The Righteous One, Jesus Christ, lived out from the source of faithfulness, not the law. And every believer shall live out from the source of His faithfulness, not the law.

The verb is both gnostic (always the case, no exceptions) and predictive. The primary or

immediate emphasis is on Christ's faithfulness; the secondary or remote reference is on the believer's faith. The manuscript evidence for Hab. 2:4 in the LXX and the Hebrew is inconclusive. I believe it should be translated "His faithfulness" because the context is christocentric and eschatological, pointing to the Messiah. I also believe Paul left out the "His" when quoting it deliberately, so the readers would have the prototype in mind (the faithfulness of Jesus Christ) as well as their responsibility (individual believer's faith). The contrasts and parallels of the two are also in Paul's mind. Christ fulfilled the law and was justified before God. No man or woman will ever fulfill the law and be justified before God. Christ was faithful, and we rest (trust) in His faithfulness.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In none of these passages (Gal. 3:2, 3:11, or 3:22) does Paul's emphasis lie upon the salvific efficacy of the individual activity of "believing." Nowhere in Galatians 3 does Paul speak of Jesus Christ as the object toward which human faith is to be directed ... The logic of Paul's argument depends upon a story in which Jesus Christ acts by the power of faith to bring salvation to humanity ... Much of the discussion of 3:11 (and of its parallel in Rom. 1:17) has centered on the problem of whether Paul understands the Habakkuk quotation to mean "the righteous [one] shall live by faith" or "the one-who-is-righteous-by-faith shall live." In other words, does the phrase "ek pisteus" modify "dikaios," thus explaining how one becomes "righteous" (= justified), or does it modify the verb "zesetai," thus explaining the manner in which the one who is righteous shall "live"? Galatians 3:11b should be translated "the righteous one shall live [= be justified] by faith." (R. Hays)

Far more crucial and interesting is a question that has been posed by exegetes: who is "the righteous one" to whom the Habakkuk citation refers? (R. Hays) "Ho dikaios" (the righteous one) is read by Paul as a designation, if not a formal title, for the Messiah. (A.T. Hanson) This hypothesis deserves serious consideration, not only because other (non-Pauline) NT texts explicitly apply the designation "ho dikaios" to Jesus (Acts 3:14, 7:52, 22:14; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:1 and especially Isaiah 53:11) but also because, the LXX rendering of Hab. 2:3-4 would have appeared to Paul as unmistakably messianic ... Paul's repeated allusions in Galatians 3 to Hab. 2:4 (in the catchphrase "ek pisteus") would serve as references not primarily to the individual believer's justifying faith but to the faith of Christ ... And because we participate in Jesus Christ, who lived "ek pisteus" we also live "en pistei." (R. Hays) Here, as in Romans 1:17, Paul corrects the LXX who translate, "out of my faith," i.e., God's faith or faithfulness. The Hebrew has "His faith," i.e., the Righteous One's faith. (R. Lenski)

The manuscript evidence presents basically four different readings. The righteous one shall live by: (a) his faithfulness, (b) my faithfulness, (c) by faith, or (d) My righteous one shall live by faith. The text in the form given by Paul is ambiguous ... In fact, there are at least three possible interpretations of "pistis" in Paul's version of Hab. 2:4 – God's faithfulness, the faithfulness of the Messiah, or the faith of people in God. There is no explicit discussion in Galatians (unlike Romans) of God's faithfulness, and there is therefore no reason to think that Paul intends to emphasize this meaning here. In fact, Paul's omission of "mou" (My) from the citation may well mean that he was intentionally avoiding this interpretation of the text. There is every reason to think, however, that the

remaining ambiguity of “ek pisteus” (= the faith of the Messiah/the faith of the believer) serves Paul’s purposes very well. (R. Hays) The LXX translates Hab. 2:4 as follows: My faithfulness, that is, of Jahwe. (H. Ridderbos)

Thus, three possible interpretations of Gal. 3:11 (= Hab. 2:4 as employed by Paul) remain: (a) The Messiah will live by (His own) faithfulness. (b) The righteous person will live as a result of the Messiah’s faithfulness. (c) The righteous person will live by (his own) faith (in the Messiah). Paul’s thought is rendered wholly intelligible only if all three of these interpretations are held together and affirmed as correct. The ambiguity of Paul’s formulation allows him to draw multiple implications out of the Habukkuk text. Paul’s gospel is founded upon the story of a Messiah who is vindicated (= justified) by God through faith. This Messiah (Jesus Christ) is not, however, a solitary individual whose triumph accrues only to His own benefit; He is a representative figure in Whom the destiny of all God’s elect is embodied. Thus, all are justified through His faith. Their response to Him, however, is also one of faith. Consequently, the statement “ho dikaios ek pisteus zesetai” can function for Paul on all three levels at once. (R. Hays) Ah, this summary is most excellent! (LWB)

Once again, it is clear that the passage in view – not just 3:11, but the whole section 3:6-18 – does not explicitly point to Christ as the object of faith. (Crisis in Galatia: Howard). Gal. 3:11 specifies neither object nor subject of faith; thus the phrase “ek pisteus” is capable of being understood in several different ways, some of which lead to a closer connection between Christology and justification by pointing to Christ Himself as the Righteous One who is justified by faithfulness. The exegetical considerations advanced here have pointed toward a reading of Gal. 3:11 which places the primary emphasis upon Christ’s faith, rather than upon the faith of the individual Christian as a means of attaining life. (R. Hays) If you haven’t guessed by now - after all of my quotes from Dr. Hays and others – this is my viewpoint of this chapter in Galatians. Again, as I have said before, Galatians 3 is christocentric, not anthropocentric. (LWB)

Gal. 3:11 However (adversative), no one (Subj. Nom.) is justified (δικαιόω, PPI3S, Gnomic) by means of the law (Instr. Means) in the sight (judgment) of God (Prep. Loc.), since (causal) it is (ellipsis) clear (Pred. Nom.; in Habukkuk 2:4) that (introductory): The Righteous One (Subj. Nom.; primary reference: Jesus Christ; remote reference: the individual believer) shall live (ζάω, FMI3S, Gnomic & Predictive) out from the source of faith (Abl. Source).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:11** ὅτι δὲ ἐν νόμῳ οὐδεὶς δικαιοῦται παρὰ τῷ θεῷ δῆλον, ὅτι ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται·

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:11** quoniam autem in lege nemo iustificatur apud Deum manifestum est quia iustus ex fide vivit

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:12** Moreover, the law is not out from the source of faith. Indeed, the one who attempts to keep them [commandments of the law] will live in the sphere of them [under legal commandments as a principle of life rather than faith].

^{KW} **Gal. 3:12** And the law is not of faith; but the one who has done them shall live in them.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:12** And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It is a simple fact that the law came hundreds of years after the principle of faith. But that does not mean that the law came out from the source of faith. Paul immediately crushes that legalistic rationalization! The law is a completely separate entity compared to faith. So the person who attempts to keep the law (Constative Aorist tense) will be living in the sphere of the commandments of the law rather than in the sphere of faith. As a source of life, the Church Age believer is to live by faith as opposed to law. The gnomic future tense points to what will always happen under given circumstances: if you attempt to keep the law, you will be living under the law as a principle - and that principle brings death, not life. I also see a deliberative element in this verb: is this a desirable action on your part? Are you sure you really want to live in the sphere of the law instead of faith? The law brought the curse; do you want to live your whole life under a curse? Wouldn't you rather trust in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ to fulfill the law for you, as opposed to your trying to keep it to absolute perfection by your own efforts?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

From Gal. 3:11-12, it is clear that “pistis” and “nomos” are opposed not as rival juridical concepts but as alternative sources of life. Indeed, the whole point of the argument is precisely that “pistis” is nonjuridical, that it is a source of life apart from the realm of law. (R. Hays) The law is not of faith, but belongs to the market, where men drive bargains, and to the courts, where they bring suit against one another. (R. Stamm)

Gal. 3:12 Moreover (coordinating), the law (Subj. Nom.) is (είμι, PAI3S, Descriptive) not (neg. adv.) out from the source of faith (Abl. Source). Indeed (emphatic), the one (Subj. Nom.) who attempts to keep (ποιέω, AAPtc.NMS, Constative, Substantival & Concessive; accomplish) them (Acc. Dir. Obj.; commandments) will live (ζάω, FMI3S, Gnostic & Deliberative) in the sphere of them (Loc. Sph.; under the law as a principle of life rather than faith).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:12** ὁ δὲ νόμος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ πίστεως, ἀλλ' ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:12** lex autem non est ex fide sed qui fecerit ea vivet in illis

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:13** Christ delivered us [Jewish believers] by the payment of a ransom from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us [on the cross], for it stands written: “Cursed is every one who is hung upon a tree,”

^{KW} **Gal. 3:13** Christ delivered us by the payment of a ransom from the curse of the law by becoming a curse in behalf of us, because it stands written: Accursed is everyone who is suspended upon a tree,

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:13** Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Notice what this verse does not say. It does not say, “Christ delivered us so that we might receive a ransom from the curse of the law if we exercise our positive volition.” Christ delivered us from the curse of the law by the payment of a ransom (Dramatic Aorist tense) without asking our opinion or requiring anything on our part. This happened historically; it was a finished work two-thousand years ago. We were not there to say “Yes” or “No.” It was not a hypothetical ransom for a hypothetical group of people. Notice something else of great importance. This statement is directed to Jewish believers only. Why? The law was given to the nation Israel, not to Gentiles. Gentiles have never been under the curse of the law, unless they have decided to illegitimately place themselves under it. Only Jews were under the law, and this freedom from the law (redemption) is addressed specifically to Jewish believers. But this verse cannot be singled-out as all that was accomplished on the cross. This passage only covers part of what was accomplished on the cross – that part for Jewish believers. And this passage only covers part of that accomplishment for them, not the entire picture. We must take 13-15 together as a unit. Verse 13 is for Jewish believers, verse 14 is for Gentile believers, and verse 15 is for both Jewish and Gentile believers without distinction.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The focus of my work is on the christological elements of the “topical sequence” of Paul’s foundational story, the dramatic events of Jesus’ death and its immediate consequences ... Christ’s faithfulness is enacted in His giving Himself up, His becoming a curse, His taking the form of a servant ... Christ is the Subject not the object of the main clause ... The blessings of salvation are achieved through Christ’s death on a cross ... When we begin an analysis of the christological formulation that appears in Gal. 3:13-14, we discover that we have plunged directly into the topical sequence of the gospel story-structure ... Christ “became a curse” not through leaving His preexistent blessedness and entering the network of human relations but very specifically through and in His crucifixion. Gal. 3:13 does not relate discrete events in chronological succession; instead it summarizes the action of the performance syntagm, seen as a whole ... Christ is the Subject, and the Opponent is “the curse of the law.” In 3:13 the object is redemption (= freedom) and the receivers are “us” (= Jews). Paul does not subordinate the story of “atonement as a cosmic event” to his teaching about justification by faith; rather, his teaching about justification by faith presupposes and rests upon the story of the cosmic event whereby God reconciled the world to Himself. (R. Hays)

Suppose one man to rely on his own faith and another to rely on his own works, then the faith of the one and the works of the other are equally the same worthless filthy rags. (William Law) The Jew-

Gentile distinction must maintain its historical specificity for Paul, and “hemas” in 3:13 must refer to Jews. (Schlier, Hays) The emphasis in Paul’s theology lies less on the question of how we should dispose ourselves toward God than on the question of how God has acted in Christ to effect our deliverance ... Gal. 3:13 picks up the thread of the gospel story precisely at its climactic point, alluding to and summarizing Christ’s completion of His mission ... The pattern is: Christ’s action enables the Jews to receive redemption, the Gentiles to receive blessing/adoption (vs. 14), and Jews and Gentiles alike to receive the Spirit (vs. 15). The formulation moves from an initial division between “us” and “them” toward a final inclusive “we” which makes no distinction between Jews and Gentile. (R. Hays) The penalty of the law for failing to keep the Sabbath day is death by stoning. If we are to be consistent, that must be the penalty for those who break the law. (K. Lamb) The word “us” refers to the Jewish nation. The Mosaic law was given to the Jew only. (K. Wuest)

The law’s accursed penalty did not apply to Jesus personally because he never broke the law, but God imputed our sins to His Son. The whole emphasis is on the phrase “for us.” When Christ took our sins upon Himself He was accursed, not for His own sins, but for ours. The curse we deserved was legally transferred from us to Him. In that old cursed cross we see the wrath of God against the sin of humanity. The cross is a public demonstration for all time of His condemnation. (P. Ryken) Christ’s atonement does not render salvation a mere potential for all men, but infallibly secures the salvation of those whom God the Father had elected. God’s justice requires satisfaction and finds it in Christ’s bearing the guilt of the elect and absorbing the wrath due their sin, thus removing all obstacles to God’s dealing mercifully with man. (T. Nettles) The atonement appears as an effective propitiatory transaction that actually redeemed – that is, secured redemption for – those particular persons for whom Jesus on the cross became the God-appointed substitute. Since the Bible rules out all thought of universal salvation, yet depicts the cross as effective for the salvation of those for whom it was endured, “particular” or “definite” redemption must be the true concept. (T. Schreiner) The persons redeemed are “us,” God’s elect, both of Jews and Gentiles; a peculiar people, the people of Christ, whom the Father gave unto Him; some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: the blessing obtained for them is redemption. (J. Gill)

Gal. 3:13 Christ (Subj. Nom.) delivered us (Acc. Adv.; Jewish believers) by the payment of a ransom (ἐξαγοράζω, AAI3S, Dramatic) from the curse (Abl. Separation) of the law (Adv. Gen. Ref.) by becoming (γίνομαι, AMPtc.NMS, Ingressive, Modal, Deponent) a curse (Pred. Nom.) for us (Gen. Adv.; Jewish believers), for (introductory; since) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive): “Cursed (Pred. Nom.) is (ellipsis) every (Nom. Measure) one (Subj. Nom.; person) who is hung (κρεμάννυμι, PPPtc.NMS, Dramatic & Aoristic, Substantival) upon a tree (Gen. Place), ”

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:13** Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξαγόρασεν ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρᾳ, ὅτι γέγραπται· ἐπικατάρματος πᾶς ὁ κρεμάνμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου,

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:13** Christus nos redemit de maledicto legis factus pro nobis maledictum quia scriptum est maledictus omnis qui pendet in ligno

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:14** So that the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus [positional relationship], so that as a result we [Jews & Gentiles] would receive the promise of the Spirit through [Christ's] faithfulness.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:14** In order that to the Gentiles the blessing of Abraham might come in Jesus Christ, to the end that the promise of the Spirit we [Jew and Gentile] might receive through faith.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:14** That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

You already know what I'm going to say next, don't you? The emphasis in this passage is on the divine side of the equation, not the human side. The emphasis is christological, not anthropological. Both Jew and Gentile believers receive the promise of the Spirit (Culminative Aorist tense) as a result of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, not by a single act or continued acts of our own faithfulness. Don't we have to believe in Christ Jesus for this to take place? Yes, we do. I have already established that we are justified by Christ's faithfulness, which then becomes the basis for our being justified by our believing in Him. The blessing of Abraham comes to the Gentile believer (Culminative Aorist tense) through the faithfulness of Christ Jesus. The believer receives them in time by believing in Christ. The two phrases here are not potential subjunctives, meaning the promise of the Spirit is received "if" we fulfill something on our part. The two phrases here are result subjunctives: meaning the promise of the Spirit is received on the basis of, or through our relationship to, Christ's faithfulness.

The emphasis in this entire epistle is on Christ's faithfulness as opposed to our works or efforts to become justified by the keeping the law. In other words, God is there first, each and every time. Our faith answers His faithfulness. Our faith participates in His faithfulness. The focus in Galatians is on Christ, not man. The focus is what He did on the cross, not what we do with that fact afterwards. Arminian interpretations, for the most part, have completely obliterated the former and have focused entirely on the latter. They have taken statements of fact about what Christ did on the cross, given to us in narrative form by Paul, and have reduced them to nothing more than an evangelical plea to believe in Christ. The latter is true, but it is subordinated or encapsulated here by the emphasis on the faithfulness of Christ on the cross. The fulfillment of the promise is given by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ to those who believe. The faithfulness of Jesus Christ is the means ("dia," Ablative) by which we obtain and participate in the spiritual life. The emphasis is on what He accomplished on the cross and our relationship to it.

The phrase "through Christ Jesus" points to our positional relationship with Him. We receive the promise of Abraham by or through our association with Christ Jesus. The common ground between Jews and Gentiles is their relationship with the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. The "seed of Abraham" is to be understood in messianic terms. Jesus Christ is the one and only heir of the promise to Abraham. We participate in the promise, not by our works or efforts in keeping the

law, but by being related to Christ. His faithfulness is the key to our inheritance of life and the promises. And as Paul has stated before, neither the Galatians nor we received the Spirit by our efforts to keep the law. The gospel message brought us to Christ positionally and Bible doctrine continues to bring us closer to Him experientially. Each time we come across the Greek word “pistis” we have to be careful how we translate and interpret it. It does not always refer to our “believing” or our “faith.” Sometimes it refers to the faith or faithfulness of another (i.e., Jesus Christ), sometimes it refers to the gospel message, and on other occasions it refers to Bible doctrine.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul insists that the Messiah is the one and only heir of the promise to Abraham and that others participate in this inheritance only “in Christ Jesus.” The whole thrust of Paul’s argument in this section of the letter is dependent upon the assertion that the Messiah is the one destined recipient of the promises, which Paul interprets to include blessing, righteousness, life and the Spirit. The conclusion lies close at hand that the Messiah is the Righteous One who shall live “ek pisteus,” Whose faith becomes the means whereby others may live ... The promise (= the Spirit) is given by God to believers as a result of Jesus Christ’s faithfulness. This is precisely the interpretation that resulted from an application of our model for narrative analysis ... Is it really so odd to think that Paul might attribute soteriological significance to Jesus’ faith? The faith of Jesus Christ might be interpreted here in the framework of a narrative Christology. This verse names “pistis” as the principle or power through which salvation is actualized, but it tells us neither whose faith is meant nor how this faith accomplishes the result ascribed to it. (R. Hays)

Some of Paul’s “pistis” expressions are multivalent; for example, if we ask whether in Gal. 3:14 Paul means that we receive the promise through Christ’s faithfulness or through our faith, the best answer is probably, “Yes, both.” The expression “dia tes pisteus” enfolds both semantic possibilities ... To be sure, several passages do refer to “human believing.” But there are no cases in Galatians where the noun “pistis” unambiguously denotes “human believing in Christ.” **The fact that Paul repeatedly uses the noun without a specified object suggests that he is thinking primarily of the trust toward God that was prefigured by Abraham and definitively enacted by Jesus Christ in such a way that is now shapes the life of all who are “in Christ.”** (R. Hays) The law destroys the work of the Spirit that has been wrought in you. We are saved by grace, and we learn by grace. We do not learn or grow by law ... It takes a lot of grace to live under the law! Legalists think grace people are utterly irresponsible, but you’ve got the peace and they’ve got the problem. (K. Lamb) The law which was the barrier that separated Jew and Gentile, is done away in Christ. By its removal, the Gentiles are put on a common level with the Jew. (K. Wuest) The “blessing of Abraham” can be summed up in “the promise of the Holy Spirit.” (J. Piper)

Gal 3:14 So that (result) the blessing (Subj. Nom.) of Abraham (Gen. Spec.) would come (γίνομαι, AMSubj.3S, Culminative, Result, Deponent; occur, be established) to the Gentiles (Acc. Adv.) through Christ Jesus (Dat. Assoc., Instr. Means; positional relationship), so that as a result (result) we would receive

(λαμβάνω, AASubj.1P, Culminative, Result; Jews and Gentiles) the promise (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of the Spirit (Adv. Gen. Ref.) through faithfulness (Abl. Means; of Christ).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:14** ἵνα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Ἀβραάμ γένηται ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος λάβωμεν διὰ τῆς πίστεως.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:14** ut in gentibus benedictio Abrahae fieret in Christo Iesu ut pollicitationem Spiritus accipiamus per fidem

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:15** Brethren, I am going to elaborate with a human example. Although from the source of man [human contract], after a covenant is ratified, no one may declare it invalid or add further stipulations to it.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:15** Brethren, what I have to say is in accordance with common human practice. Even though it be a man's covenant, when it has finally been ratified, no man annuls it nor adds stipulations to it.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:15** Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is now going to switch to a human example to further explain (Static Present tense) that the promises to Abraham are unconditional. What he means is that this is a commonly understood example from everyday life. Although a last will and testament is from the source of man, and not God, it is still common practice to ratify it accord to legal standards (Intensive Perfect tense). After it has been ratified (Temporal Participle), no one has the authority to cancel it (Gnomic Present tense) or add any further requirements (Gnomic Present tense) for its fulfillment. It is a “done deal” at the moment it is ratified (Latin: confirmed). Nothing can be added to it and nothing can eliminate it from being in effect. As a parallel, the promise is not abrogated by the law, nor is the law added to it as a new stipulation that must be fulfilled before the promise is activated. Faith is not mentioned as a requirement for the promise to be in effect, either, although the promise is given to those who believe in verse 22. God's promise stands in effect just like the day it was ratified.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In Galatians 3:15, Paul introduces the metaphor of inheritance, which he then plays upon in various ways throughout the following discussion. The key to Paul's use of this metaphor is found in his assertion (verses 16 & 19) that Christ is the one heir of the promises made to Abraham. This interpretation can have soteriological implications only in light of the presupposition that finally becomes explicit in verses 26-19: all who are baptized into Christ become one in Him and thus participate in the inheritance ... Galatians is unique in portraying Christ as heir of the promises to

Abraham ... The promises antedated the Law; consequently, the Law cannot impose *ex post facto* conditions or limitations on the fulfillment of the promises ... The promise to Abraham may be understood as the “initial contact” that remained unfulfilled before the intervention of Christ, Whose coming into the world signals the beginning of the topical sequence of the gospel story ... “Pistis” is conspicuously absent when the topic changes to the promise of the inheritance. “Pistis” (faith or faithfulness) plays no part in the promise. (R. Hays)

The promise to Abraham came first in the story, and it is fulfilled only at the coming of the Messiah; thus the Law can neither supercede the promise nor fulfill it ... The “sequence” argument is employed to show that the Law came later than the promise, that is has now been rendered obsolete by the coming of Christ, and that it is absurd for the Galatians to revert to practices proper to an earlier sequence in the story. The “shape” argument is closely linked to the text’s participatory soteriology: the action of Jesus Christ in the gospel story defines the pattern of justification and life (ek pisteus). This pattern is employed to show that Gentiles are included in the promised blessing (= adopted as God’s children) apart from adherence to Law, that divisions among God’s people are dissolved in Christ, that righteousness and life are gifts of grace in which Christians participate because of Christ’s “pistis,” and that “pistis” is consequently the distinguishing mark of the life given to those who live “in” Him. (R. Hays) Christ is the only Testator to make a will, survive death, and become the Executor of His will. (W. Best)

Gal. 3:15 Brethren (Voc. Address), I am going to elaborate (λέγω, PAI1S, Static; explain) with a human example (Abl. Manner). Although (concessive adv.) from the source of man (Abl. Source), after a covenant (Subj. Acc.; will, treaty) is ratified (κυρώω, Perf.PPtc.AFS, Intensive, Temporal; confirmed), no one (Subj. Nom.) may declare it invalid (ἀθετέω, PAI3S, Gnostic; cancel, abrogate) or (disjunctive) add further stipulations to it (ἐπιδιατάσσομαι, PMI3S, Gnostic, Deponent).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:15** Ἀδελφοί, κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω· ὅμως ἀνθρώπου κεκυρωμένην διαθήκην οὐδεὶς ἀθετεῖ ἢ ἐπιδιατάσσεται.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:15** fratres secundum hominem dico tamen hominis confirmatum testamentum nemo spernit aut superordinat

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:16** Now the promises [of the unconditional covenant] were given to Abraham and to his Descendant [spiritual Seed]. He [God the Father] does not say: And to the descendants [plural: spiritual seeds], as to imply many, but as a reference to One [spiritual Descendant], namely your Descendant, Who is Christ.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:16** Now to Abraham were made the promises, and to his Descendant. He does not say, And to the descendants, as in respect to many descendants, but in respect to one Descendant, and to your Descendant, who is Christ.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:16** Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul teaches the doctrine of federal headship in this passage. Our eternal destiny ultimately depends on who we are related to: the seed of the serpent (Satan) or the Seed of the woman (Christ). Believers are related to Christ; unbelievers are related to Satan. Believers are descendants of their Descendant, Christ; unbelievers are descendants of their descendant, Satan. This verse, like most in this chapter, does not point to man but to Christ. The promises of the unconditional covenant were given (Gnomic Aorist tense) to Abraham and to his Descendant, Jesus Christ. The singular is important here (Latin: uno), because it refers to Christ as the spiritual Seed (sperma) or Descendant of the promises. Paul denies that he is referring to plural (Latin: multi) seeds or descendants. As believers, we do not receive the promises of Abraham by becoming spiritual seeds. We receive them by our relationship with the One Descendant, Christ.

Many have tried to make this verse anthropological, emphasizing our volition. Even a cursory reading should tell you that this comes from preconceived notions. The passage says nothing about us doing anything; it focuses completely on Jesus Christ. Paul even tries to head off that false interpretation by telling us he is not referring to each and every one of us as descendants. He uses the singular to point to One Descendant, Christ – not to many descendants, believers. We receive the promises through our representative union with Christ, our Federal Head. Some have taken the plural as a reference to “physical and spiritual” seeds, as opposed to the singular “spiritual” seed. This is an attempt to wrestle out of the doctrine of federal headship, which embraces the sovereignty of grace, and insert oneself back into the picture by emphasizing the sovereignty of man.

The Greek word “sperma” (Latin: semen) can be translated as “seed” or “descendant.” As long as you understand that it points to Christ as our spiritual Seed, I have no preference between the two. As believers we are “seminally” in Him. This shouldn’t be difficult to embrace, since Paul tells us in the last phrase that the Seed or Descendant he is referring to is none other than Christ. He is the sole heir and we are his joint-heirs because of our relationship to Him. A clearer understanding of headship and representative union is taught in 1 Corinthians 15. In this explanation by Paul, we are either related to the first Adam or the Last Adam. If we are related to the first Adam, we remain in sin and do not receive the promises. If we are related to the Last Adam, we are in Christ and we receive the promises through Him.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The “Christ” of verse 16 is an individual, as Paul insists, but he is an individual in whom the destiny of others is embodied, a “universal heir.” A very similar idea appears in Romans 8:17, which describes Christians as “fellow-heirs with Christ,” who participate in His suffering and glorification. Thus, our participation in the inheritance depends upon the configuration of the story of Christ, a configuration in which we are included ... The death of Jesus is also an act of divine “pistis,”

embodying and revealing the faithfulness of God (Rom. 3:3, 21-22). In the death and resurrection of Jesus, we see God's fidelity to the promises made to Abraham. Rather than abandoning His unfaithful people, God constitutes Abraham's "sperma" by His own gracious action in Christ (Gal. 3:16, 29). Thus, the expression "the faith of Jesus Christ" signals that the death of Jesus is simultaneously an act of human fidelity to God and an act of divine fidelity to humanity. (R. Hays) The promise of the offspring referred first of all to Abraham's son Isaac. Ultimately it referred to all of God's children, but especially to God's Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the true offspring. He is the party to the covenant that God made with Abraham. The covenant was all about Jesus Christ. It looked forward to His coming. (P. Ryken)

Jesus Christ is both Israel's representative (the Israelite who keeps the covenant with God) and God's representative (the righteousness of God enacted through His own faithfulness, His faithful obedience unto death on the cross). Jesus Christ embodies the new creation and embraces us in His life. All who are baptized into union with Him share His destiny and His character. His fidelity to God is the pattern for the new life that He has inaugurated ... Paul insists that the promise was made to Abraham and to his (singular) seed (sperma), a single individual who was destined to be the heir of "the blessings of Abraham." In 2 Samuel 7:12-14 and Genesis 17:8, "sperma" is properly and unambiguously singular; they are to be understood as messianic prophecies in pre-Christian Judaism. There is an exegetical linkage between the "seed of Abraham" and the "seed of David," both understood in messianic terms. (R. Hays, T. Torrance, M. Wilcox) The true sons of Abraham are not identified biologically, but Christologically. The covenant promise was really for Christ, and when we belong to Christ, the promise belongs to us. Once we understand that God's promise to Abraham is a promise to Christ, then the fact that the word "offspring" is a collective noun makes perfect sense. The promise refers first of all to a single individual, Jesus Christ. But it also refers to a collection of individuals, namely, everyone who belongs to Christ. The party to the covenant is Christ and all who are in Him. (P. Ryken)

The importance of Gal. 3:16 in the development of Paul's argument is not always fully appreciated: Paul insists that the Messiah is the One and only heir of the promise to Abraham and that others participate in this inheritance only (Gal. 3:14) "in Christ Jesus." (Dahl). The whole thrust of Paul's argument in this section of the letter is dependent upon the assertion that the Messiah is the One destined recipient of "the promises," which Paul interprets to include blessing, righteousness, life and the Spirit. The probability that Paul identifies the Righteous One with the messianic "sperma" is strengthened still further by a consideration of the LXX of Isaiah 53:10-12. Here, of course, the LXX text does not intend to identify the "seed" with the "Righteous One" who "will bear their sins," but anyone approaching this text with Paul's presupposition that the "sperma" is the Messiah could very easily read the passage that way simply by taking "sperma" as the antecedent of the pronouns "autou" and "auto" in 53:11. (R. Hays) There are two manner of seeds in the world: the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. The seed of the woman (Israel) is seen through Abel (her seed), Christ, and the Spirit (Issac). The seed of the serpent (devil) is seen through Cain (thy seed), the Antichrist, and the flesh (Ishmael). Every believer is a seed of the woman in this sense. (K. Lamb)

People share the blessing NOT because their faith imitates Abraham's faith, but because they

participate in Christ, who is Abraham's seed. Christians have no direct relationship to Abraham. Their relationship to him is dependent on their belonging to Christ (Gal. 3:29). He is the mediating point between Abraham and the peoples that are blessed in him. (D. Boers) Christ is not the object of Abraham's faith; rather, Abraham's faith is a foreshadowing of Christ's. This interpretation hinges upon the claim that "ek pisteus" in verses 7 & 9 should be understood as an allusion to Hab. 2:4, understood messianically ... Gal. 3:16 and 3:19 show that Paul understood certain scriptural promises to the seed of Abraham as messianic prophecies ... Abraham is the prefiguration both of Christ and of those who are in Christ. Christ is Abraham's "sperma" (seed), and those who are Christ's are the seed of Abraham. Abraham is the biblical type to whom the promise was given, Christ the eschatological antitype through whom the promise becomes effectual for those who are "children of promise" (4:28), Abraham's sons (3:7). Abraham's theocentric faith is not properly analogous to christological Christian faith. Paul's use of the Abraham story remains metaphorical in character. Abraham is a metaphor for the truth now disclosed in the faith of Jesus Christ. (R. Hays)

"Ho epangeltai" means "to whom the promise was come." This limits not only the fulfillment, but also the recipient of the promise, to Christ (and His own). The promise proves not to be intended for each and all; it goes into fulfillment only in Christ and in His own. It is this smaller circle to which Paul is limiting the covenant-group and the recipients of the promise. He is here speaking of the covenant, the promise, and the recipients of the promise in the narrower sense of the word. (H. Ridderbos) It is unthinkable that God should qualify a free promise by a condition imposed unilaterally, centuries later: still less is it possible that the condition should be such as virtually to nullify the promise, changing a free gift into something to be "earned" by conformity to a law beyond man's capacity. (F. Coad)

Gal. 3:16 Now (transitional) the promises (Subj. Nom.; of the unconditional covenant) were given (λέγω, API3P, Gnostic) to Abraham (Dat. Adv.) and (connective) to his (Gen. Rel.) Descendant (Dat. Adv.; spiritual Seed). He (God the Father) does not (neg. adv.) say (λέγω, PAI3S, Static): And (connective) to the descendants (Dat. Adv.; spiritual seeds), as (comparative) to imply many (Adv. Gen. Ref.; spiritual descendants), but (adversative) as (comparative) a reference to One (Adv. Gen. Ref.; Descendant), namely (ascensive) your (Gen. Rel.) Descendant (Dat. Adv.), Who (Subj. Nom.) is (εἰμι, PAI3S, Descriptive) Christ (Pred. Nom.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:16** τῷ δὲ Ἀβραάμ ἐρρέθησαν αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ. οὐ λέγει· καὶ τοῖς σπέρμασιν, ὡς ἐπὶ πολλῶν ἀλλ' ὡς ἐφ' ἑνός· καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου, ὅς ἐστιν Χριστός.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:16** Abrahæ dictæ sunt promissiones et semini eius non dicit et seminibus quasi in multis sed quasi in uno et semini tuo qui est Christus

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:17** Now let me elaborate on this: The [unconditional Abrahamic] covenant which was previously ratified by God, the law which came four hundred thirty years later did not cancel, with the result that it invalidated the promise.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:17** This is now what I mean. A covenant previously established by God, the law which came after four hundred and thirty years does not render void with the result that the promise becomes inoperative,

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:17** And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Although Paul is not asking the Galatians for permission to pursue this topic further, there is a weak hortatory sense here. He wants to elaborate on what he has just said (Static Present tense) and therefore sets out to do so immediately. The law was given (Dramatic Aorist tense) about 430 years after the covenant was ratified (Latin: confirmed) with Abraham (Gnomic Perfect tense). The law which came later did not cancel (Gnomic Present tense) the covenant which came before. The law did not, therefore, invalidate or abolish (Culminative Aorist tense) the promise. This is what some of the false Jewish teachers were preaching. The covenant was unconditional, which means there was nothing man had to do to make sure it was carried out. And since there were no conditions, the promise could not have been nullified (Latin: evacuated) by anyone but God Himself – which was not likely to happen! The unconditional Abrahamic covenant remained in place after the law was given.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Arminians are always introducing works into this equation. (K. Lamb) Verse 15 described the permanence of the covenant, which was established once and for all when God gave it to Abraham. Verse 16 identified the party to the covenant. God's promise to Abraham was also made to Christ, and to everyone who is in Him. Next Paul clarifies the promise of the covenant, saying, "This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void." (P. Ryken) If we are saved, we are saved by grace, and grace alone. Our salvation depends on what Jesus did; not what we do. It depends not on what we feel but what Jesus felt for us. It depends not on our faithfulness, but on His faithfulness. (M. DeHaan)

Gal. 3:17 Now (transitional) let me elaborate on (λέγω, PAI1S, Static, somewhat Hortatory) this (Acc. Spec.): The covenant (Subj. Acc.) which was previously ratified (προκυρώ, Perf.PPtc.AFS, Gnomic, Attributive) by God (Abl. Source), the law (Subj. Nom.) which came about (γίνομαι, Perf.APtc.NMS, Dramatic, Attributive, Deponent) four hundred thirty years (Acc. Extent of Time) later (Temporal Acc.) did not (neg. adv.) cancel (ἀκυρώ, PAI3S, Gnomic; abrogate, nullify), with the result that (result) it invalidated (καταργέω, AAInf., Culminative, Result; abolished) the promise (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:17** τοῦτο δὲ λέγω· διαθήκην προκεκυρωμένην ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ μετὰ τετρακόσια καὶ τριάκοντα ἔτη γεγονὼς νόμος οὐκ ἀκυροῖ εἰς τὸ καταργῆσαι τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:17** hoc autem dico testamentum confirmatum a Deo quae post quadringentos et triginta annos facta est lex non irritam facit ad evacuandam promissionem

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:18** For if the inheritance is out from the source of the law, it is no longer out from the source of the promise [mutually exclusive spiritual principles]. However, God graciously provided the inheritance to Abraham through the promise.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:18** For if the inheritance is from law [as a method of divine dealing], no longer is it from promise [as a method of divine dealing]. But to Abraham, through the intermediate instrumentality of promise, God has in grace freely bestowed it.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:18** For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it* is no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a protasis of a 2nd class condition to pose a hypothetical (but untrue) assumption that the inheritance is obtained out from the source of the law. Knowing this is a false statement, he contrasts it with the truth – the inheritance is out from the source of the promise. These are mutually exclusive methods of spiritual operation. Law and promise cannot be mixed willy-nilly into some sort of spiritual smorgasbord. Paul eliminates any argumentation in this area by flat-out stating that God gave the inheritance (Latin: donated) out of His own grace (Intensive Perfect tense) to Abraham through the promise. It was an unconditional promise, requiring nothing from Abraham in order to be fulfilled. The law was totally absent when the promise was given.

Please pay special attention to my quote by Greer Taylor below. It isn't perfect, but is nevertheless an excellent summary of the christological view of Galatians 3 as opposed to the humanistic view promulgated by Arminian philosophers. The second half of his quote doesn't address this verse specifically, but I thought this was a good place to insert it during our study – since the inheritance of the promise is in view.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The substance of Paul's teaching is that man is saved by Christ's work and by Christ's work alone, and circumcision or any other work of the law is theologically objectionable because it implies that Christ's work is insufficient and needs to be complemented. From this point of view a system of justification simply by faith in Christ is also objectionable, as assigning to man too much of a function and to Christ too little: it simply substitutes the mental act of having faith for the bodily one of being circumcised as a precondition of salvation, and (so far as the mechanism of justification is concerned) leaves Christ in the passive role of being the object of our justifying faith. "Pistis" refers not to our act or attribute of "faith" but the Roman legal institution of "fidei commissum," a device

whereby a testator could leave property “in trust” under the care of a “testamentary heir” with the stipulation that the testamentary heir should transmit it to a third party or parties. By the use of this legal procedure a Roman testator could “name national aliens as beneficiaries of his testament” and “adopt strangers as his sons.” As a result of this transaction, the adopted person “lost his previous juristic personality and acquired an entirely new and different juristic personality,” i.e., “he was exonerated from the various civil liabilities and obligations he had acquired prior to this adoption.” This was possible, however, only because the testamentary heir was required to “pay the cost of the exoneration.” Paul has employed this legal institution as a “conceptual analogy” to explain his gospel to the Galatians. God is the testator, Abraham and Christ are successive testamentary heirs, and the Gentiles are the ultimate beneficiaries, aliens who are adopted and constituted as new persons ENTIRELY APART FROM ANY ACTION ON THEIR PART. Christ, as a faithful trustee, distributes the inheritance to the Gentiles and sets them free from past liabilities and obligations by taking these liabilities upon Himself. “Pistis” means “fidei commissum” and the phrase “pistis Jesou Christou” refers to Christ’s reliability as a trustee. (G. Taylor)

Gal. 3:18 For (explanatory) if (protasis, 2nd class condition, “but it’s not true”) the inheritance (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) out from the source of the law (Abl. Source), it is (ellipsis) no longer (neg. adv.) out from the source of the promise (Abl. Source). However (adversative), God (Subj. Nom.) graciously provided (χαρίζομαι, Perf.MI3S, Intensive, Deponent) the inheritance (ellipsis) to Abraham (Dat. Adv.) through the promise (Abl. Means).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:18** εἰ γὰρ ἐκ νόμου ἡ κληρονομία, οὐκέτι ἐξ ἐπαγγελίας· τῷ δὲ Ἀβραὰμ δι’ ἐπαγγελίας κεχάρισται ὁ θεός.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:18** nam si ex lege hereditas iam non ex repromissione Abrahae autem per promissionem donavit Deus

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:19** What then is the purpose of the law? It was added [brought in alongside of the promise in a different sphere of operation] for the sake of [to make men see] transgressions (until the Descendant should come to Whom the promise was made), directed by angels into the hand of a mediator [Moses].

^{KW} **Gal. 3:19** What is then the significance of the law? For the sake of transgressions it was added until there should come the Descendant to whom the promise was made, having been promulgated by angels through the instrumentality of the hand of a mediator.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:19** Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul anticipates the next question by the legalists he was addressing. What purpose does the law

serve if it doesn't enable man to obtain the inheritance by his own works? The law was brought in alongside of the promise in a different sphere of operation. The law could not provide righteousness. The law could not provide the inheritance. The law could not provide salvation. The law was not a means of living the spiritual life. The law did not cancel the promise. So what was the law good for, anyway? It was added for the sake of transgressions. It was added to make men see that they can not live up to the divine standard and are in need of a Savior. It was added until the Descendant, the Seed, the Lord Jesus Christ should come at the incarnation (Culminative Aorist tense). Once the Descendant came to Whom the promise was made (Dramatic Aorist tense), the purpose of the law came to an end. Historically, of course, the law was directed by angels into the hand of a mediator (Dramatic Aorist tense) named Moses. Moses was a type or picture of the coming Messiah. The promise came to Abraham directly from Jesus Christ while the law came through angels to Moses.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The peculiar logic of the argument shows that the salvation-historical thrust of the Abraham story can be used by Paul against the Judaizers only if he centers the story Christocentrically (Christ as the exclusive seed) and therefore discontinuously. (J. Beker) Protestant exegesis has tended to treat this material carelessly, assuming that the basic sense of the passage is contained in 3:6-9 and the rest of the argument must somehow conform to the idea presumably expressed there: just as Abraham was justified by believing in God, so also we are justified by believing in Christ. From this point of view, it has always been difficult to comprehend Paul's argument about Christ as the singular "seed" in verses 16 and 19, and there has been a strong tendency to disregard this latter conception as a peculiar and inessential quirk in Paul's thinking. However, the idea of Christ as the one "seed" who is the sole heir of the promise governs verses 16-29, and that is in fact the "center" of Paul's treatment of the Abraham story. (R. Hays)

Our difficulty in grasping the argumentative coherence of the central section of Galatians is attributable in large part to a deeply entrenched but mistaken interpretation of the first half of Galatians 3. The logic of the text is a narrative logic, founded upon the narrative substructure ... Christians are justified/redeemed not by virtue of their own faith but because they participate in Jesus Christ, who enacted the obedience of faith on their behalf. Abraham is understood by Paul not as an exemplar of faith in Christ but as a typological foreshadowing of Christ Himself, a representative figure Whose faithfulness secures blessing and salvation vicariously for others ... Paul understands salvation as a sharing in the destiny of a representative figure whose story is the enactment of God's salvific purpose ... Gal. 3:16 and 3:19 show that Paul understood certain scriptural promises to the seed of Abraham as messianic prophecies. (R. Hays) Angels were involved in the giving of the Law ... The Law needed a mediator, but the promise needed nothing of the kind. God acted sovereignly and unilaterally in grace when ratifying His promise to Abraham ... In no way could the Law give life because no amount of doing can generate spiritual life in a dead human soul. (J. Phillips)

The law exposes sin for what it really is, namely, a violation of God's holy standard ... One purpose

of the law is not preventative, but provocative. Rather than preventing transgression, the law actually provokes people to sin. By doing so, it does not make things better, but makes a bad situation even worse. The law has a way of making people want to break it ... However, the law feeds into the promise; it is the on-ramp to the gospel highway. The more we know the law, the more we see our sin, and the more we see this, the more we confess that we need a Savior. (P. Ryken) The moment the law meets a sinner, he reacts by transgression because of the sin in him. The law brings it out so that he and all men may see it. Let us make it drastic. While it is latent, sin stirs but slightly. It is like a lion that is asleep or is moving about quietly. Apply the stick of the law to it, prod it a little, and its fangs flash, it rages and roars, it tries to rend and tear, it displays what a wild beast it really is. That stick does not make the beast a beast; it cannot kill or change the beast; all it can do is make it show what it is. (R. Lenski)

The law – the whole body of the law was given to Israel – was delivered by Moses as he received it direct from Almighty God ... The law had its beginning at Sinai and ended at Calvary. There was a time when there was no written law of Ten Commandments. Besides the dispensational character of the law, it was also national, given to one definite nation, the Nation of Israel. “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law” (Rom. 2:14) cannot be plainer ... The law was given to Israel to stop the mouths of all men forever who would teach salvation by the law. God has tried that out on one whole nation for over 1,500 years and proven that it cannot be done. There is no need for further proof. (M. DeHaan)

Gal. 3:19 What (interrogative) then (inferential) is the purpose of (ellipsis) the law (Subj. Nom.)? It was added (προστίθημι, API3S, Ingressive; brought in alongside of the promise in a different sphere of operation) for the sake of (to make men see) transgressions (Gen. Purpose), [until the Descendant (Subj. Nom.; the Seed, Jesus Christ) should come (ἔρχομαι, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Temporal, Deponent; at the incarnation) to Whom (Dat. Adv.) the promise was made (ἐπαγγέλλομαι, Perf.PI3S, Dramatic, Deponent)], directed (διατάσσω, APpTc.NMS, Dramatic, Modal; ordered, arranged) by angels (Abl. Means) into the hand (Prep. Loc.) of a mediator (Poss. Gen.; Moses).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:19** Τί οὖν ὁ νόμος; τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη, ἄχρις οὗ ἔλθῃ τὸ σπέρμα ᾧ ἐπηγγέλλεται, διαταγείς δι’ ἀγγέλων ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:19** quid igitur lex propter transgressionem posita est donec veniret semen cui promiserat ordinata per angelos in manu mediatoris

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:20** Now a mediator [angels and Moses as mediators of the law] is not of One [one in essence with God], but God [Jesus Christ as the superior mediator of the promise] is One [in essence].

^{KW} **Gal. 3:20** Now, the mediator is not a go-between representing the interests of one individual, but God is one individual.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:20** Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Angels and Moses were mediators of the law, but they were not one in essence with God, therefore they were inferior mediators. Mediators who are not one in essence with God can only mediate in conditional covenants. This means there are elements of this kind of covenant that must be met by both parties. Jesus Christ was the mediator of the promise, and since He is one in essence with God, He is a superior mediator. Mediators who are one in essence with God can mediate in unconditional covenants. This means Jesus Christ mediated in an unconditional covenant in which both sides of the equation were fulfilled by God. From both divine and human perspectives, an unconditional covenant is superior because it requires nothing from us to ensure its fruition.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A religion of law separates us from direct communion with God. The magnifying of human priesthood and the elaboration of ceremonial religion by one school in the church, and the over-dependence on human teaching and preaching of another school, put new mediators between us and God, and so separate us from the privileges of immediate Divine fellowship. The same result follows the slavish observance of rules and regulations laid down by the wisest and holiest of teachers. Those men come between us and God. A religion of law is irksome. There is no joy in obedience forced by constraint. But in Christ we have grace to enter through the rent veil to the holiest place, and to rest in the eternal light of God's near presence. (W. Adeney) When Abraham was about to take part in making the covenant according to the custom (Jer. 34:18-19), God put him to sleep (Gen. 15:12), and passed between the pieces Himself, alone. He was "one;" one party, alone in the promise. That covenant is not only prior to the Law as to time, but was superior to it because it was unconditional. (E. Bullinger)

Gal. 3:20 Now (transitional) a mediator (Subj. Nom.; angels and Moses as mediators of the law) is (ἐἰμι, PAI3S, Descriptive) not (neg. adv.) of One (Gen.; one in essence with God), but (contrast) God (Subj. Nom.; Jesus Christ as the superior mediator of the promise) is (ἐἰμι, PAI3S, Descriptive) One (Pred. Nom.; in essence).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:20** ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἑνὸς οὐκ ἔστιν, ὁ δὲ θεὸς εἷς ἔστιν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:20** mediator autem unius non est Deus autem unus est

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:21** Is therefore the law against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given which had the power to give life [justification], then indeed righteousness could have been out from the source of the law.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:21** Is therefore the law against the promises of God? God forbid. For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, righteousness in that case would have been from the law.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:21** /Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The natural conclusion of a legalist to Paul's argument would be to ask if the law was therefore opposed to the promises. Paul says, "God forbid" or "Absolutely not!" The law is not against the promises, but the law has a purpose or sphere completely separate and different to the promise. But as a hypothetical question, let us assume the false proposition that a law had been given (Constative Aorist tense) which had the power (Attributive Participle) to give life (Culminative Aorist tense). Such a law does not exist, as the protasis of a 2nd class condition affirms, but we are going to pretend for a moment that such a law was given. If a law was given that had the ability to give life (Latin: vivify), then by all means righteousness could have been obtained (Voluntative Imperfect tense) out from the source of the law. The potential indicative mood points to our having the option of obtaining righteousness out from the source of the law. If such a law could bring spiritual life out of spiritual death, it would be possible. But such a law doesn't exist.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Gal. 3:21 poses a contrary-to-fact condition which plays a crucial role in Paul's argument. This sentence sketches concisely a hypothetical alternative gospel ... He has reconstituted, as in a mirror, the antithesis of the gospel story by raising for rhetorical purposes the possibility that a life-giving law might have been provided by God. If this were the case, says Paul, then righteousness would be out from the source of the law. In this schema, "life" and "righteousness" are virtually equated, as they are pervasively in Paul's thought ... The power to give life is the same thing as the power to confer justification. Paul never feels the need to argue in favor of this equation between "life" and "righteousness/justification;" it is axiomatic for him ... Paul rejects the Law not because of an empirical observation that no one can do what it requires, but because its claim to give life, explicitly articulated in Lev. 18:5 and Gal. 3:12 is incompatible with the gospel story – which says that Christ had to die in order to give life to us. (R. Hays) The law was not contrary to faith, but incommensurable with it; the two belonged to separate spheres, one of death, the other of life. (R. Stamm)

The passive verb as a circumlocution for divine action is a well-known mannerism of Jewish piety, and it is clear that only God could be the giver of this hypothetical, life-giving law. Likewise, if we ask ourselves "To whom would this law have been given?" the answer is obviously "humanity," or perhaps "the Jews." But all of this, of course, is flatly rejected by Paul, who insists that the law cannot give life (Rom. 8:3) and was never intended to do so ... God is not only the Sender in the story but also the author of the story. He is sovereign even over the failed initial sequence, and the enslavement of humanity is a necessary part of the story of its deliverance ... The promise, which is

equated with the Spirit in 3:14, is here, by its immediate context with 3:21, linked with life and righteousness. This shows that Paul is very flexible in his choice of terms for designating the Object in his gospel story. Spirit, promise, blessing, life, righteousness: all these seem to function as virtually interchangeable terms for the benefits of salvation. “Redemption” and “adoption” do not seem, however, to be interchangeable in the texts considered here. The former relates specifically to Jews, the latter to Gentiles. (R. Hays)

There is no great rivalry between the Law and the promise – not when the different function of each is understood. How could there be when God was the Author of both? What was the great purpose of the Law? To make us aware of what righteousness is all about. What was the great purpose of the promise? To provide that needed righteousness in the Person and work of Christ (the Seed). There was no contradiction, no rivalry, and no inconsistency. The goal of both was righteousness for fallen man. The Law was given to prove something – our utter inability to attain a standard of righteousness acceptable to a holy God by any amount of law-keeping and the fact that no law exists that can give life. The Law underlines death. The promise was given to provide something – the life and the righteousness that we need, both of which are found in Christ alone. (J. Phillips) Legalism is any set of rules that purport to bring us to maturity or into right standing with God. (K. Lamb)

Gal. 3:21 Is (ellipsis) therefore (inferential) the law (Subj. Nom.) against the promises (Obj. Gen.) of God (Abl. Source)? May it not (neg. particle) be so (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Gnostic, Voluntative, Deponent; God forbid, by no means, certainly not)! For (explanatory) if (protasis, 2nd class condition, “but it’s not true”) a law (Subj. Nom.) had been given (δίδωμι, API3S, Constative) which (Nom. Appos.) had the power (δύναμαι, PMPtc.NMS, Descriptive, Attributive, Deponent; ability) to give life (ζωοποιέω, AAInf., Culminative, Result; justification), then (apodosis; in this case) indeed (affirmative) righteousness (Subj. Nom.) could have been (εἶμι, Imperf.AI3S, Voluntative, Potential Ind.) out from the source of the law (Abl. Source, Origin).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:21** ὁ οὖν νόμος κατὰ τῶν ἐπαγγελιῶν [τοῦ θεοῦ]; μὴ γένοιτο. εἰ γὰρ ἐδόθη νόμος ὁ δυνάμενος ζωοποιῆσαι, ὥντως ἐκ νόμου ἂν ᾦν ἡ δικαιοσύνη.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:21** lex ergo adversus promissa Dei absit si enim data esset lex quae posset vivificare vere ex lege esset iustitia

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:22** But the scripture [as a jailer] has imprisoned everyone under sin, so that the promise out from the source of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe [the elect].

^{KW} **Gal. 3:22** But the scripture shut up all under sin in order that the promise on the ground of faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:22** But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This verse is a marvelous encapsulation of the “traditional” doctrine of justification by faith (believers believing) within the larger context of the promise coming to us out from the source of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. It is quite simple, really: Jesus Christ got there first. His faithfulness obtains the promise for us. We trust in His faithfulness, we share the promise with Him as joint-heirs. The Scripture functions as a jailer who has imprisoned all of us (Dramatic Aorist tense) under sin. Being under sin, we do not have the life-giving power to keep the law so that we might obtain justification. The door to righteousness by means of the law has been slammed shut in our face. The only option left is that the promise is obtained out from the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, and it is now given (Culminative Aorist tense) to those who place their trust in Him. In other words, trust in Jesus Christ and not on the works of your flesh. We have already covered the unlikelihood, in fact near impossibility, of translating “ek” as “in” as opposed to “out of” with the subjective genitive.

Let me repeat myself: There is no way to make this verse say “on the grounds of faith in Jesus Christ” unless you beat the Greek text to death. The second part of the verse refers to “those who believe;” the first part of the verse refers to the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. Why would you even need the second half of the phrase if the first half of the phrase meant “faith in Jesus Christ?” The second phrase would be nothing more than a redundancy. The faithfulness of Jesus Christ has redemptive consequences for His people. We have seen that they have been redeemed from the curse and given the promise of the Spirit as a result of His faithfulness. And even though justification by faith (human side) might be seen in the last part of this phrase, be careful not to jump to any conclusions. The phrase “to those who believe” does not necessarily point to “those who have faith” but to those “who are given the promise on the basis of Christ’s faithfulness.” Paul is not giving an altar call; he is identifying the elect of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Jesus Christ is in the role of Subject, with “pistis” as the power or quality which enables Him to carry out His mandate ... Jesus Christ, by the power of faith, has performed an act which allows believers to receive the promise. “Receive the promise” means, of course, “receive that which was promised.” The “faith of Christ” in Paul must always be understood in the context of the gospel story, in which Christ’s faith enables Him obediently to carry out His mission of deliverance. We are saved by Christ’s faithfulness, not by having a faith like His ... God’s integrity is made manifest not in our believing (or at least not primarily there) but in Jesus Christ whom God put forward as an answer to the problem of humanity’s unfaithfulness. God’s righteousness has been manifested, claims Paul. Where and how? Through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, the One who “became a servant of circumcision for the sake of the truthfulness of God in order to confirm the promises given to the fathers ... (Rom. 15:8), the one in whom “all the promises of God find their Yes” in 2 Cor. 1:20 ... Gal. 3:22 may be interpreted to mean that the promise (= the Spirit in 3:14) is given (by

God) to believers as a result of Jesus Christ's faithfulness ... The fulfillment of the promise is given "by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ to those who believe." The faithfulness of Jesus Christ is the means of the transmission of the blessing to others who now participate in His life. (R. Hays)

Since Luther's time, Protestant theology has found in Galatians the classic prooftexts for the doctrine that individuals are saved not by performing works but by believing in Jesus Christ. As popularly understood, however, this doctrine has always carried with it the risk of turning faith into another kind of work, a human achievement ... Faith is understood as an activity of the human individual, a means (putatively alternative to "works") of securing our acceptance before God. (R. Hays) It simply substitutes the mental act of having faith for the bodily one of being circumcised as a precondition of salvation, and (so far as the mechanism of justification is concerned) leaves Christ in the passive role of being the object of our justifying faith ... Many texts speak of faith as though it had the character of a meritorious achievement. (G. Taylor) Sensitive exegetes have always recognized the difficulty that Taylor emphasizes here, and various proposals have been made to circumvent it. Most typically it has been argued that faith is not the product of human will but of divine agency, that it is a gift planted in the human heart by God ... When Paul writes of "pistis Christou" does he mean to refer to a human act of "believing" which has Christ for its object as well as its author? The answers to such questions are by no means as clear as the Protestant tradition has sometimes assumed. (R. Hays) In Galatians 3:22 the "pistis Jesou Christou" is the means by which the Abrahamic promise overcame the obstacle posed by the interlude of the law and was made available to all who should believe, i.e., it is not man's faith but Christ's faithfulness. (D. Robinson)

Galatians 3:22 poses significant difficulties for the usual interpretation of "pistis Jesou Christou" as "faith in Jesus Christ." The RSV translation, which is an impossible distortion of Paul's Greek, reflects the awkwardness that results from attempting to make the text say what Paul is usually supposed to mean ... It is necessary to ask whether the genitive construction can in fact legitimately be translated as "faith in Jesus Christ." Gal. 3:22 describes "pistis Jesou Christou" as the source or ground OUT OF OF which the promise is given to those who believe ... The balance of the grammatical evidence favors the view that "pistis Jesou Christou" means "faith of Jesus Christ," however that might be interpreted. The case on grammatical grounds for the translation "faith in Jesus Christ" is really very weak. The latter rendering has nonetheless won widespread acceptance on the assumption that it makes more sense theologically. This assumption must be evaluated ... We may conclude that it is indeed theologically intelligible to interpret "pistis Jesous Christou" as "the faith of Jesus Christ." Such a conception can be understood to manifest a representative Christology attested not only elsewhere in the NT but also elsewhere in Paul's letters. To read Gal. 3:22 in this way will require a significant shift in our understanding of the shape of Paul's thought, but this new reading can be shown to yield a configuration which is coherent – more coherent than the conventional way of understanding Paul. (R. Hays)

The kerygmatic pattern, beginning from Christ's "pistis" as source of salvation and moving to the human response of "pistis" in return, corresponds precisely to the interpretation given in Rom. 1:17, 3:22 and Gal. 2:16. The faith of Jesus Christ precedes the account of the answering response ... What difference does it make whose faith is meant in Paul's compressed "pistis" formulations? There

are serious theological issues at stake here: (1) The relation between Christology and soteriology in Pauline theology ... By no means should this be understood to mean that Christians are saved by their own Herculean faithfulness; indeed, the central emphasis of the christological interpretation of “pistis Jesou Christou” is precisely that we are saved by Jesus’ faithfulness, not by our own cognitive disposition or confessional orthodoxy. (2) The humanity of Jesus ... If Jesus was a real human being, it is hardly scandalous or inappropriate to speak of His faith/fidelity toward God. (3) Experiential-expressive versus narrative theology ... The besetting danger of the anthropological (objective genitive) interpretation, with its emphasis on the salvific efficacy of individual faith, is its tendency to reduce the gospel to an account of individual religious experience, or even to turn faith into a bizarre sort of work, in which Christians jump through the entranceway of salvation by cultivating the right sort of spiritual disposition. (4) The cruciform character of Christian obedience ... Those who are in Christ are called to live the same sort of faith-obedience that He revealed. (5) The righteousness of God as covenant-faithfulness ... The key is to recognize that Paul’s defense of God’s faithfulness to Israel in Romans 3:3-5 is linked to his affirmation that the righteousness of God has been manifested through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. (R. Hays)

It is not even our faith that saves, but the faith of Jesus Christ – not the faith in Jesus Christ as some translators would like it to be and interpret it accordingly. So much importance has been attached to the exercise of faith as the basis of salvation that this has become our contribution, as though a dead man could exercise faith in his own resurrection sufficient to guarantee it. Man is not saved by his own faith any more than he is saved by his own decision not to resist the Holy Spirit. Because the moment we allow such a thing, we give credit to those who have this ability in distinction to those who do not. And the fortunate ones achieve salvation simply because they are in some way different in themselves. They would have every right to boast in heaven. But boasting is excluded. We are saved by grace through faith – and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God. We do not even contribute our own saving faith. And so boasting is excluded indeed ... The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise through (Greek “ek,” followed by the genitive) the faithfulness of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. In each case (Gal. 2:16 and 3:22) it is the faithfulness of Jesus Christ and not the perseverance of the believer which is the basis of his eternal security. (A. Cushman) If “pistis christou” (faith of Christ) means only faith in Christ, as some modern translations have led us to believe, then Paul is speaking redundantly in Romans 3:22 and Galatians 2:16. This is equally true of Galatians 2:20 and Galatians 3:22. Jesus had a perfect faith, a concept that has not been taken seriously by some. (R. Kendall)

Gal. 3:22 But (adversative) the scripture (Subj. Nom.; as a jailer) has imprisoned (συγκλείω, AAI3S, Dramatic; confined) everyone (Acc. Dir. Obj.) under sin (Noncompl. Acc.), so that (result) the promise (Subj. Nom.) out from the source of the faithfulness (Abl. Source, Origin) of Jesus Christ (Subj. Gen.) might be given (δίδωμι, APSbj.3S, Culminative, Result) to those (Dat. Adv.) who believe (πιστεύω, PAPtc.DMP, Descriptive, Substantial).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:22** ἀλλὰ συνέκλεισεν ἡ γραφὴ τὰ πάντα ὑπὸ ἁμαρτίαν, ἵνα ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοθῇ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:22** sed conclusit scriptura omnia sub peccato ut promissio ex fide Iesu Christi daretur credentibus

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:23** Moreover, before the faith [as a power field or domain unique to Christianity] came, we [Jews] were held in custody under the law, shut up in prison from the faithfulness [of Jesus Christ] which was destined afterwards [at the incarnation] to be revealed.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:23** But before the aforementioned faith came, under law we were constantly being guarded, being shut up with a view to the faith about to be revealed.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:23** But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

“The faith” is a new power system or principle unique to Christianity that was brought to public display by Jesus Christ on the cross. Before it came into operation at the incarnation (Infinitive of Antecedent Time), Jews were held in custody by the law – which served as their jailer or prison guard. They were shut off in prison from the faithfulness of Jesus Christ until He was revealed (Infinitive of Subsequent Time) at the incarnation. None of this was an accident. It was all part of God’s predestined plan which would eventually come to pass (Futuristic Present tense). Again, this verse is not talking about our faith – it is referring to the power of faith(fulness) that was initially displayed by Jesus Christ as the new principle by which all believers (and especially Jews who were previously under the law) were to live by. The phrase “faith which was destined soon afterwards to be revealed” points to the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. Like many other verses in this context, I interpret this as a messianic verse – in other words, once again we have a christocentric rather than an anthropocentric passage in view. It’s all about Christ, not about us.

“Pistis” in this verse is said to be something that “has come” and will be “revealed.” How can these references have anything to do with our believing? The first part of this passage says Jews were under the law “before” faith came. Paul just told us that Abraham believed the promise of God, and the promise came “before” the law. So how could “faith” in this passage refer to “our believing” if it “came” after the law and was “afterwards” to be revealed? At the least, it is referring to “the faith message;” at best, it is referring to the new principle or domain of “the faith” that Jesus Christ brought into operation by His “faithfulness” and obedience on the cross. There are plenty of passages in scripture that teach us about our faith. But there are also passages that talk about “the faith” (Christianity), the faith message (the gospel), faith as Bible doctrine, and the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. Rather than force one or two of these meanings into every passage that contains the word “pistis” (reductionist error), let’s allow the overall context to guide us into the correct

interpretation of the word. That is exactly what Professor Hays (Yale, Duke and other Divinity Schools) has done in the book that I am so often quoting.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Jesus Christ embodies the new creation and embraces us in His life. All who are baptized into union with Him share His destiny and His character. His fidelity to God is the pattern for the new life that He has inaugurated. That is why Paul can equate the coming of Christ with the coming of “pistis” in Gal. 3:23, 25: in a definitive way, he has now instantiated “pistis” as a historical reality. (R. Hays) Jesus actualized and exemplified faith in such a way that He is the Creator of a new domain or “power field” characterized by faith. (S. Williams) As a result of Jesus’ faithfulness, the life that we now live in Christ we live “by the faith of the Son of God” (Gal. 2:20). We are taken up into His life, including His faithfulness, and that faithfulness therefore imparts to us the shape of our own existence. (R. Hays) Christ became what we are in order that we might become what He is. Consequently, “pistis Jesou Christou” should be understood as a concentric expression, which begins, always, from the faith of Christ Himself, but which includes, necessarily, the answering faith of believers, who claim that faith as their own. (M. Hooker)

The cross, as Christ’s saving action, is God’s action of “pistis,” God’s demonstration of fidelity to the promise made to Abraham. For Paul, Christ’s death becomes God’s own act, so that here, as for example in Romans 8:9-11, there is an overlay and fusion of the agency of Christ and the agency of God. Ultimately, being united with Christ is salvific because to share His life is to share in the life of God ... “Pistis” designates the new era or principle or power which has now come ... The faithfulness of Jesus Christ is the means of the transmission of the blessing to others who now participate in His life and therefore reflect the same trusting relationship to God that broke into human experience through His death and resurrection. It should be said clearly that for Paul, “pistis Christou” refers to Jesus’ obedience to death on the cross: in other words, the meaning of the phrase is focused on the kerygma’s narration of His self-giving death, not on the whole ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. This narrative punctiliar sense – focused on the cross – is the only meaning supported by Paul’s usage. (R. Hays)

Faith comes in that Christ, the single “sperma” of Abraham, Who actualizes and exemplifies faith. In His trusting obedience, His complete reliance on God as trustworthy and true, Christ reveals faith. Consequently, Christian faith is Christ-faith, that relationship to God which Christ exemplified, that life-stance which He actualized and which, because He lived and died, now characterizes the personal existence of everyone who lives in Him. Christ is not the “object” of such faith, however, but rather its supreme exemplar – indeed, its Creator. (S. Williams) The “faith” which has now “come” is not the faith of an individual but the historic phenomenon of “the faith” (= Christianity). (Lietzmann) Note the article, it is not “faith” in general but “the faith” in a specific sense - Christ. With the arrival of Christ everything changed for all believers whether they were native Jews, foreign proselyte believers, or pagans who were converted by the apostles. (R. Lenski)

It is typical of Paul that he sees the need for God’s revelation to us in connection with this gift of

faith. Without a prior act of God, we cannot even believe in Him. (R. Cole) The law was a jailer who held in custody those who were subjected to sin, in order that they should not escape the consciousness of their sins and their liability to punishment. (K. Wuest) The law is conceived, not as the prison, but as the warder, the lord or despot, the power of sin. (M. Vincent) “Before faith came” means before the true doctrine of the Gospel was revealed. (E. Bullinger) The law functioned as a custodian until the gospel came. The custodial function is not educative, but restraining or disciplining. What is meant is not progress in religion, but being in custody awaiting the Redeemer. Men were kept like wards under guard. (S. Mikolaski)

Gal. 3:23 Moreover (continuative), before the faith (Adv. Acc.; as a power field or domain unique to Christianity) came (ἔρχομαι, AAInf., Constative, Antecedent Time, Deponent), we (Jews) were held in custody (φρουρέω, Imperf.PIIP, Descriptive; confined) under the law (Acc. Disadv.), shut up in prison from (συγκλείω, PPPTc.NMP, Descriptive, Modal; confined, imprisoned, hemmed in) the faithfulness (Acc. Disadv.; of Jesus Christ) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) was destined afterwards to be revealed (ἀποκαλύπτω, APInf., Culminative, Subsequent Time).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:23** Πρὸ τοῦ δὲ ἐλθεῖν τὴν πίστιν ὑπὸ νόμον ἐφρουρούμεθα συγκλειόμενοι εἰς τὴν μέλλουσαν πίστιν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι,

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:23** prius autem quam veniret fides sub lege custodiebamur conclusi in eam fidem quae revelanda erat

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:24** Therefore, the law became our [Jews] repressive slavemaster until Christ, in order that we might be justified out from the source of [Christ’s] faithfulness.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:24** So that the law became our guardian until Christ, in order that on the ground of faith we might be justified;

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:24** Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The translation of “paidagogos” as “schoolmaster” in the KJV is most unfortunate, as it portrays a more positive light on how the law functioned for Jews. In prior verses, the law is referred to as a jailer and those who are under the law as prisoners in a dungeon. Many commentators take a positive route as if the law was a benevolent teacher which leads men to Christ. In a way, the law does highlight our hidden sins and reveals to us the need of a Savior. But in this case, the law has been consistently portrayed in a negative light so the Galatians won’t think they can attain righteousness by keeping its mandates by the works of their flesh. The law actually has a repressive element in it here, more in line with the jailer or prison guard metaphor used earlier.

The law kept them in bondage as slaves; Jesus Christ set them free. The law brought condemnation; Jesus Christ brought salvation.

Once Jesus Christ arrived on the scene and faithfully submitted to the indignities of the cross, the law ceased to serve as a guardian or superintendent. He fulfilled the requirements of the law. And as mentioned in the previous verse, a new power system or domain was brought into operation by His faithfulness on the cross. This happened as part of God's ultimate plan so that justification would be obtained (Culminative Aorist tense) out from the source of faithfulness rather than through law-works. Although many do not know it, Jesus Christ did a magnificent thing for the Jews – He liberated them from the prison which the law (as their jailer) had kept them in for centuries. The center stage once again is the faithfulness of Christ, not their faith and not our faith. Find your evangelistic passage somewhere else. This verse has nothing to do with “human believing” or “faith in Christ.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul is thinking primarily of the trust toward God that was prefigured by Abraham and definitively enacted by Jesus Christ in such a way that it now shapes the life of all who are “in Christ.” (R. Hays) This in no way suggests that our faith in Christ is not a significant issue for Paul, but it is not the overarching one ... What could be more apocalyptic, than Christ's redeeming us from the curse of the law or his invasion into the world and into us when the fullness of time had come? (A. Just) Notice the words “our,” “us,” and “we.” Wherever the pronouns “we,” “us,” and “our,” occur, Paul is speaking of Israel. When the pronouns “ye” and “you” are used, it refers to the Gentiles. That is the key to the book of Galatians. (M. DeHaan)

Gal. 3:24 Therefore (inferential), the law (Subj. Nom.) became (γίνομαι, Perf.AI3S, Aoristic, Deponent) our (Gen. Rel.; Jews) repressive slavemaster (Pred. Nom.; custodian, superintendent) until Christ (Acc. Extent of Time), in order that (blending of purpose/result) we might be justified (δικαιώω, APSubj.1P, Culminative, Result) out from the source of faithfulness (Abl. Source; Christ's faithful obedience).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:24** ὥστε ὁ νόμος παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν εἰς Χριστόν, ἵνα ἐκ πίστεως δικαιωθῶμεν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:24** itaque lex pedagogus noster fuit in Christo ut ex fide iustificemur

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:25** But since this faithfulness was demonstrated publicly [Jesus Christ on the cross], we [Jews] are no longer under a repressive slavemaster.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:25** But this faith having come, no longer are we under the guardian,

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:25** But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The repressive slavemaster was replaced by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ on the cross. His faithfulness was displayed publicly (Dramatic Aorist tense) when He was crucified. Jews who were under the law as a jailer and slavemaster are no longer bound by that repressive master (Gnomic Present tense). Faith or faithfulness is a whole new mode of operation which arrived at the cross. And once again, following the context of this entire chapter, the faith(fulness) is not ours but Christ's. I know many Arminian believers who are so focused on man's volition in the experiential Christian life, that it is sometimes difficult for them to focus on Christ instead of on man. While I share their zeal for the Christian life, I believe many of them have gone so far in bringing experiential truth into the foreground that they have all but obliterated positional truth. Galatians is a narrative and drama about Jesus Christ and what He accomplished for us on the cross, not about man's volition. The world does not revolve around us and our puny, depraved volition; it revolves around the Son of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As said in the prior verse: "Jesus actualized and exemplified faith in such a way that He is the Creator of a new domain or power field characterized by faith." (S. Williams) The doctrine of righteousness by faith is in fact developed out of Paul's eschatological drama. (R. Hays) The doctrine of righteousness by faith is developed in the Epistle to the Galatians, with the aid of material drawn from the eschatological doctrine of the being-in-Christ, on strictly logical lines as a cosmico-historical speculation. (A. Schweitzer) We might advance Schweitzer's argument one step further, however, by suggesting that the "pistis" through which righteousness comes might be, within the context of the "cosmico-historical speculation," the faith of the Messiah Himself rather than that of the individual believer. (R. Hays)

"Pistis" designates the new era or principle or power which has now "come." The "coming of the faith" is virtually identified with the coming of Christ Himself ... The faith(fulness) of Jesus Christ is the means of the transmission of the blessing to others who now participate in His life and therefore reflect the same trusting relationship to God that broke into human experience through His death and resurrection. (R. Hays) Those who know their maturity in Christ refuse the bondage of law as both unnecessary and humiliating. We are not children but sons. Law leads minors. Faith controls sons. (A. Knoch)

Gal. 3:25 But (adversative) since this (Gen. Spec.) faithfulness (Adv. Gen. Ref.) was demonstrated publicly (ἔρχομαι, AAPTc.GFS, Dramatic, Causal, Deponent; on the cross), we (Jews) are (εἰμι, PAI1P, Gnomic) no longer (neg. adv.) under a repressive slavemaster (Prep. Acc.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:25** ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς πίστεως οὐκέτι ὑπὸ παιδαγωγόν ἔσμεν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:25** at ubi venit fides iam non sumus sub pedagogo

LWB Gal. 3:26 For in Christ Jesus [positional truth] you [both Jew and Gentile believers] are all sons of God, through [the principle of] faith.

KW Gal. 3:26 For all of you are God's sons through faith in Christ Jesus,

KJV Galatians 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The phrase “in Christ Jesus” is a favorite expression of Paul’s that represents our positional union with Him. We are only “sons of God” when we are ensphered in Christ Jesus. If we are not “in Christ Jesus” we are still unbelievers and we are not “sons of God.” In this case, Paul is addressing Jew and Gentile believers in Galatia, who are now on equal footing before God now that Jews are no longer under the law as a repressive slavemaster. And what is the principle by which we are “in Christ Jesus”? The principle is faith. Whose faith? The proof is less clear in this verse when taken by itself, due to the change in preposition (“en” instead of “ek”), so it by no means clarifies whose faith is in view. This verse could be talking about (a) the faithfulness of Christ, (b) faith in Christ, or (c) faith as the principle by which we are sons of God. The anthropocentric interpretation is (b) faith in Christ, meaning human believing. The christocentric interpretation is either (a) or (c). I choose option (c), faith as the principle by which we are sons of God. In the debate between the christocentric and anthropocentric interpretation of Galatians, this is a neutral verse – offering nothing substantial to either side of the argument.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Although some of the older commentators seized upon this verse as evidence for the “objective genitive” interpretation of “pistis Christou,” there is virtually universal critical agreement that “en Christo Jesou” neither modifies “pistis” nor expresses the object toward which faith is directed. Instead, we find here an instance of Paul’s characteristic formula “en Christo,” as the parallelism with 3:28 makes clear. In its present context “pistis” in 3:26 might be understood in light of 3:23, 25, where “he pistis,” used absolutely, designates the new era or principle or power which has now “come.” The fact that “en Christo Jesou” follows “dia tes pisteus” in the word order of Paul’s sentence if of no particular consequence; he does not intend to speak of a “pistis en Christo Jesou.” Even the RSV, which otherwise leans strongly, as we have seen, to interpretations which stress “believing in Christ,” renders this sentence, clearly and correctly, in accordance with the interpretation set forth here: “for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.” Thus Gal. 3:26 (along with 3:23, 25) offers neither confirmation nor disconfirmation with regard to the thesis that “pistis Jesou Christou” might be interpreted in the framework of a narrative Christology as “the faith of Jesus Christ.” This verse, like 3:14, names “pistis” as the principle or power through which salvation is actualized, but it tells us neither whose faith is meant nor how this faith accomplishes the results ascribed to it. (R. Hays)

Who in his right mind would want to go back to the old bondage of the Law? It would be like a

grown man sucking his thumb! (J. Phillips) It could mean “the faith of Jesus Christ,” that is, His own faithfulness to God. The question is, Who is doing the trusting: Christ or the Christian? Is Paul talking about faith in Christ or the faithfulness of Christ? And if it is the latter, does Galatians really teach the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith after all? Gramatically speaking, either translation is possible. It is true that Jesus was faithful. In fact, our salvation depends on His faithfulness to obey the law and suffer the punishment for our sins. But even if Christ is the one who is faithful, we still need to put our faith in His faithfulness. (P. Ryken)

Gal. 3:26 For (explanatory) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.) you (both Jew and Gentile believers in Galatia) are (είμι, PAI2P, Descriptive) all (Nom. Measure) sons (Pred. Nom.) of God (Gen. Rel.), through faith (Abl. Means; as a principle or power).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:26** Πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:26** omnes enim filii Dei estis per fidem in Christo Iesu

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:27** For as many as were placed into union with Christ [positional truth] have put on Christ.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:27** For as many as were introduced into union with Christ, put on Christ.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:27** For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

All believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have been baptized or placed into union with Christ (Dramatic Aorist tense). The Holy Spirit baptizes us into Christ, which is why it is often called the baptism of the Spirit. This is a simple statement of positional truth. The phrase “put on Christ” refers to a change of clothing (Constatative Aorist tense). Jewish believers have discarded their old clothing (the demands of the law) and have put on new clothing (the righteousness of Christ). Gentile believers have discarded their “filthy rags” and have also put on the righteousness of Christ as new clothing.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This verse should be understood as “transfer terminology,” the transfer from one order of existence into another ... to stand with Christ in that domain, that power field, created through His death and resurrection ... In His trusting obedience, His complete reliance on God as trustworthy and true, Christ reveals faith. Consequently, Christian faith is Christ-faith, that relationship to God which Christ exemplified, that life-stance which He actualized and which, because He lived and died, now characterizes the personal existence of everyone who lives in Him. Christ is not the “object” of such faith, however, but rather its supreme commander – indeed, its creator. (S. Williams) Water baptism does not put us into Christ. Paul had already thoroughly learned the lesson that an outward rite, such as circumcision, conferred to spiritual benefit. He was not about to substitute one external rite –

circumcision - for another one - water baptism. (J. Phillips) Paul depicts Israel as an immature son, the Church as an adult son and heir. At a dramatic moment in the Roman ceremony of adoption, the new heir is clothed with the magnificent toga virilis, the garment of manhood. Christians wear the spiritual equivalent of the toga virilis from the moment of salvation, when the baptism of the Spirit occurs. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 3:27 For (explanatory) as many as (Subj. Nom.) were placed into union (βαπτίζω, API2P, Dramatic) with Christ (Acc. Rel.; positional truth) have put on (ἐνδύω, AMI2P, Constativ; clothed) Christ (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:27** ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:27** quicumque enim in Christo baptizati estis Christum induistis

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:28** **There is neither Jew nor Greek [no racial distinctions]; there is neither slave nor free man [no distinction in rank]; there is neither male nor female [no sexual bias]: for you are all one in Christ Jesus [members of one body, the Church].**

^{KW} **Gal. 3:28** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female. For you all are one in Christ Jesus.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:28** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

All barriers between human beings have been broken by Jesus Christ. There are no racial distinctions – either Jew or Greek. There are no distinctions in rank, neither slave (servant) or free man (liberated). There is no sexual bias between man or woman (Latin: masculine, feminine). All believers, regardless of type or class, are united in the sphere of Christ Jesus. We are all members of one body, the Church.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Distinctions of creed or race are incompatible with true membership of Christ: the legal barriers and social cleft which severed freeman from slave, even natural divisions as deep-seated as those of sex, disappear in the presence of the all-absorbing unity of the body of Christ. The Galatians themselves were a signal instance of the power of the Gospel to make men one in Christ: for their churches were gathered out of the most diverse elements: Jew and Gentile, slave and freeman, male and female, had all contributed to their composition. (W. Nicoll)

Gal. 3:28 There is (ἔνεμι, PAI3S, Gnostic) neither (neg. adv.) Jew (Pred. Nom.) nor (neg. conj.) Greek (Pred. Nom.; Hellenist; no racial distinctions); there is (ἔνεμι, PAI3S, Gnostic) neither (neg.

adv.) slave (Pred. Nom.) nor (neg. conj.) free man (Pred. Nom.; no distinction in rank); there is (ἔνιμι, PAI3S, Gnostic) neither (neg. adv.) male (Pred. Nom.) nor (neg. conj.) female (Pred. Nom.; no sexual bias): for (explanatory) you (Subj. Nom.) all (Nom. Spec.) are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Descriptive) one (Pred. Nom.) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:28** οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην, οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ· πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:28** non est iudaeus neque Graecus non est servus neque liber non est masculus neque femina omnes enim vos unum estis in Christo Iesu

^{LWB} **Gal. 3:29** And since you [Gentiles] are Christ's, then you are Abraham's [spiritual] descendants, heirs according to the [unconditional] promise.

^{KW} **Gal. 3:29** And since you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to the promise.

^{KJV} **Galatians 3:29** And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Gentile believers are related to Christ on the basis of His faithfulness. And since they are related to Christ, they are also the spiritual descendants (Greek: sperm; Latin: semen) of Abraham. How can this be? Jesus Christ fulfilled our obligations in the Abrahamic covenant, making us his spiritual descendants. And now we are heirs (Latin: heredity) according to the unconditional promise. Jesus Christ destroyed the barrier between Jews and Gentiles; all believers are now part of the body of Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the death and resurrection of Jesus, we see God's fidelity to the promises made to Abraham. Rather than abandoning or destroying His unfaithful people, God constitutes Abraham's "sperma" by His own gracious action in Christ. Thus, the expression "the faith of Jesus Christ" signals that the death of Jesus is simultaneously an act of human fidelity to God and an act of divine fidelity to humanity. (T. Torrance) Paul's reasoning in Galatians is in terms of the Christian believers' participation in Christ (3:26, 29), the one seed of Abraham in whom the promise went into fulfillment (3:16), as had been intended already at the announcement of the promise (3:8, 29). Christians, thus, have no direct relationship to Abraham. Their relationship to him is dependent on their belonging to Christ (3:29). He is the mediating point between Abraham and the peoples that are blessed in Him. (H. Boers)

There is a sense in which Abraham is the prefiguration both of Christ and of those who are in Christ. Christ is Abraham's "sperma" (seed, 3:16), and those who are Christ's are "the seed of Abraham"

(3:29). Abraham is the biblical type to whom the promise was given, Christ the eschatological antitype through Whom the promise becomes effectual for those who are “children of promise” (4:28), Abraham’s sons (3:7). Abraham’s theocentric faith is not properly analogous to christocentric Christian faith. In fact, on this understanding, both Abraham and Jesus are paradigms for Christian faith and Christian faith is – properly understood – theocentric. Abraham is a metaphor for the truth now disclosed in the faith of Jesus Christ. (R. Hays) The three divisions of Abraham’s seed must be viewed as his natural descendants, his spiritual descendants, and his spiritual seed who are not his natural seed. (W. Best)

Though the evidence of Galatians, taken by itself, is less compelling than the evidence of Romans, it appears that Paul’s allusive formulations in Galatians are intended to recall his preaching to them about a Jesus who was “publicly exhibited as crucified” (3:1) in obedience to the will of the Father (1:4, 4:4) in order to set free those who had been slaves (4:3-7, 5:1) and to bring them, in unity with Him, into the blessing that had been promised to the children of Abraham (3:13-14, 29). Jesus’ act of giving Himself up to death is precisely the act of burden-bearing to which Paul refers when he speaks in Gal. 2:20 of “the ‘pistis’ of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (R. Hays)

Gal. 3:29 And (continuative) since (protasis; conditional particle) you (Subj. Nom.; Gentiles) are (είμι, PAI2P, Descriptive) Christ’s (Gen. Rel.), then (apodosis) you are (ellipsis) Abraham’s (Gen. Rel.) descendants (Pred. Nom.; spiritual), heirs (Nom. Appos.) according to the promise (Adv. Acc.; unconditional).

^{BGT} **Galatians 3:29** εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ, ἄρα τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ σπέρμα ἐστέ, κατ’ ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι.

^{VUL} **Galatians 3:29** si autem vos Christi ergo Abrahae semen estis secundum promissionem heredes

CHAPTER 4

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:1** Now I say: As long as an heir remains an infant [spiritually immature], he is in no way different from a slave [spiritually in chains], although he is lord [positionally] over all [his inheritance is just sitting there waiting for him to grow up],

^{KW} **Gal. 4:1** Now I say, that as long as the heir is in his minority, he does not differ one bit from a slave, even though he is owner of all,

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:1** Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the transitional “now” to switch his emphasis from positional truth related to the faithfulness of Christ and our relationship “in Him” to experiential truth related to the spiritual growth of the believer. He is almost being hortatory in his introduction: “Now let me change directions a bit and teach you this.” As long as an heir to a fortune is an infant (Durative Present tense), he might as well be a slave, because he is not old enough to possess his fortune. Even though he owns everything on paper (Concessive Participle), he is not old enough by law to receive it until he grows up. Paul is drawing a human parallel to show that a believer who is not growing in the spiritual life is still an infant. A spiritual infant is positionally an heir to all the blessings of the promise, but he is no different than a slave because he does not possess them experientially. As long as he remains in carnality, in either legalism or antinomianism, he is not growing up spiritually. And as long as he is not growing spiritually, he is unable to possess his spiritual inheritance. Someone has to guard him and teach him until he is ready to exercise his right to rule over his spiritual inheritance. Paul is about to explain to the Galatians that the law cannot perform these functions either.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It refers to a child of tender years, naturally subject to the control of guardians. (R. Earle) Slave corrects servant. (R. Stamm) In dealing with believers as minors, Paul is looking at the past and has the Jewish believers particularly in mind. He wants to draw the contrast between the spiritual immaturity of the past and the full maturity and freedom that we have in Christ. (J. Phillips) In Greek civil law, the heir had about as much liberty as a common slave. He had no legal or property rights. His guardian kept him under discipline. He was told when to wake up, when to go to school, what to wear, how to behave, and when to go to bed. He also had a trustee to manage his property, especially if his father was deceased. Until he came of age he was called “the young master” – “master” because one day he would inherit the estate, but “young” to keep him firmly in his place. Under this system, the young master sometimes felt more like a slave than a son. (P. Ryken)

We have seen how in Galatians 3 the apostle Paul surveyed 2,000 years of OT history. In particular, he showed the relation between three of the great figures of biblical history – Abraham, Moses and Jesus Christ. He explained how God gave Abraham a promise to bless all the families of the earth through his posterity; how He then gave Moses a law which, far from annulling the promise, actually made it more necessary and urgent; and how the promise was fulfilled in Christ, so that everyone whom the law drives to Christ inherits the promise which God made to Abraham. Now in Galatians 4:1-11 Paul rehearses the same history again, contrasting man’s condition under the law with his condition when he is in Christ, and basing on this contrast an impassioned plea about the Christian life. (J. Stott) The OT saint was a babe, immature, not realizing the glory and fullness of his future inheritance. He was like a little child who, although heir to millions by virtue of relation to his father, is totally ignorant of the great wealth he is heir to, and would be made happier with a nickel than the promise of millions. (M. DeHaan)

The apostle designs to throw further light upon the position taken in 3:24 - that God's people, while under the Law, were under a bondage from which they have now been emancipated. (E. Huxtable) "Nepios" refers to an immature person, intellectually and morally. This word Paul uses to describe the person under the law. He is treated as an immature person. An adult, for instance, is old enough to govern his own actions. A child must have restraints put on him. Israel under law was treated like a minor. (K. Wuest) When we start out in the Christian life, we are babes and we are to grow to maturation. However, God gives us the position of a full-grown son to furnish us with a capacity that we would not otherwise have. (J. McGee) "Nepios" is used of the Jews, who, while the law was in force, were in a state corresponding to that of childhood, or minority, just as the word "infant" is used of a minor, in English law. (Vine)

Gal. 4:1 Now (transitional; switching his emphasis from positional truth to experiential truth) I say (λέγω, PAI1S, Static): As long as (Acc. Extent of Time) an heir (Subj. Nom.) remains (εἰμι, PAI3S, Durative) an infant (Pred. Nom.; spiritually immature), he is in no way (Adv. Acc.) different from (διαφέρω, PAI3S, Descriptive) a slave (Gen. Disadv.), although he is (εἰμι, PAPtc.NMS, Descriptive, Concessive) lord (Pred. Nom.; positionally) over all (Gen. Measure),

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:1** Λέγω δέ, ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ὁ κληρονόμος νήπιός ἐστιν, οὐδέν διαφέρει δούλου κύριος πάντων ὢν,

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:1** dico autem quanto tempore heres parvulus est nihil differt servo cum sit dominus omnium

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:2** But remains under slave-guardians and stewards [trustees] until the time [adult son placing] appointed by his father [adoption].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:2** But is under guardians and stewards until the time previously fixed by his father.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:2** But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

An infant remains (Durative Present tense) under the control of slave-guardians and stewards until the father is ready to begin the "adult son placing." There is no emphasis on teaching here. The erroneous use of the Latin "tutors" was utilized by the KJV translators. The "adult son placing" took place when the father decided it was time to acknowledge his son as his heir formally. This involved the public ceremony in which the son was given the toga virilis.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"Epitropos" refers primarily to a personal guardian; "oikonomos" refers to a steward of property. (R.

Earle) The phrase should be rendered “controllers of his person and property.” (J. Lightfoot) The minor child was kept under guardians who watched over his person, and trustees who protected his estate. (D. Campbell) Guardians and trustees is correct, not tutors and governors. (R. Stamm) Under the old economy, the believer was a ward of the state, so to speak. His property and his inheritance were in the care of another. All of that is changed in Christ. (J. Phillips) Whereas Israel was compared to an irresponsible child, under the strict discipline of the law, we today are adult sons and take our place fully in the family of God. (M. DeHaan)

Gal. 4:2 But (adversative) remains (εἰμι, PAI3S, Durative) under slave-guardians (Prep. Acc.; governors) and (connective) stewards (Prep. Acc.; house managers) until the time appointed (Gen. Extent of Time; adoption: adult son placing) by his (Gen. Rel.) father (Abl. Source).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:2** ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ ἐπιτρόπους ἐστὶν καὶ οἰκονόμους ἄχρι τῆς προθεσμίας τοῦ πατρὸς.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:2** sed sub tutoribus est et actoribus usque ad praefinitum tempus a patre

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:3** In this manner, we [Jews] also, when we were infants [spiritual babes], were in a state of permanent bondage under the control of the basic precepts [fundamentals of the Mosaic Law] of the world [Jewish system].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:3** In like manner, we also, when we were in our minority, were in a permanent state of servitude under the rudimentary first principles of mankind.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:3** Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In the same manner as an infant who is under slave-guardians and trustees, Jews were spiritual infants enslaved (Modal Participle) to the basic precepts (Latin: elements) of the Mosaic Law. Paul uses the Imperfect tense repeatedly in this verse to point to the inability of the law to bring any adherent to maturity. Jews were in an imperfect state as spiritual infants because the law was imperfect in its ability to bring them to spiritual maturity. The law served a purpose, but only for minors – spiritually immature children. The purpose of the Mosaic Law was to keep children under lock-and-key. Those who remained under the law were continually brought under subjection to the Jewish system of slave-guardianship. Rather than being more pious and spiritual, they remained in a state of constant childhood. How can we apply this today? Legalistic believers are constantly under the control of babysitters. The babysitter doesn't teach them anything of value spiritually, but only guards them from misbehavior. And as long as the believer remains legalistic, he never grows up and is never allowed out of the house without a babysitter. There is no freedom, no adoption, and no inheritance for anyone who remains a minor under the control of a babysitter.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The subject has already been enslaved by the opponent (the law), and the contract (the receiving of our inheritance) remains unfulfilled. Thus a situation of “lack” is created ... Humanity was powerless, imprisoned, and enslaved ... Redemption and adoption do not seem to be interchangeable ... God sends His Son to redeem those under the law (= Jews) and to adopt us (= Gentiles) and then gives the gift of the Spirit to all who are “sons” (= Jews and Gentiles together). This structure implies but does not articulate a final sequence in which those who have received the Spirit become protagonists in their own story, overcoming the “opponent” that once enslaved them. (R. Hays) There is an error of “concern” in legalism. A legalist wants to give direction. There is an error of responsibility in freedom. (K. Lamb) “We” refers also to Paul himself as well as to all the Jews who came to faith after Christ came. (R. Lenski) “When we were children” does not mean in age, but in knowledge of divine, spiritual, and evangelical things; which must be understood not of every individual person among them, for there were some grown men, men of great faith, light, knowledge, and experience; but of the bulk and generality of the people of the Jews. (J. Gill)

What are these “elemental spirits of the universe”? First, it can be used in the sense of elementary things, the letters of the alphabet, the ABC which we learn at school. Paul’s meaning here, then, is likening the OT period to the rudimentary education of the people of God, which was completed by further education when Christ came. The second way in which the word “elements” can be interpreted is associated in the ancient world with either the physical elements (earth, fire, air and water) or with the heavenly bodies (the sun, the moon and the stars), which control the seasonal festivals observed on earth. This fits in with verse 8, where we are said to have been in bondage to beings that by nature are no gods, namely demons or evil spirits ... God meant the law to be a stepping-stone to liberty; Satan uses it as a cul-de-sac, deceiving his dupes into supposing that from its fearful bondage there is no escape. (J. Stott) Paul was a Jew, writing to Gentiles. Wherever, therefore, the pronoun “we” or “us” is used, it always refers to Israel, but the “you” and “ye” always refers to the Gentiles. Apply this rule. It will prevent you from mixing law and grace as these Galatians were doing. (M. DeHaan)

The word for “children” is “nepios,” which implies a small child, one not old enough to speak. The Law treated people as infants. Everything has to be spelled out for an infant. A child must be told when to go to bed, when to get up, what to eat, and what to wear. From the time it gets up to the time it goes to bed, it is told what to do and where to go. Nearly all of its decisions are made for it. Such was the Law, and such was the state of spiritual infancy of those under the Law. Indeed, here is the very essence of legalism. In the NT, God sets before us general principles. Legalism lays down the law. Being governed by legalism is suitable only for a child. The legalist likes to line everybody up, give orders, and make them march in step to the beat of his drum. (J. Phillips) The Judaizers had been telling the Galatians that the law was a graduate school for the gospel. But Paul insisted that being under the law was actually a sign of spiritual immaturity. For the Galatians to go back to the law would be like a PhD repeating kindergarten to work on his alphabet. If they wanted to be spiritual grown-ups, they would have to advance beyond the law. (P. Ryken) It must have wounded Jewish vanity to have their usages and feasts lumped together with the pagan rites and festivals that they despised. (J. Dow)

Gal. 4:3 In this manner (comparative adv.), we (Subj. Nom.; Jews) also (adjunctive), when (temporal particle) we were (εἰμι, Imperf.A1P, Descriptive) infants (Pred. Nom.; minors, spiritually immature), were (εἰμι, Imperf.M1P, Descriptive) in a state of permanent bondage (δουλόω, Perf.PPtc.NMP, Descriptive, Modal; enslaved, brought into subjection) under the control of the basic precepts (Prep. Acc.; fundamentals of the Mosaic Law) of the world (Adv. Gen. Ref.; Jewish system).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:3** οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς, ὅτε ἦμεν νήπιοι, ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου ἤμεθα δεδουλωμένοι·

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:3** ita et nos cum essemus parvuli sub elementis mundi eramus servientes

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:4** But when the fullness of time arrived [the precise moment in God's plan], God sent forth His Son [Jesus Christ] on a specific mission [to redeem Jews from the law, adopt Gentiles, and give both the Holy Spirit as sons], born out from a woman [emphasis on His humanity], established under the authority of the law [so He could fulfill the requirements of the legal dispensation],

^{KW} **Gal. 4:4** But when there came the fullness of the time, God sent His Son, woman-born, made subject to the law,

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:4** But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

When the precisely correct moment (Gk: chronology) in God's plan arrived (Culminative Aorist tense), He sent His Son to earth. Jesus Christ was sent forth on a specific, three-fold mission (Dramatic Aorist tense) by the Father – to redeem Jews from the law, adopt Gentiles, and give both Jews and Gentiles the gift of the Holy Spirit as sons. He was born out from a woman (Dramatic Aorist tense), a reference to His deity becoming humanity. The dispensation of the hypostatic union was beginning. He was also established on earth under the authority of the law (Constative Aorist tense). The birth of Jesus Christ began a new dispensation, but He lived His life on earth under the legal dispensation so that He could fulfill the law in its entirety as prophesied. There may be some of you who object to the phrase “faith of Christ” used in chapter 3. When Jesus is seen in His humanity, is there really a problem speaking of His faith or fidelity toward God? I don't think so. Jesus Christ was indeed God, but He was God in the flesh. He was born of a woman (humanity) and of the Spirit (deity). He was faithful to the Father and faithful to fulfill the exact demands of the law. He died spiritually on the cross, and He died physically on the cross.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The grace of God is manifested and made effectual by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ. God is the Sender whose purpose to convey blessing to humanity is carried out through the action of a single Subject, Jesus Christ ... Paul is narrating the entry of the Son of God into human affairs ... Through Jesus Christ, God brings freedom to the Jews, the blessing of Abraham to the Gentiles, and the Spirit to both Jews and Gentiles. His human birth and subjection to law were contributory to the achievement of redemption. (R. Hays) The “fullness” was complete fullness: all things were ready for the King – the Son of God and the Son of man – to enter His messianic kingdom. It was God’s own moment for the giving of His Son. (R. Stamm) When the “fullness of time” came, Judaism was a dead religion, a religion of rite and ritual, of form and ceremony, of tradition and crushing legalism. The Gentiles, weary to death of their own bankrupt religions, turned hopefully toward Judaism only to be repelled by Jewish hostility and hypocrisy and by its bitter exclusiveness and rigid bondage to dead forms and narrow views. The great Gentile world was equally bankrupt. (J. Phillips)

What is envisaged here is neither the death nor the resurrection, nor even simply birth, but the coming of Jesus, His life viewed as a whole. (Kramer) The Hebrew prophets and Jewish apocalyptists believed that their God was the creator of the universe and arbiter of the destinies of all men and nations. Nothing could happen that was not His doing, either directly or indirectly through angels and men. He had a time for everything, and everything happened exactly on time. To demonstrate His mercy as well as His power He had to work slowly, allowing good and evil all the time they needed to grow into their full harvest. A predetermined increase of wickedness had to be filled up, and a predestined number of righteous folk had to be gathered into the faithful remnant. (R. Stamm) Jesus came when the time which had been ordained by the providence of God was seasonable and fit. (J. Calvin) The phrase that begins with “ek” denotes more than the separation from the womb, it includes the entire human nature of the Son as this was derived from His human mother. (R. Lenski) Notice that God’s purpose was both to “redeem” and to “adopt.” (J. Stott)

“Made of a woman” does not mean created as Adam was, nor begotten by man, as men in common are; nor is He said to be born, though truly He was, but “made” – which word the Holy Spirit chooses, to express the mighty power of God, in His mysterious incarnation, wonderful conception, and birth. (J. Gill) The “fullness of the time” means the world’s history was all articulated and predestined stage by stage according to the hidden counsels of God. (J. Dow) As a Son, Jesus Christ was sent, because He was always God’s Son. Nevertheless, he was born of woman under the law, and thus became man. The Bible is never hesitant to put the twin truths of the full deity and true humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ together. (J. Boice) We have received that adoption as “adult sons” through the gift of the Holy Spirit. By His indwelling, we have been placed as sons in the Body of Christ. There are responsibilities and privileges that go with being a son. A son is free to fail, but he is not free to be irresponsible. If the believer fails to recognize his position, he lives out his life as a child rather than a son. He may be a son positionally, but practically he is still experiencing childhood. (K. Lamb)

The moment had arrived which God had ordained from the beginning and foretold by His prophets for Messiah’s coming. (J. Lightfoot) We are the friends of God by virtue of the intra-Trinitarian love

of God that so worked out in the fullness of time that the plan of redemption, conceived in the mind of God in eternity past, has exploded into our space-time history at exactly the right moment. When the time had fully come, as Paul puts it, God sent His Son. And we have been incalculably privileged not only to be saved by God's love, but to be shown it, to be informed about it, to be let in on the mind of God. God is love; and we are the friends of God. (D. Carson) The "fullness of time" is used for each of the two christocentric dispensations, the Age of the Hypostatic Union (Gal. 4:4) and the Church Age (Eph. 1:10), indicating the close relationship between these two dispensations ... The death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and session of Christ fulfilled and therefore abrogated the old contract or old testament of the Mosaic Law. We live under a new grace contract, the New Testament, which we fulfill inside the sphere of divine power. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 4:4 But (adversative) when (temporal particle) the fullness (Subj. Nom.) of time (Gen. Extent of Time) arrived (ἔρχομαι, AAI3S, Culminative, Deponent; the precise moment in God's plan), God (Subj. Nom.) sent forth His (Gen. Rel.) Son (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jesus Christ) on a specific mission (ἐξαποστέλλω, AAI3S, Dramatic), born (γίνομαι, AMPtc.AMS, Dramatic, Deponent, Modal) out from a woman (Gen. Source, Separation), established (γίνομαι, AMPtc.AMS, Constative, Deponent, Modal) under the authority of the law (Prep. Acc.),

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:4** ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον,

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:4** at ubi venit plenitudo temporis misit Deus Filium suum factum ex muliere factum sub lege

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:5** In order that He might redeem those [Jews] under the authority of the law, in order that we [Gentiles] might receive the adoption,

^{KW} **Gal. 4:5** In order that He might deliver those under the law to the end that we might be placed as adult sons.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:5** To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As mentioned in my prior translation highlight, Jesus Christ came to earth to accomplish a three-point mission. Two of those points (double "hina" clauses) are in this passage; the third point is in the next verse. He came for the purpose and eventual result of redeeming (Culminative Aorist tense) the Jews from the authority and bondage of the law. He also came for the purpose and eventual result that Gentiles would receive the adoption (Culminative Aorist tense). The subjunctive mood is not potential, as if there was any chance of His plan failing. It is a subjunctive mood that outlines His purpose for coming to earth and the eventual, absolutely successful results that will follow. Also, there is nothing in this verse that points to an individual

“receiving” redemption or “receiving” adoption. The emphasis on this verse is corporate, in which Jews are corporately redeemed and Gentiles are corporately adopted. I’ll say it again: Paul is not giving an evangelical altar-call in Galatians. He is telling and re-telling a narrative, soteriological story.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The cross as Christ’s saving action, is God’s action of “pistis,” God’s demonstration of fidelity to the promise made to Abraham. While Jesus is “sent forth” by God, there is a mysterious sense in which He is more than simply an intermediary or an agent of God’s will. There is an overlay and fusion of the agency of Christ and the agency of God. Ultimately, being united with Christ is salvific because to share His life is to share in the life of God. Once again, this claim is only explicable in relation to the story in which Jesus is not just an exemplary human being but in fact God’s own Son sent forth for our deliverance from slavery to the “elements of the world.” (R. Hays) The double “hina” clause expresses the soteriological implications of the action described in the main clause. (Betz) Jesus Christ is the archetypical (or prototypical) hero who, through His faithfulness unto death on the cross, wins deliverance and access to God for His people. (R. Hays)

Paul’s theology must be understood as the explication and defense of a story. The narrative structure of the gospel story depicts Jesus as the divinely commissioned protagonist who gives Himself up to death on a cross in order to liberate humanity from bondage. His death, in obedience to the will of God, is simultaneously a loving act of faithfulness to God and the decisive manifestation of God’s faithfulness to His covenant promise to Abraham. The emphasis in Paul’s theology lies less on the question of how we should dispose ourselves toward God than on the question of how God has acted in Christ to effect our deliverance. Indeed, this last sentence is a tolerable summary of the message of Paul’s letter to the Galatians. (R. Hays) Contrary to Arminian philosophy, Paul’s theology is christocentric and theocentric, not anthropocentric. (LWB) Adoption is of grace, and we are adopted regardless of whether or not we fulfill the requirements. (J. Dillow)

The law brought God (His nature) out to man, but it could not bring man to God. Grace brings men to God. The law by its very character demands obedience, but the law could not convey the character of God, the nature of Fatherhood. The law came by Moses. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. God the Son is our Mediator, not Moses or Aaron or the Levitical priesthood. We are brought into a unity with God through Jesus Christ. There is a oneness between God and His people now. (K. Lamb) Jesus was not only born under Law, but was subject to it all His life. What this involved for His childhood appears in Luke 2:21-52. The “yoke” of the Torah demanded that He observe the customs of His forefathers, such as wearing phylactery and prayer fringes, ceremonial washing of hands before eating, giving thanks at mealtime, praying at stated times, bringing tithes and sacrifices, and obeying the Ten Commandments. (R. Stamm) Here is an heirship which comes to the Christian only because he is a son and for no other reason. There is no mention of work or obedience here. (J. Dillow)

Gal. 4:5 In order that (purpose/result) He might redeem (ἐξαγοράζω, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Result; buy out of the slave market) those

(Acc. Dir. Obj.; Jews) under the authority of the law (Prep. Acc.), in order that (purpose/result) we (Gentiles) might receive (ἀπολαμβάνω, AASubj.1P, Culminative, Result) the adoption (Acc. Dir. Obj.; adult son placing),

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:5** ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ, ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:5** ut eos qui sub lege erant redimeret ut adoptionem filiorum reciperemus

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:6** And because you [both Jew and Gentile believers] are [positionally] sons [redeemed Jewish sons and adopted Gentile sons], God [the Father] has sent forth the Spirit [Holy Spirit] of His Son [Jesus Christ] on a specific mission [to assist you in living the supergrace life] into the mentality of your souls, calling out inaudibly on a continual basis: Oh Father, my Father.

^{KW} **Gal. 4:6** And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying, Abba [namely], my Father.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:6** And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The two “hina clauses” in the prior verse are closely tied to this passage. The third point in Paul’s three-point outline is that because both redeemed Jewish believers and adopted Gentiles believers are sons (positionally), God has sent forth the Spirit (Dramatic Aorist tense) as our Mentor in the Christian life. This is an obvious Trinitarian verse. God the Father has sent forth the Holy Spirit of His Son, Jesus Christ, to assist us in living the supergrace life. The Spirit does this initially by indwelling, but continuously by His filling - when we are in fellowship with Him. As the Spirit indwells each believer, He is continuously calling out (Iterative Present tense) in an inaudible voice: Oh Father, my Father. The Holy Spirit, therefore, is our mouthpiece to the Father through the Son. This is exactly how we have been commanded to pray: to the Father, by means of the Spirit, in the Name of Jesus Christ. We might not hear His voice inside us, especially if we are grieving or quenching His intended ministry for us, but He is nevertheless continuously operating on our behalf before the Father. The gift of the Holy Spirit can also be viewed as the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The apostle refers to the promise to Abraham and has learned to interpret this as having reference to the gift of the Spirit. (Burton) Is it possible, then, that this foundational Christ-story creates for Paul the link between the experience of the Spirit in the community and the Abraham story? As the story is proclaimed, the Spirit is given to the community (3:1-5), and the story itself portrays Christ as the agent in and through Whom the Spirit is given (3:14, 4:6). At the same time, the story also identifies Christ as Abraham’s messianic “seed,” in Whom the promise of blessing to the nations is to be

fulfilled. The conclusion lies readily at hand, within the framework defined by this story, that the experienced Spirit, given to the Gentiles, must be equated with the promised fulfillment ... The Spirit that the Galatians have received is not just a self-authenticating religious experience; rather, the experience is significant for Paul because he interprets it, in light of Scripture, as the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. (R. Hays)

If you live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit. Don't alienate yourself from that by coming back over to a work of the flesh when your citizenship is here in the Spirit, hidden in Christ with God. If you're a citizen of the United States, your citizenship is in the United States (Spirit), not Bangladesh (law). Don't go live in Bangladesh. Why have a mud-hole in front of your house for a bathroom, when you can enjoy a nice pleasant shower and tub? Don't come over here (Bangladesh) and put law on yourself again and bring all this mess on top of you when this (United States - Spirit) is what you are. If you move over here (law), death is going to be experienced. Disorganization, chaos, confusion: that's what you're going to walk in here. Walk over here (Spirit) and it's life and peace and righteousness. (K. Lamb) This is the Spirit who is crying, Abba, Father. This cry points to the passionate, violent operation of the Spirit. The Spirit Himself is the subject of the crying. It is He who together with the believers, and in the believers, cries out to God, and teaches them to cry out. (H. Ridderbos)

Here we are drawn into the mystery of the Trinity. The one true God exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The work of the Son is to bring us into relationship with the Father, while the work of the Spirit is to seal that family tie. Thus the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all work together to make us God's true sons and daughters. (P. Ryken) "Abba" is the voice of the Spirit of Jesus on the lips of His people. (F. Bruce) The Spirit is sent into the "heart," the central seat or organ of the inner life and power, which the Spirit of God's Son inhabits, and out of which He cries through us, Abba, Father. And that Spirit in their hearts is represented as crying, Abba, Father. The Divine Agent Himself, as the Spirit of adoption, is represented as crying. For the impulse is His, the realized sonship is of Him, the deepened sense of want is of His creation, in the heart whence rises the tender and earnest address, Abba, Father. (J. Eadie)

God the Father sent the Son in order that believers might have the position of sons and He sent His Spirit so that they might have the experience of the same reality. (A. Gaebelein) The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is one of the outstanding evidences of the salvation of the individual and also the means by which God can effect sanctification in the experiential and progressive sense. (J. Walvoord) We were sons in God's elective purpose and love. (A. Robertson) Abba is the Aramaic equivalent to the Greek "Pater." The combination of the two words seems to have been a liturgical formula. (J. Lightfoot) There is a distinction to be made between adoption and the witness of our adoption. Adoption itself is God's secret act behind the scene, as it were; the witness of adoption is God's revealed act, in our hearts. The witness of the adoption, then, is the Holy Spirit. It is the conscious work of the Spirit. (R. Kendall)

All three divine persons here appear, as having a concern in this business. (J. Gill) Because they had been eternally predestinated unto the adoption of sons (Eph. 1:4-5), because they were actually given

to Christ under that character in the eternal covenant (John 11:52, Heb. 2:13), at God's appointed time the Holy Spirit is sent into their hearts to give them a knowledge of the wondrous fact that they have a place in the very family of God and that God is their Father. This it is which inclines their hearts to love Him, delight in Him, and place all their dependence on Him. The great design of the gospel is to reveal the love of God to His people, and thereby recover their love to God, that they may love Him again Who first loved them. (A. Pink) The participle "krazon" agreeing with "pneuma" ascribes the cry to the Spirit of God's Son; yet it is undoubtedly the apostle's thought that it is the expression of the believer's attitude also. (E. Burton)

Gal. 4:6 And (continuative) because (causal) you (both Jew and Gentile believers) are (εἰμι', PAI2P, Descriptive; positionally) sons (Pred. Nom.; redeemed and/or adopted), God (Subj. Nom.; the Father) has sent forth the Spirit (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Holy Spirit) of His (Gen. Rel.) Son (Adv. Gen. Ref.; Jesus Christ) on a specific mission (ἐξαποστέλλω, AAI3S, Dramatic; to assist you in living the supergrace life) into the mentality of your (Gen. Poss.) souls (Prep. Acc.), calling out inaudibly on a continual basis (κράζω, PAPtc.ANS, Iterative, Modal, Articular): Oh Father (Voc. Address), my (Nom. Rel.; the) Father (Nom. Appos.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:6** Ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν κράζον· ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:6** quoniam autem estis filii misit Deus Spiritum Filii sui in corda nostra clamantem Abba Pater

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:7** Therefore, you [Gentile believers] are no longer a slave, but a son, and since you are a son, you are also an heir through God.

^{KW} **Gal. 4:7** So that no longer are you a slave but a son, and since you are a son, you are also an heir through God.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:7** Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Gentile believers are no longer slaves, but are sons due to adoption. And since they are sons, they are also heirs through God. Working backwards, heirship is based on sonship, and sonship is based on adoption. Paul is shifting his discussion from the narrative story about Jesus Christ to a direct questioning of the Gentile believers in Galatia. He is going to remind them about who they used to be, who they are now because of Christ, and what he hopes they will someday become. And in the midst of this questioning, he is going to ask them again why they would want to live under the authority of the law as opposed to the grace of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The inheritance is for sons, not for slaves. It does not come by keeping the law, but by living in the Spirit. (P. Ryken) The Christian is compared to the son, the Jew to the slave. The gospel brings sonship, Law inflicts bondage. Intelligent principles are substituted for specific commandments. The Law keeps men as slaves. It commands, it does not explain. Christianity enlightens so that we see the principles of righteousness, understand their inherent rightness and discern their applicability to specific cases. Christianity also liberates by allowing us freedom to apply these principles according to our own conscientious convictions, instead of forcing upon us a rigid course of conduct. (W. Adeney)

Positional sonship is predicated upon the gift of the Holy Spirit. (K. Lamb) We are all heirs of God by virtue of the fact that we are His children. Being an heir of God is unconditional, but being a joint-heir of the kingdom is conditioned upon our spiritual perseverance. Being an heir in the sense of final deliverance from hell is not based upon sharing in His sufferings. Otherwise salvation is earned and based on works. Paul specifically says that we are heirs of God by virtue of the fact that we are sons and for no other reason. Yet in Romans 8:17 he says that this heirship is conditioned upon works, perseverance in suffering. Contextual considerations suggest that two kinds of Christians are in view, and thus two kinds of inheritances are implied. (J. Dillow)

Gal. 4:7 Therefore (inferential), you are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Descriptive) no longer (neg. adv.) a slave (Pred. Nom.), but (contrast) a son (Pred. Nom.), and (continuative) since (conditional) you are (ellipsis) a son (Pred. Nom.), you are (ellipsis) also (adjunctive) an heir (Pred. Nom.) through God (Abl. Agency).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:7** ὥστε οὐκέτι εἰ δοῦλος ἀλλὰ υἱός· εἰ δὲ υἱός, καὶ κληρονόμος διὰ θεοῦ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:7** itaque iam non es servus sed filius quod si filius et heres per Deum

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:8** Indeed, during the time when you [Gentiles] did not know God [as unbelievers], you served as slaves those [demonic entities behind idols] which by their very nature and essence were not gods.

^{KW} **Gal. 4:8** But at that time, in fact, now knowing God, you were in a slave's bondage to the gods which are not gods by nature.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:8** Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

When the Gentiles in Galatian did not know God (Temporal Participle), they worshipped idols with demonic forces behind them. When they were unbelievers, they served these demons as if

they were their slaves (Constative Aorist tense). And the most pathetic thing about it was that the things they served were not even gods (Attributive Participle) by their very nature and essence. They did not possess divinity. There was no monotheism practiced here. In their complete dominance and delusion by Satan, they were slaves to demonic images and the phantoms behind them. Before they came to know the One and Only living God, they were slaves to demonic entities which were no-gods at all.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God knows everybody, but not everybody knows God. (K. Lamb) Why would anyone who had been adopted by God want to go back and work for the devil? (P. Ryken) In contrasting the condition under the law with that when one is freed from the law Paul used a comparison (vs. 1) which applied directly to the Jewish Christians and indirectly (vs. 3) to the Gentile Christians. He now completes this by doing the reverse, by speaking directly about the Gentile and indirectly about the Jewish Christians. (R. Lenski) Men deified forces and phenomena which by nature are not gods because they are not personal, rational, self-initiating, and omnipotent. Images representing these forces and phenomena are not gods either, for they possess no life or power. The reason why the heathen were enslaved to that which was not divine was that they “knew not God.” (H. Vos)

The apostle speaks of the former gods which the Galatian Gentiles worshipped. He thinks of them as realities, calling the gods of the pagan world demons (1 Cor. 8:5, 6; 10:19; Col. 2:15). The Galatians were slaves of these deities, in bondage under a system of legalism. He grants them objective existence, but denies that they are gods by nature. Paul does not deny their existence, but their deity. Yet while the apostle did not think of them as deity by nature, yet at the same time he did not class them as being of mere mundane matter. They belonged to a world not human but demoniac, a point which must have been well known to the Galatians from Paul’s oral instruction. (K. Wuest) To Paul, the great sin of idolatry is to worship the created thing rather than the Creator; and whether it be the “elements” or the “heavenly bodies,” all are alike the work of God’s hands. (R. Cole)

Gal. 4:8 Indeed (emphatic), during the time (temporal) when you did not (neg. adv.) know (οἶδα, Perf.APtc.NMP, Intensive, Temporal) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.; as unbelievers), you (Gentiles) served as slaves (δουλεύω, AAI2P, Constative) those (Dat. Disadv.) which by their very nature and essence (Dat. Spec.) were (εἰμί, PAPtc.DMP, Historical, Attributive) not (neg. particle) gods (Dat. Ref.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:8** Ἀλλὰ τότε μὲν οὐκ εἰδότες θεὸν ἐδουλεύσατε τοῖς φύσει μὴ οὖσιν θεοῖς·

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:8** sed tunc quidem ignorantes Deum his qui natura non sunt dii serviebatis

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:9** But now, after you have come to know God [human response], or rather [correcting himself in mid-sentence] being known by God [sovereign initiative], how is it possible that you are turning once more to weak [having no power to transform anyone] and beggarly [bringing no rich endowment of spiritual blessings] elements [precepts of the

law], with reference to which [turning from God], for some time now, you seem increasingly desirous to be enslaved again?

^{KW} **Gal. 4:9** But now having come to know God, indeed, rather having become known by God, how is it possible that you are turning back again to the weak and beggarly rudimentary principles to which you are again bent on being in bondage?

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:9** But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul begins a true statement about the life-changing moment each Gentile believer in Christ experienced (Ingressive Aorist tense) at their designated point in time (at regeneration) according to God's plan. But catching himself in mid-sentence, he changes his emphasis from their coming to know God to their being known by God (Gnomic Aorist tense). Both are true statements, but in the divine order, God got there first. Paul stops his sentence short, and rebukes the tendency of his own flesh to steal the glory from God. He catches himself magnifying the volition of man and corrects himself immediately by instead magnifying the sovereignty of God. He switched his thinking from being anthropocentric to being christocentric. If you think Paul's gospel focuses on the volition of man, then you do not know Paul. From the moment he was saved on the road to Damascus to his death as a martyr, Paul was a thorough-going sovereignist.

The Father knew who His elect were, the Son recognized them as His sheep, and the Spirit regenerated them. God was the Initiator; man merely responded to the message. Paul is amazed that once someone believes in this Sovereign God, that they could possibly be interested in any cheap substitute, no matter what it was. He asks the Galatian believers, sarcastically, how they could turn from God (Static Present tense) to anything inferior by nature? They were turning from the all-powerful God of creation, Who had rescued them from condemnation and brought them spiritual blessings, to a set of powerless legal precepts that brought no rich endowment of spiritual blessings. When they were unbelievers, following weak and beggarly elemental (demonic) entities, God rescued them. Now they are turning away from God and desiring to be enslaved (Perfective Present tense) to another kind of weak and beggarly element!

If they were going to turn away from God as Gentiles, Paul could at least understand their returning to the pagan idolatry they were once enslaved to. But instead of doing that, they were changing to a new master – the weak and beggarly elements of the law. They were turning their zeal for the Lord, not into zeal for idols again, but into zeal for the law. As reversionistic Gentiles, he could understand returning to pagan idolatry. As reversionistic Jews, he could understand returning to the precepts of the law. But as reversionistic Gentiles, he could not understand why they would enslave themselves to a law which they were never given in the first place! The progressive present tense points to this being something that has been going on for some time. This didn't happen to them all at once, but was a process that had been increasing in their thinking day-by-day. Each time they listened to the false, legalistic teachers they gravitated

more and more toward legalistic enslavement instead of grace orientation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Because justification hinges upon the action of Jesus Christ, upon an event outside man, it is a terrible and ironic blunder to read Paul as though his gospel made redemption contingent upon our act of deciding to dispose ourselves toward God in a particular way. The grammar of Paul's gospel – more precisely, of the gospel's topical sequence – places humanity in the role of "receiver." This fact emerges with striking clarity in Gal. 4:9. Paul starts to cast the Galatians in the role of active knowing subject, but he catches himself up short, perhaps for deliberate rhetorical effect, and re-words his sentence so that God is cast as the knower. The logic of the gospel story requires that the deliverance of "those who believe" depend not upon their knowing or believing but upon the action of Jesus Christ, Who faithfully discharges the commission of God. As Paul puts the matter in 2 Cor. 5:18a: "Everything is from God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ." (R. Hays)

Does this mean that the human faith-response to God's action in Christ is insignificant for Paul? By no means! It does mean, however, that "faith" is not the precondition for receiving God's blessing; instead, it is the appropriate mode of response to a blessing already given in Christ. As such, it is also the mode of participation in the pattern definitively enacted in Jesus Christ: as we respond in faith, we participate in an ongoing reenactment of Christ's faithfulness. This point must be spelled out carefully, because it is an elusive one. The gospel story is not just the story of a super-hero who once upon a time defeated the cosmic villains of the Law, Sin and Death and thus discharged us from all responsibility; it is also the enactment of a life-pattern into which we are drawn. Christians are justified precisely because they participate in the crucified and justified Messiah, Whose destiny embodies theirs. (R. Hays)

The law destroys the work of the Spirit that has been wrought in you. A diet of the "first principles" leaves you without spiritual growth ... It takes a lot of grace to live under the law! (K. Lamb) The turning is not a repetition but a reversion. With "palin" it is translated "once more," expressing the desire of the Galatians to go back to the beginning and recapture their childhood at the expense of their freedom of adulthood. (R. Stamm) Many people do not like freedom. They find it difficult to make decisions for themselves. They like to be told what to believe and what to do. That is why leaders with charm and charisma can so easily find a following no matter how weird and outrageous their cause. People, after all, tend to be like sheep, following anyone who will take the lead ... For people who were fascinated by forceful personalities and who were themselves unskilled in biblical hermeneutics, the legalizers offered something that many people found desirable – determined leadership and no-nonsense rules by which to live. (J. Phillips)

By listening to the legalists, all they had done was exchange one form of bondage for another. Such was Paul's scathing denunciation of that very Judaism of which he had once been the most zealous ambassador. To go back to that kind of thing would be like a strong, grown man, who was accustomed to eating prime rib and roast beef, going back to mush, mashed peas, and baby food. Judaism and its legalism were now so completely obsolete that Paul turns to contemptuous

adjectives in describing it: impotence, feeble, destitute. Such was legalistic Judaism. Far from being able to enrich anyone, it was a beggar itself, utterly impoverished and destitute of any means whatsoever of imparting spiritual life and godliness to a human soul. And this is what the Galatians were willing to exchange for that “adoption of sons” that set them in the royal family of heaven! Paul would have laughed in their faces if the situation had not been so tragic and serious. (J. Phillips) Walking under the law kept them from knowing the Lord. (K. Lamb)

“Epistrephein” does not mean “return” but only “turn,” since the idea of reversal is expressed in the adverb. “Palin” in this case expresses repetition rather than, as in the preceding clause, reversal, though, as in many other cases, the repetition also involves a return to a former position. (E. Burton) To know God is to be a child of God, but this depends on the even more fundamental truth that we are known by God. This is the freedom of God’s grace, that He knew us long before we ever came to know Him. The initiative for membership in God’s family comes entirely from God Himself. (P. Ryken) The defection was not yet accomplished, it had just recently begun. (R. Lenski) The bond uniting them with God was not established by them but by God Himself. He had wanted to know them as His own, interested Himself in their behalf, and chosen them. (H. Ridderbos) The purpose of this added phrase is doubtless to remind the Galatians that it is not to themselves but to God that they owe their knowledge of Him and escape from idolatry. (E. Burton)

God knew them ere they knew Him, and His knowing them was the cause of their knowing Him. (J. Eadie) It is typical of Paul’s strong theological position that he is reluctant to speak of humans “knowing” God; at once, he corrects it to the passive “to be known by God.” This transfers salvation altogether out of the possibly subjective and possibly illusory into the great objective reality of the will of God. (R. Cole) Their escape from idolatry and bondage to law was not affected by any knowledge they acquired of God, but by God coming to know them in a saving way. (K. Wuest) They were loved by Him with an everlasting love, which had been manifested in their conversion, in the drawing of them to Himself, and to His Son; that He approved of them, delighted in them, had an exact knowledge, and took special care of them. (J. Gill) God has brought us into a position as sons, so we should stand in freedom as sons and not as children under regulations. We should walk as adults who know what needs to be done. We are moved by our relationship with the Father and not because it is required of us as servants. (K. Lamb)

It is characteristic of Paul’s understanding of man’s total spiritual depravity and of the electing grace of God that he corrects himself so as not to leave the impression that it is possible for any man to come to know God by his own efforts. The truth of the matter is that God comes to know us. That is, He takes the initiative in salvation with the result that we come to know Him only because we are first known of Him. Again, the word “known” does not refer to factual knowledge, for God always possesses that. It refers rather to the fact that through Christ the individual Christian has become an object of God’s personal recognition and favor. (A. Gaebelein) If God knows a man, that fact implies an activity of God which passes over to the man, so that he, as the subject of God’s knowledge, comes into the knowledge of God. (M. Vincent) He can only be referring to a people who had a personal relationship with the Lord, but had regressed to a place where God simply knew them. They no longer knew God. Every believer is known by God, but not every believer knows

God. (K. Lamb)

“Stoicheiolatry” consists of introducing that which belongs to the world into Christian worship and practice. Romanism has given the “stoichea” of paganism and Judaism a very large place in its creeds and ritual; while the Protestant churches show that they have not wholly purged themselves from them when they adopt worldly methods and adapt Jewish rites and ceremonies to Christian faith and practice. (E. Bullinger) They did not first know and love God; but God first, in His electing love, knew them, and therefore attracted them to know Him savingly. God’s great grace made their fall from it the more heinous. (R. Jamieson) Paul reminds the Galatians whence they had derived the knowledge of God. He affirms that they did not obtain it by their own exertions, by the acuteness or industry of their own minds, but because, when they were at the farthest possible remove from thinking of Him, God visited them in His mercy. What is said of the Galatians may be extended to all; for in all are fulfilled the words of Isaiah 65:1: “I am sought by them that asked not for Me, I am found by them that sought Me not.” The origin of our calling is the free election of God, which predestinates us to life before we are born. On this depends our calling, our faith, our whole salvation. (J. Calvin)

Gal. 4:9 But (adversative) now (temporal), after you have come to know (γινώσκω, AAPtc.NMP, Ingressive, Temporal: Subsequent Time; human reception) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.), or (adversative) rather (contrast) being known (γινώσκω, APpTc.NMP, Gnostic, Circumstantial; divine intiation) by God (Subj. Gen.), how is it possible that (interrogative) you are turning (ἐπιστρέφω, PAI2P, Static) once more (adv.) to weak (Noncompl. Acc.; unimpressive, having no power to transform) and (connective) beggarly (Noncompl. Acc.; poor, bringing no blessings) elements (Acc. Dir. Obj.; precepts of the law, demonic substances or entities), with reference to which (Dat. Ref.; turning from God), for some time now (adv.), you seem increasingly desirous (θέλω, PAI2P, Progressive) to be enslaved (δουλεύω, PAInf., Perfective, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) again (adv.)?

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:9** νῦν δὲ γνόντες θεόν, μᾶλλον δὲ γνωσθέντες ὑπὸ θεοῦ, πῶς ἐπιστρέφετε πάλιν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀσθενῆ καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα οἷς πάλιν ἄνωθεν δουλεῦειν θέλετε;

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:9** nunc autem cum cognoveritis Deum immo cogniti sitis a Deo quomodo convertimini iterum ad infirma et egena elementa quibus denuo servire vultis

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:10** You are making it a practice to carefully observe special purpose days [Sabbaths, legislated days off] and monthly festivals [feasts & celebrations] and favorable periods of time [sabbaticals] and other certain days of the year [jubilees, personal holidays].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:10** Days you are scrupulously and religiously observing, and months, and seasons, and years.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:10** Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Galatians have departed from Paul's philosophy that "all days are equal under the sun" and were scrupulously adhering to (Iterative Present tense) all sorts of "special" days. Their calendars were suddenly full of Sabbaths, legislated days off and other national holidays (special purpose days). They were also attending every manner of feast, fast and celebration that occurred on a monthly basis. Some were setting aside whole blocks of time for "special" events, such as sabbaticals and extended vacations. Then there were all the other days of the year marked-out for personal reasons, such as jubilees, birthdays, and anniversaries. Paul doesn't have a problem with enjoying time off from work, but he did have a problem with the inflexible idea that these days are more special than any other day. And when they were observed in a religious manner, as if missing one would ruin your state of happiness or spirituality, he was infuriated.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The kingdom of God isn't meat and drink; it's righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (K. Lamb) The Galatians were tempted to re-observe pagan "days" and the Jewish calendar, but did not become better persons. In like manner, the observance of the Christian calendar may result in religious servitude, with little creativity and no fresh commitment to Christ ...The observances with which the Galatians were beginning were new moons, fast and feast days, and holidays such as New Year's Day. There were special months of fasting, and lucky and unlucky days to do things, so that all one's undertakings had to be set for just the right times and seasons. There can be no doubt that Paul was referring especially to the Jewish calendar, with its yearly cycle of observances; but customs carried over from the Gentile cults were also included. (R. Stamm) In other words, your religion has degenerated into an external formalism. It is no longer the free and joyful communion of children with their Father; it has become a dreary routine of rules and regulations. (J. Stott)

The Galatians, it seems, were taking up the Jewish religious calendar as a guide to godliness. The Jews observed annual feasts and fast days. They observed the Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Tabernacles, and Purim. They observed all kinds of Sabbaths: the weekly Sabbath, the Sabbatic years, and the Years of Jubilee. All such things have nothing whatsoever to do with Christianity. (J. Phillips) If the Galatians wanted to practice the forms of outward religion, they might as well read their horoscopes or practice some other form of paganism ... Any religion that is based on observing special days is primitive because it reduces relationship to a ritual. It makes following God a matter of doing one's duty rather than receiving God's grace. It is a warning sign that many Americans are really pagans, for our national spirituality focuses on major holidays rather than on living for Christ every day. There are still far too many people who think that all they have to do for God is to go to church at Christmas and Easter. (P. Ryken)

There is a dangerous observance of seasons. The question is: What good do we do or gain through use of the privileges of the day? (1) The idea that the holy season sanctifies what would be otherwise

common. (2) Making the sanctity of the day an excuse for neglecting duty. (3) Regarding the mere observance of the seasons as a virtue on its own account. (4) Treating the religious observance of the holy season as an excuse for irreligion at other seasons. How many Protestants seem to think that cessation from business on Sunday shows so much respect for religion that all the work of the week may be carried on in utter worldliness! Let us remember that each man must draw the line between the harmless use and the dangerous observance of seasons for himself. It depends much on natural constitution and on early habits. If some Christians seem rather over-observant of days, those who with Paul regard all days, the Sabbath included, as in themselves equally holy, are not to judge their weaker brethren, but to reverence their devotion and to be charitable to their failing. (W. Adeney)

Gal. 4:10 You are making it a practice to carefully observe (παρατηρέω, PMI2P, Iterative) special purpose days (Acc. Extent of Time; Sabbaths, legislated days off, national holidays) and (connective) monthly festivals (Acc. Extent of Time; feasts, fasts, celebrations) and (connective) favorable periods of time (Acc. Extent of Time; sabbaticals, vacations) and (connective) other certain days of the year (Acc. Extent of Time; jubilees, personal holidays, birthdays, anniversaries).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:10** ἡμέρας παρατηρεῖσθε καὶ μῆνας καὶ καιροὺς καὶ ἐνιαυτοὺς,

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:10** dies observatis et menses et tempora et annos

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:11** I am afraid about you, that perhaps I have labored to the point of exhaustion for you [studying and teaching] in vain [I feel like I have wasted my time on you].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:11** I am afraid about you lest perhaps in vain I have labored to the point of exhaustion for you.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:11** I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is afraid (Descriptive Present tense) that he has completely wasted his time trying to teach the Galatians about the Christian way of life. He has exhausted himself studying, writing and teaching (Intensive Perfect tense) them publicly about the liberty and grace they have in Christ. But what have they done with his teaching? They ignored him and adopted all sorts of legalistic practices that served no spiritual purpose and offered no benefit to them in God's plan. Paul is at his wit's end. Nobody in Galatia seems to know how to apply any of the doctrines he has taught them in the past. They have abandoned biblical principles for pathetic, legalistic philosophies. When they abandoned the grace principle that "every day is a day from the Lord" and began to set up calendars with a host of man-made "special" observances - that was the last straw. They were rejecting Bible doctrine as well as the messenger who taught it to them. They were turning back to the pagan observance of "special days." He was crushed.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Either we're going to heaven on the righteousness of Another, or we aren't going to heaven at all. (K. Lamb) The danger was very real that the Galatians would lose all by mistaking the shadow for the substance. He was anxious for them. (R. Stamm) Paul's work would certainly be in vain if all that it eventually accomplished would be to make the Gentile Galatians exchange their old pagan elements and observances for the old abrogated Jewish elements and observances. (R. Lenski) Will the Galatians now become unlike Paul to whom they owe everything? (R. Lenski) Should they really come under legalistic domination, his labour would have been for naught. (E. Burton)

Gal. 4:11 I am afraid (φοβέω, PMIS, Descriptive) about you (Noncompl. Acc.), that perhaps (enclitic & negative particles) I have labored to the point of exhaustion (κοπιᾶω, Perf.AIS, Intensive; studying and teaching) for you (Acc. Adv.) in vain (adv.; to no avail).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:11** φοβοῦμαι ὑμᾶς μή πως εἰκῇ κεκοπίακα εἰς ὑμᾶς.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:11** timeo vos ne forte sine causa laboraverim in vobis

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:12** Brethren, I beseech you: Keep on being [free from the bondage of the law] like me, since I also became like you [by giving up the law to be like Gentiles]. You have done nothing harmful to me [you are only hurting yourself by adhering to the law].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:12** Become as I am, because I also became as you were, brethren; I am beseeching you. You had done me no wrong.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:12** Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am*; for I *am* as ye *are*: ye have not injured me at all.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul begs the Galatian believers (Dramatic Present tense), using his customary address of “brethren,” to keep on being like him (Iterative Present tense) on a daily basis. What does he mean by that? Is Paul being arrogant? What Paul is referring to is his freedom from the law. Paul is a Jewish believer, but he is not under the law. He became like the Galatians by giving up the law, since Gentiles never had the law in the first place. By embracing the law, they weren't causing him any harm (Constative Aorist tense). They were merely hurting themselves by trading the grace walk with God into a legalistic, condemning *modus operandi*. Paul was sticking to Bible doctrine while the Galatian believers were succumbing to legalism. He cared for their well-being, but if they chose to follow false, legalistic teachings, he wasn't about to join them in such pursuits or place his blessing on their misinformed activities.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

He has a right to expect this because he too has relinquished all his special privileges as a member of

God's chosen people, and has put himself on the same level as the Gentiles in respect of the grace of God ... Anything that threatened the stability and hindered the progress of his churches was a wrong to him. The preachers of "another gospel" maintained that they had a right to differ with him, and that in doing so they were not wronging him personally. Paul admitted that up to their present defection the Galatians had done him no wrong, but he implied that if they carried through their proposal to change his gospel, they would wrong not only him but the Christ who dwelt in him. (R. Stamm)

The thought is striking, paradoxical, involving a chiasm. The Galatians were formerly Gentiles without the Jewish legal system. Paul was formerly a Jew under this Jewish legal system. Then he became a believer in Christ, dropped this legal system, and thus became like the Gentiles who never had it. But the Galatians, who were originally without the Jewish system (insofar as they were of Gentile descent) and, on becoming Christians, were still without this system, were at this late date beginning to adopt at least large parts of it. Paul begs them not to do so, but ever to be as he is who had dropped all of it. (R. Lenski) It was true that he had been writing to them in strong terms of displeasure and indignation; but this was altogether on account of their behavior towards the gospel, not at all on account of any injury that he had himself to complain of. (E. Huxtable)

You have not injured me at all; what injury they had done was to God, whose will it was that these things should be abolished; and to Christ, who had broken down the middle wall of partition; and to the Gospel, which proclaimed liberty to the captives; and to their own souls, by entangling themselves with the yoke of bondage; but no personal injury was done to the apostle by their compliance with the law. (J. Gill) Paul was prepared to use every weapon in his arsenal to rescue his beloved converts from their peril. So he did not hesitate to make his appeal on the personal level. He will use doctrine, reproof, sarcasm, divine logic, and Scripture. He will also make a personal appeal to the love they had for him. (J. Phillips)

Gal. 4:12 Brethren (Voc. Address), I beseech (δέομαι, PM1LS, Dramatic, Deponent; beg) you (Gen. Adv.), keep on being (γίνομαι, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Command or Entreaty, Deponent; free from the bondage of the law) like (comparative) me (Pred. Nom.), since (causal) I (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive) became (ellipsis) like (comparative) you (Pred. Nom.; by giving up the law to be like Gentiles). You have done nothing (Acc. Dir. Obj.) harmful (ἀδικέω, AAI2P, Constative; injurious, wrong) to me (Acc. Gen. Ref.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:12** Γίνεσθε ὡς ἐγώ, ὅτι καὶ γὰρ ὡς ὑμεῖς, ἀδελφοί, δέομαι ὑμῶν. οὐδέν με ἡδίκησατε·

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:12** estote sicut et ego quia et ego sicut vos fratres obsecro vos nihil me laesistis

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:13** Now you know that because of a sickness of the flesh [perhaps a common eye disease called ophthalmia] I preached the gospel to you during my first visit [I was headed for Asia Minor but my infirmity kept me in Galatia for awhile].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:13** But you know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel to you on the occasion of my first visit.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:13** Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds the Galatian believers that he initially preached the gospel to them (Ingressive Aorist tense) during his first visit to the region. He was in fact headed to Asia Minor, but contracted some sickness while making the arduous journey. He was forced to remain in Galatia long enough to recover from his ailment, but in spite of this infirmity, he still had the energy to preach the gospel to them (Latin: evangelism). They already know this story about his first visit (Intensive Present tense), but he reminds them of it nevertheless. What was this sickness? Nobody knows for sure, but some commentators have made a fairly compelling case for an eye disease called ophthalmia. Whatever the ailment was, it was not pretty to look at.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Where Jesus Christ is embraced, justice begins to be a by-product ... like when our country was first founded on Judeo-Christian principles. This is not the case when false religions come into place, because justice then becomes an arbitrary thing, depending on whoever is in power. A lot of people embrace the gospel not because of the Person, but because of one of these things: peace, love, mercy, justice, etc. They come into the environment of the people of God so they can embrace mercy, or because they like morality, or they see the imperative need for justice. When this is observed, there is “another kind of gospel” being promoted. But this “other gospel” is always a legalistic thing. There is an embracing of the people who embrace these kinds of things. As long as Paul is the center of these things by his grace message, they (the false teachers) cannot gather a following. So they must separate the people from Paul in order to promote their legalism. There is a gravitation to the things produced by the gospel (morality, justice, truth) that they have embraced, but as long as Paul is around, they can’t shut Jesus out and make these things the center in themselves. (K. Lamb)

Humanism does not see these things (mercy, love, justice, morality) as emanating from the Person of Christ, but rather from man. Therefore they are demanding these things from man – and that is “another gospel.” It has all the characteristics that you see in the man Christ Jesus. The Person of Christ emanates these qualities, while humanism says they are really rooted in man. So what do they do? You demand that they come out of man. This is what man ought to produce. You try to create an environment where you can produce these kinds of things automatically through upbringing, man being raised in these things. In other words, they say “Don’t spank a child because it will make him violent. If you raise him in a non-hostile way then he won’t become a hostile person.” The problem with that is that it doesn’t work! But these things continue to be preached anyway as an end in themselves. They think this is how you honor God. But it takes the Person of Christ out of the equation and makes Him some kind of abstract thing to us, no longer a part of the gospel. And in the place of Him comes law. They do not recognize that violence is in the heart of a person. They see

everything as caused by environment. So if you improve the environment of man, you improve his behavior. That's why there is so much emphasis on social activity – because you've got to correct the environment in order to improve the behavior of man. But if they recognize that "iniquity is bound up in the heart of a child," then they would understand that the problem is not where we live, but what exists on the inside – what I am, not where I am. (K. Lamb)

The law was given to retard iniquity until a new life could come inside the heart of a man and change the behavior of man from the inside. So everyone who begins to embrace these things (justice, love, mercy) begins to set their own morality, and that's where everything that plagues this country, the deterioration, comes from. Morality comes from Christ, and historically we predicated all morality on Jesus Christ, the Absolute. But now He has been moved out of the picture and morality is now based on the situation – situation ethics. And morality has indeed changed. We have removed the Absolute and now everything is predicated on our own judgment of morality. Then legalism comes into the body of Christ and demands from people these things (justice, love, mercy, morality), and people start gravitating away from Christ and toward these things. But having all these qualities that emanate from Him does not mean you know Him. These things will build a church. You can preach legalism and build a church. But when Jesus Christ is the center of all of this, all you need to do is preach the Person of Jesus Christ and those that gravitate to Him will produce these things ... while those who gravitate to these things will produce that quality perhaps that they most appreciate by working hard. So that "other gospel" is centered on things that are done, rather than the Person of Christ Jesus. And "focusing on these things" does not mean anyone in this church knows Him. (K. Lamb)

In 2 Corinthians 11:4 the "another" Jesus (allos) means another of the same kind of Jesus, but one whom we have not preached. Or if you receive "another" (heteros) spirit, that is, another spirit of a different kind, which you have not received ... or another gospel of a different kind (heteros) which you have not received. The other Jesus who is preached in one that possesses all of these qualities. The other spirit is what, when I embrace the qualities and not the Person, is the other spirit which I obtain – not the Holy Spirit, but another spirit of legalism which I obtain which causes me to want to reproduce these things, in turn, in other people. It is a spirit of error. So in the last days men will give heed to seducing spirits (an angel that comes in to preach another gospel) and doctrines of demons. Once a person has embraced a spirit of error then he is open to all manner of doctrines of demons. Notice in 2 Cor. 11:13-14 what they are preaching. They are not preaching iniquity and go get drunk and commit adultery, etc. They are preachers of righteousness. They are calling for morality, they are calling for justice, they are calling for mercy, they are calling for righteousness, they are calling for peace – and all of these things become a part of the vocabulary of the legalist. They are also a part of the vocabulary of the humanist. But they do not have Jesus Christ at their root. Humanism has man as its root; the legalist has the law as his root. In either case, they miss the Person of Christ. And redemption is found in the Person of Christ solely. (K. Lamb)

And so people will gravitate towards all of these things instead of to Christ. But if they are not coming because they desperately understand that Jesus Christ is their only hope for missing a devil's hell and standing in the righteousness of God in that day – if that is not their only hope, they have

embraced a false gospel. And then that spirit of error will in turn begin to reproduce in the people who have embraced these things all manner of horrendous religious activity and religious spirit, Babylonian spirit, and so forth. In Acts, “grievous wolves” are false apostles that come in from without. They come in wearing sheep’s clothing. He looks like the real thing, talks like the real thing, Baa’s like the real thing. “Also of your own selves men will arise who speak true things that they have perverted” who will try to make disciples after them. Unsuspecting believers will say, “Oh, this man has the true revelation of God,” but they are in fact going out addressing the things of Jesus rather than the Person of Jesus. These people “from among yourselves” are believers; they will be in heaven in that day. But they do not speak the truth. (K. Lamb)

There are any number of people in a given assembly of believers who have embraced one or several of “these things” which are characters or qualities of the Person of Christ rather than the Person Himself. But when all these things begin to break down, their foundation is shot. Although they seem very appropriate to pursue, and a man embraces all these things in the environment, and these demands are put upon him by others who have embraced them, something very unfortunate begins to happen. Law becomes the strength of sin. And as a result of that, while he is trying to perform morality because of a legalistic demand, he begins to perform immorality. And while he’s looking for peace by legalistic demand, he finds guilt. As you embrace any one of “these things,” it is the opposite that you are going to begin to produce. If I demand that justice be performed, then I’m going to often end up being unjust in bringing about that justice to somebody. If I begin to demand that everyone else be just according to my standard of justice, then I’m going to become unjust in my demands for justice. (K. Lamb)

In other words, I’m getting concerned about a lot of what’s happening in the moral majority. There is a demand for justice, and while they are demanding justice, injustice is actually being promoted. There is a very subtle thing about the way it comes in. It is betwitching. Everything in it is external. Do this, do that. Live like this, live like that. Arrange it like this, not like that. Do not permit that. And somewhere along the line someone is going to begin suffering from all this, personally. I have seen sufficient ways in which this has functioned when I was an Independent Baptist. It is a system of ethics, an ethic required for fellowship with anybody you’re around. Now these people, many of them, love the Lord. They really do. And their concern is the righteousness of God, but while their concern is the righteousness of God, they move off the Person of Christ and out to the things. And all of a sudden, justice becomes oppression. “Liberalism is taking the specific and making it general. Legalism is taking the general and making it specific.” The bewitching idea is preaching righteousness, but without Christ as the center. That takes me away from Him and takes me instead to something we all want – a nice, comfortable environment. So we can either pray for our government to govern righteously, or we can get our placards and go out and demand one. But the one that we set up will demand morality according to a certain (often depraved) code. And that’s when it begins to be oppression. (K. Lamb)

A good many hypotheses about Paul’s disease have put in their appearance. Some have connected it with verse 15, and construed it as an affliction of the eyes. (H. Ridderbos) Disfigured individuals could not under the prohibitions of Mosaic law fill positions of leadership in Judaism. Yet Paul

received an invitation from the elders of the synagogue at Antioch (Acts 13:15-16) to address them. (H. Vos) In Gal. 6:11 Paul says, “You see with how large letters I wrote to you with my own hand.” It is generally assumed that this suggests poor eyesight on the part of the apostle. (R. Earle)

Gal. 4:13 Now (transitional) you know (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive) that (introductory) because of a sickness (Causal Acc.; disease, infirmity, ailment) of the flesh (Gen. Rel.; perhaps a common oriental eye disease called ophthalmia) I preached the gospel (εὐαγγελίζω, AMI1S, Ingressive) to you (Dat. Adv.) during my first visit (Acc. Time; initially, earlier).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:13** οἶδατε δὲ ὅτι δι' ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν τὸ πρότερον,

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:13** scitis autem quia per infirmitatem carnis evangelizavi vobis iam pridem

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:14** Moreover, against [contrary to] your natural inclination, you did not reject with contempt nor despise me in my flesh [because of my outward appearance], but welcomed me as a supernatural messenger [thinking he was Hermes or an angel], as you would Christ Jesus.

^{KW} **Gal. 4:14** And the test to which you were subjected and which was in my flesh, you did not loathe nor utterly despise, but as a messenger of God you received me, as Christ Jesus.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:14** And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Now Paul congratulates the Galatian believers on passing their first test, which was to welcome him (Culminative Aorist tense) in spite of his sick, outward appearance. Whatever Paul's infirmity was, it was not pretty to look at. The natural inclination of anyone who looked at him would have been wincing and avoidance. But the Galatians somehow “got past” his appearance and listened to his message. Instead of rejecting him with contempt or despising him (Dramatic Aorist tense) as would be the expected norm, they welcomed him as if he was a supernatural messenger from God – perhaps an angel or the messenger of the gods, Hermes. The Greek word for “despise” means to spit something out with disgust. Paul looked so bad that he would have expected them to spit in disgust (a common practice in that day). But they treated him like royalty, in the same manner as they would have treated Christ Jesus Himself. This was a splendid example of objectivity and maturity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

All that the meager data tell us is that Paul's affliction was chronic, very painful, repulsive, and humiliating; but not such as to disable him completely or keep him from leading an intensely active life. It is more to the point to observe what Paul made of his handicap ... Paul's condition, trying as it

were to himself and his friends, did not prevent the Spirit of Christ from shining in him and through him, and it allowed Christ's compassion to flow through the Galatians into his life. (R. Stamm) When the glorious truth about Christ dawned on their hearts, they could not have received the Lord Himself any more kindly or enthusiastically than they had received him. It was a telling argument in the context of this epistle. The Galatians were about to trade their glorious freedom in Christ for a mess of pottage concocted from them by the legalists – a poisonous brew of self-effort, dos and don'ts, religious requirements, and man-made laws. (J. Phillips) It was as if one of the celestial inhabitants had been sent down from heaven to bring them the good tidings of the Gospel. (J. Gill)

They did not spit in his presence, as men were accustomed to do when they wanted to ward off an evil spirit. Figuratively, "spit out" may be translated "rejected" or "despise," but in view of its general use to refer to the physical act, and of the custom of applying saliva as a protection from evil, it is better to keep the literal meaning. (R. Stamm) Ministers should not be judged by their ability, appearance, personality, popularity, or any of the other standards ordinarily used to judge them. Ministers should be evaluated primarily by their faithfulness to the Word of God. If they are faithful, then to welcome their message is to welcome Christ Himself. Unfortunately, the Galatians were starting to turn against Paul. Their hospitality was turning into hostility, presumably because the Judaizers had been denigrating the apostle and denying his gospel. (P. Ryken) Either the disease of itself had a tendency to produce this disgust and revulsion, or it may be that there was a temptation to set at nought and nauseate a professed teacher of a new religion so afflicted and disabled, reject his claims, and turn a deaf ear to his teaching. (J. Eadie)

Gal. 4:14 Moreover (continuative), against (contrary to) your (Poss. Gen.) natural inclination (Acc. Rel., Advantage; temptation, test, trial), you did not (neg. adv.) reject with contempt (ἐξουθενέω, AAI2P, Dramatic) nor (neg. conj.) despise (ἐκπτύω, AAI2P, Dramatic; loathe, spit out) me (ellipsis; because of my outward appearance) in my (Dat. Poss.) flesh (Loc. Sph.; physical body), but (contrast) welcomed (δέχομαι, AMI2P, Culminative, Deponent) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.) as (comparative) a supernatural messenger (Acc. Appos.; angel, god; perhaps Hermes) from God (Abl. Source), as you would (comparative, manner) Christ Jesus (Acc. Gen. Ref.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:14** καὶ τὸν πειρασμὸν ὑμῶν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου οὐκ ἐξουθενήσατε οὐδὲ ἐξεπτύσατε, ἀλλὰ ὡς ἄγγελον θεοῦ ἐδέξασθέ με, ὡς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:14** et temptationem vestram in carne mea non sprevisis neque respuistis sed sicut angelum Dei excepistis me sicut Christum Iesum

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:15** Where is your generous condition now? For I stand as a witness that if possible [though it obviously wasn't], after plucking them out, you would have given me your eyes.

^{KW} **Gal. 4:15** Where is therefore your spiritually prosperous state? For I bear witness to you that

if it had been possible, you would have dug out your own eyes and given them to me.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:15** Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if *it had been* possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Galatian believers are treating Paul terribly. He wants to know what happened to that former state of happiness they used to have concerning him? He wants to know where their generous condition went? They passed the test of objectivity and compassion towards him once, so why can't they do it again? He reminds them as if he was a witness in court (Pictorial Present tense; Latin: giving testimony) that they once cared about him so much that if it would have helped, they would have plucked out (Dramatic Aorist tense) their own eyes (Gk: ophthalmology; Latin: ocular) and would have given them to him (Culminative Aorist tense). Obviously nobody could dig out their own eyeballs and give them to Paul, but he uses this phrase as a form of hyperbole to get their attention – to refresh their memory about how things used to be before they started listening to the false teachers. They had once loved his gospel message so much, and had such compassion for his ailment, that they would have done almost anything to relieve him of his painful condition.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

He has been God's instrument to open their spiritual eyes. They wished that they could have repaid him by giving him their physical eyes. Such was the overwhelming sense of gratitude. (J. Phillips) A mark that distinguishes God's children is their love for their Father's instruction. To be a son or a daughter of God is to find true enjoyment in the ministry of God's Word. (P. Ryken) On the whole, this specification of "eyes" seems rather to point to there having been something amiss with the apostle's own eyes, either from ophthalmia or as the effect of personal outrage perpetrated upon him. (E. Huxtable) Eye diseases are very common in the East. Paul's first acquaintance with the Galatians was when, as a sick traveler, he proclaimed the evangel to them in the midst of his infirmities. (A. Knoch) Satisfaction suggests, rather, self-congratulation at their good fortune. Where is that feeling now? (S. Mikolaski) In short, by despising the pure doctrine which they had embraced, they throw away, of their own accord, the blessedness which they had obtained, and draw down on themselves the destruction in which their unhappy career must terminate. (J. Calvin)

Gal. 4:15 Where (interrogative adv.) is (ellipsis) your (Poss. Gen.) generous condition (Subj. Nom.; state of happiness) now (transition from something in the past to something current)? For (explanatory) I stand as a witness (μαρτυρέω, PAI1S, Pictorial) that (introductory) if (protasis, 2nd class condition, "but it wasn't possible") possible (Ind. Nom.; ability), after plucking them out (ἐξορύσσω, AAPtc.NMP, Dramatic, Temporal; digging through, tearing up), you would have given (δίδωμι, AAI2P, Culminative) me (Dat. Adv.) your (Poss. Gen.) eyes (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:15** ποῦ οὖν ὁ μακαρισμὸς ὑμῶν; μαρτυρῶ γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰ δυνατὸν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑμῶν ἐξορύξαντες ἐδώκατέ μοι.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:15** ubi est ergo beatitudo vestra testimonium enim perhibeo vobis quia si fieri posset oculos vestros eruissetis et dedissetis mihi

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:16** **Because I speak the truth to you, for this reason, have I become your enemy?**

^{KW} **Gal. 4:16** So then I have become your enemy because I am telling you the truth?

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:16** Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul began speaking the truth to them and he is still speaking the truth to them (Static Present tense). Is this the reason why he is now their enemy? He is in a state of disbelief that they could have changed their attitude towards him so quickly, when all he has done is tell the truth. I sense not only a state of surprise on his part, but also a twinge of sarcasm. The false teachers lie to them and the Galatian believers are welcoming them with open arms. Paul is telling them the truth and they are treating him like the enemy. When they liked his message, they treated him like an angel; when they didn't like his message, they treated him like an enemy. Everything is upside down!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

He had to tell the truth even at the risk of making enemies; but this very compulsion makes the strain of religious controversy an ever present threat to Christian mutuality ... The Galatians preserved his letter; and from that fact we may infer that the constructive love of Christ proved stronger than the corrosive effect of religious controversy. (R. Stamm) He would do anything to cultivate their continued regard and goodwill. But he was not prepared to compromise the truth just to keep on their good side. (J. Phillips) Paul became an enemy to the Galatians simply because they did not like the home truths he was teaching. A congregation should beware of assessing their minister according to their own subjective doctrinal fancies. Instead, a congregation's attitude to their minister should be determined by his loyalty to the apostolic message. (J. Stott) The preacher of unpleasant truths must expect to be treated as an enemy by the very men he is trying to help. (W. Adeney) "Until Christ be formed in you" means until the maturity of Christian character and comprehension result. (S. Mikolaski)

Ministers who are faithful to God's Word often tell people what they don't want to hear. Truth be told, they sometimes preach things they themselves don't want to hear either. But if it really is God's message, God's true children rejoice to hear it. They know that if their loving Father is telling them something they would prefer not to hear, it must be for their own good. (P. Ryken) While the apostle would go far in the way of accommodation to prejudice, and in matters indifferent, he would on no account sacrifice any element of truth. The truth was Christ's and he dares not compromise it. Truth

resting on the perfection of Christ's work, and involving the freeness of His salvation must be upheld at all hazards. (J. Eadie) He is an ungrateful patient who treats as an enemy the surgeon who hurts only that he may heal. (W. Adeney) We all like to have our backs rubbed, and there is a lot of back-rubbing from the contemporary pulpit rather than the declaration of the truth. (J. McGee)

Gal. 4:16 Because I speak the truth (ἀληθεύω, PAPtc.NMS, Static, Causal) to you (Dat. Adv.), for this reason (subordinating), have I become (γίνομαι, Perf.A1s, Descriptive, Interrogative Ind., Deponent) your (Gen. Rel.) enemy (Pred. Nom.)?

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:16** ὥστε ἐχθρὸς ὑμῶν γέγονα ἀληθεύων ὑμῖν;

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:16** ergo inimicus vobis factus sum verum dicens vobis

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:17** They [Judaizers] are filled with zeal courting you, but not honestly [just wait until the honeymoon is over], desiring to isolate you [from the doctrines of grace] so that you might be increasingly zealous towards them [without grace you would have nowhere else to go but to legalistic teachers].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:17** They are zealously paying you court, but not honestly, desiring to isolate you in order that you might be paying court to them.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:17** They zealously affect you, *but* not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Judaizers were filled with zeal while courting the neophyte Galatian believers, but it was all a scam. Their zeal was dishonest. They weren't really interested in the Galatians, only themselves. Once the honeymoon was over, they would eventually drop the Galatians like a hot rock. The only thing they were really interested in (Static Present tense) was to isolate the Galatians from the doctrines of grace. If the Judaizers were successful in tearing them away from the true gospel, they would have nowhere else to run except to their false, legalistic teaching. So their ultimate purpose was to lure the Galatians away from grace day-by-day, until they became interested in legalism and began to court the Judaizers (Latin: emulate them) on an increasing basis (Progressive Present tense). That would give the Judaizers power, fame and financial resources while enslaving the Galatian believers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The apostle declares that they – his opponents, unnamed by so much as a pronoun but clearly enough referred to – are courting the favour of the Galatians, not honorably, not sincerely and unselfishly, but with selfish motive. (E. Burton) The false teachers were assiduous in their attentions to Paul's converts. They could not make enough of them. But Paul saw through their designs. It was a zeal to get the Galatians under their power; it was to make them ritualists of the Jewish type, and

so amenable to their Jewish authority and direction. (R. Edgar) The Judaizers wanted the Galatians to love them, show respect to them, be on their side, follow their directions, imbibe their doctrines, give themselves up wholly to their care, and be at their call and command. (J. Gill)

“That you might affect them” means that in your isolation from others, you might be led to seek affiliation with them. (M. Vincent) Whatever pretenses such may make, they have usually more regard to their own interest than that of others, and will not stick at ruining the reputation of others, if by that means they can raise their own. (M. Henry) By insisting on ceremonial observances, they were in fact shutting out the Galatians from Christ. (J. Lightfoot) By producing in the people a dislike of their pastor, they hope afterwards to draw them to themselves; and, having disposed of the rival, to obtain quiet possessions. A careful and judicious examination of their conduct will discover that in this way they always begin. (J. Calvin)

Gal. 4:17 They (Judaizers) are filled with zeal courting (ζηλώ, PAI3P, Descriptive) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), but (adversative) not (neg. adv.) honestly (adv.; just wait until the honeymoon is over), desiring (θέλω, PAI3P, Static) to isolate (ἐκκλείω, AAInf., Culminative, Result; exclude) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; from the doctrines of grace) so that (purpose) you might be increasingly zealous in courting (ζηλώ, PAsubj.2P, Progressive, Potential) them (Acc. Dir. Obj.; without grace they would have nowhere else to go but legalism).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:17** ζηλοῦσιν ὑμᾶς οὐ καλῶς, ἀλλὰ ἐκκλεῖσαι ὑμᾶς θέλουσιν, ἵνα αὐτοὺς ζηλοῦτε·

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:17** aemulantur vos non bene sed excludere vos volunt ut illos aemulemini

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:18** Now it is good to be zealously courted in a good thing at all times [as long as you are hearing the truth], and not only in it [correct doctrine] when I am present face-to-face with you.

^{KW} **Gal. 4:18** But it is good to be zealously courted in a good thing at all times, and not only when I am present with you.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:18** But *it* is good to be zealously affected always in a good *thing*, and not only when I am present with you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul carries his courting metaphor one step further, by telling the Galatians that it is a good thing to be zealously courted on a daily basis (Iterative Present tense) as long as what they are hearing is the truth. This is another way of saying we need Bible doctrine every day, as our daily bread. And if possible, we should locate for ourselves (or pray for) a trained Bible teacher to “court” us in the doctrines of grace. That is what Paul taught them on a daily basis when he was in Galatia, but their intake, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine should also continue unabated

when he is not in their presence (Temporal Infinitive). All believers should be courted by a trained Bible teacher; all believers should be courting the doctrines of grace and those who dedicate themselves to studying and teaching these same doctrines. Everyone who is not a pastor should have a faithful pastor who teaches Bible doctrine on a regular basis.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The vivid remembrance of the simple-hearted joy and frank sympathy with each other's happiness of those days comes back to the apostle's mind with fresh force, after his brief mention and rebuke of the false-hearted gratulations and compliments by which they were now in danger of being ensnared. (E. Huxtable)

Gal. 4:18 Now (transitional) it is (ellipsis) good (Pred. Nom.) to be zealously courted (ζηλώω, PPInf., Iterative, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb) in a good thing (Dat. Adv.) at all times (temporal; as long as you are hearing the truth), and (continuative) not (neg. particle) only (adv.) in it (Loc. Sph.) when I am present (παίρειμι, PAInf., Static, Temporal) face-to-face with you (Acc. Rel.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:18** καλὸν δὲ ζηλοῦσθαι ἐν καλῷ πάντοτε καὶ μὴ μόνον ἐν τῷ παρεῖναι μέν πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:18** bonum autem aemulamini in bono semper et non tantum cum praesens sum apud vos

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:19** My children, I am suffering birth pangs for you again, until Christ has been formed in you [part of the stage of Christian growth called spiritual self-esteem].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:19** My born ones, concerning whom I am again striving with intense effort and anguish until Christ be outwardly expressed in you.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:19** My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul calls upon his spiritual children in Galatia, his Bible students, to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Until they reach the stage of spiritual adulthood where Christ has been formed in them (Culminative Aorist tense), he continues to suffer birth pangs for them (Iterative Present tense). "Christ being formed in you" is all about thinking Bible doctrine. It is part of the stage of Christian growth called spiritual self-esteem, the first of three stages in spiritual adulthood. Paul didn't leap over the stage of spiritual self-esteem into discussions on spiritual autonomy, because the Galatians were not even close to being ready to grow spiritually without the apostle. The first thing they did after he left was to begin listening to false teachers and embrace legalism!

And Paul definitely didn't leap over the stage of spiritual autonomy into discussions about

spiritual maturity, because the Galatians would have no frame of reference for that stage of Christian growth either. They were spiritual babies. He brought them into the world spiritually, like a mother giving birth. And he continues to suffer for them while they (hopefully) grow into the first stage of spiritual adulthood. But right now they are causing him unnecessary grief by following legalistic teachers and rejecting his grace ministry. His hope is for each of them to attain spiritual self-esteem, then spiritual autonomy, and then spiritual maturity. Then, and only then, will he be able to quit suffering birth pangs for them. In the meantime, they need to be filled with the Spirit so they can resume their walk according to grace mechanics.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Something happens to people who enjoy the ministry of God's Word. The more they learn the Bible, the more they start to look like Jesus Christ. They start to think the things He thinks, love the things He loves, do the things He does, even suffer the things He suffers. (P. Ryken) He is not satisfied that Christ dwells in them; he longs to see Christ formed in them, to see them transformed into the image of Christ. (J. Stott) No one doubts his meaning: it is the agony of the pastor, watching for signs of Christian growth in his flock. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 11:28 that this was the heaviest burden which he had to bear. (R. Cole) By their relapse they have retarded this result and renewed Paul's spiritual travail. (M. Vincent) This is in fact God's ideal and purpose – for Christ to live His life in and then through each believer. Yet the apostle was perplexed about the Galatians because he felt their spiritual development was being arrested. (D. Campbell)

The tremendous truth brought out is that the Lord Jesus, resident in the heart of the believer, lives there in an inactive or passive state. Surely, He is not inactive when it comes to fellowshiping with the saint or ministering in behalf of the saint in His office as advocate. But He is inactive and passive so far as expressing Himself in and through the life of the saint is concerned. If the Lord Jesus is to be seen in the life of the saint, it must be through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and that ministry is performed only to the extent that the saint lives a yielded life in dependence upon Him. (K. Wuest) I have a right to ask for constancy in your affections. I have a greater claim on you than these new teachers. They speak as but strangers to strangers; I as a mother to her children with whom she has travailed. (J. Lightfoot) Each stage of spiritual adulthood brings a new experiential glorification of Christ. This progressive experience begins with spiritual self-esteem, which is described by the phrase "Christ formed in you." In spiritual autonomy, which is the next stage of Christian growth, the glorification of Christ in the unique life of the royal family will be described as (Eph. 3:16-17) "Christ at home in your heart." In spiritual maturity, the final stage of spiritual adulthood, the unique life will be expressed as (Phil. 1:20-21) "Christ glorified in your body." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Christ "formed in you [your thinking]" means He takes precedence in all your considerations. Instead of reacting to people or circumstances with a martyr complex or eliciting pity from those around you, apply the doctrine you have stored. Your soul will relax under pressure and your personal sense of destiny will inspire confidence and courage. When Bible doctrine becomes your first priority, you ultimately arrive at spiritual self-esteem, personal love for God, the happiness of God, and occupation with Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) When the mind of Christ has been inculcated

and metabolized into the soul of the believer, that individual acquires spiritual self-esteem. Inside the divine dynasphere [sphere of divine power] the virtues of the humanity of Jesus Christ are formed in him, including our Lord's great personal love for the Father. From his own love for God and divine viewpoint thinking, the believer then has the contentment, stability, composure, and all the other characteristics of spiritual self-esteem with which to face the challenges of living and dying. (ibid)

Gal. 4:19 My (Gen. Rel.) children (Voc. Address; students), I am suffering birth pangs (ὠδίνω, PAIIS, Iterative & Durative) for you (Acc. Gen. Ref.) again (adv.; once more), until (Temporal Adv.; to the point in which) Christ (Subj. Nom.) has been formed (μορφόω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Result) in you (Loc. Sph.; your thinking).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:19** τέκνα μου, οὐς πάλιν ὠδίνω μέχρις οὗ μορφωθῇ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:19** filioli mei quos iterum parturio donec formetur Christus in vobis

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:20** Moreover, I wish that I was present face-to-face with you at this very moment so I could change the tone of my voice [from a severe rebuke to a friendly greeting], because I am at a loss about you.

^{KW} **Gal. 4:20** Moreover, I was wishing that I were present with you at this very moment and could those change my tone, because I am perplexed about you.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:20** I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is perplexed with the Galatians (Iterative Present tense). He saw them making spiritual progress, but after he left town he found out they were retreating from grace to legalism. Because he is uncertain about what to say to them next, he wishes (Voluntative Imperfect tense) he could be with them face-to-face at this very moment. Then he could question them directly and perhaps figure out what to address next. If he was there in person, he could communicate with a different tone of voice. From afar, he has no choice but to use severe rebukes in order to persuade them to change the direction of their lives. But if he was there in person, he might be able to discuss the error of their ways with a more friendly type of discourse (Culminative Aorist tense).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

He was filled with misgivings. Had his approach and language been too severe, or had he not been forthright in warning his "children"? If only he could be in Galatia! Then he could gauge the situation more accurately and control it by changing his tone of voice. (R. Stamm) If he were with them he could change his voice so as to meet their need in the most perfect way; as it is, he labors under a handicap, he must secure his information about the Galatians at secondhand, cannot be perfectly sure of meeting all their inmost thoughts, and must resort to writing, which is never as

effective as the voice. (R. Lenski) Paul, in writing Galatians, regarded himself as locked in a life and death struggle with the Judaizers, whose teaching was heavily influencing Paul's converts at Galatia. Paul's agony was so great that he likened his state of mind to the pangs that a mother has in giving birth to a child. (D. Fuller)

Gal. 4:20 Moreover (continuative), I wish (θέλω, Imperf.AI1S, Voluntative: if it were possible) that I was present (πάρειμι, PAInf., Static, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) face-to-face with you (Acc. Assoc.) at this very moment (temporal; now) so (conj.) I could change (AAInf., Culminative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) the tone of my (Gen. Poss.) voice (Acc. Dir. Obj.), because (causal) I am at a loss (ἀπορέω, PMI1P, Iterative; in doubt, uncertain, perplexed) about you (Dat. Disadv.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:20** ἤθελον δὲ παρεῖναι πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἄρτι καὶ ἀλλάξαι τὴν φωνήν μου, ὅτι ἀποροῦμαι ἐν ὑμῖν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:20** vellem autem esse apud vos modo et mutare vocem meam quoniam confundor in vobis

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:21** Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear [truly understand the ramifications of] the law?

^{KW} **Gal. 4:21** Be telling me, you that are bent upon being under law, are you not hearing the law?

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:21** Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul poses a rhetorical question to the Galatian believers, with a bit of sarcasm added. Tell me (Imperative of Command), he says, don't you hear the law (Interrogative Indicative)? Those who desire to be under the law, in Paul's opinion, must not understand what the law is requiring from them. He knows what the law requires, and that it is impossible to fulfill. He is going to make this very point in Pauline fashion. If they truly understand what the law required, they would hide their faces and flee towards grace.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul often thinks in terms of opposites, as the following equation illustrates:

Hagar = slave woman = Sinai = law = flesh = Jerusalem "now" = mother of slaves.

Sarah = free woman = promise = faith = Spirit = Jerusalem "above" = mother of freemen.

This means that the Jews who refuse to accept Christ are slaves with Jerusalem in Palestine; whereas

the Christians, Gentile as well as Jewish, are citizens of the new Jerusalem in heaven. (R. Stamm)

A considerable part of the Bible was taken up with the law. Failure to rightly divide the Word of Truth, failure to discern God's dispensational dealings with the human race, failure to apply sound hermeneutical principles to God's Word and to make a difference where God makes a difference could lead the unwary to think that the Law still applied not only as a standard, but also as a system. Paul could well understand that. Anyone who was steeped in OT theology could make out a prima facie case for keeping the Law. We have the same thing today with those who try to persuade us that the church is spiritual Israel, that God is through with the nation of Israel, and that all of the exceeding great and precious promises of God to Israel in the OT are now being fulfilled spiritually in the church. "Very well!" says Paul to his Galatian friends. "You fancy yourselves to be at home in the Scriptures. You cannot discern, however, between law and grace. You seem eager to saddle yourselves with Moses and the Law. Let me give you an illustration of what you are doing. Let me take you back to an old Bible story, one with which you are familiar. Let me take you back to Genesis 16:1-16 and 21:1-21. Let me tell you a story that you know by heart. And let me draw a spiritual lesson from it, one that is very much to the point in view of what you are proposing to do." (J. Phillips)

This is a remonstrance to these Galatians who are bent on upholding the authority of the law, but who are not heeding the full significance of that law. (K. Wuest) The desire to be kept by the works of the law is the result of a total misunderstanding of what the law really is and does. Once we understand the true purpose of the law, we would never want to be placed under it again. (M. DeHaan) Paul was a marvelous cunning workman in the handling of allegories; for he is wont to apply them to the doctrine of faith, to grace, and to Christ, and not to the law and works. But to use allegories is often a very dangerous thing. For unless a man has a perfect knowledge of Christian doctrine, he cannot use allegories rightly and as he should do. (M. Luther)

There are people who talk about the Ten Commandments or some legal system, but they don't talk about the penalty imposed by the Law. They don't present the Law in the full orb of its ministry of condemnation ... Now my friend, God is high and holy and lifted up, and He dwells in glory. You and I are down here making mud pies in the world because physically we are made out of mud. Paul says, "Listen to the Law. You haven't even heard it yet." The giving of the Law was not beautiful and cozy, but terrifying. God told the people to stand back, actually to stand afar off, when He gave Moses the Law. Exodus 20:18-19 says, "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (J. McGee)

Gal. 4:21 **Tell** (λέγω, PAImp.2P, Static, Command) **me** (Dat. Ind. Obj.), **you** (Subj. Nom.) **who desire** (θέλω, PAPtc.NMP, Static, Substantial) **to be** (εἶμι, PAInf., Descriptive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) **under the law** (Acc. Disadv.), **do you not** (neg. adv.) **hear** (ἀκούω, PAI2P, Static, Interrogative Ind.) **the law** (Acc. Dir. Obj.)?

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:21** Λέγετέ μοι, οἱ ὑπὸ νόμον θέλοντες εἶναι, τὸν νόμον οὐκ ἀκούετε;

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:21** dicite mihi qui sub lege vultis esse legem non legistis

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:22** For it stands written: Abraham had two sons, one out from a slave girl [his wife's maidservant, Hagar, representing legalism] and one out from a free woman [his wife, Sarah, representing grace].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:22** For it stands written, Abraham had two sons, one from the maidservant and one from the freewoman.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:22** For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It is written in Genesis that Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. Isaac was born out from the source of Sarah, his wife; Ishmael was born out from the source of Hagar, his wife's maidservant. Using typology, Sarah represents grace while Hagar represents legalism. This entire story points to the son he had through Sarah as coming solely by the grace of God. But when he took matters into his own hands and did not wait on God, he had a son through Hagar by the legalistic, energy of his own flesh. As his wife, Sarah was a free woman; as a maidservant, Hagar was a slave girl. Paul is drawing on Abraham's situation to point to the offspring of grace (Isaac) receiving the inheritance while the offspring of legalism (Ishmael) is driven out of the camp. The same parallel between grace and legalism will be made in the next verse between faith and works. The point he is going to make is that a person who lives by grace and faith should have absolutely nothing to do with law and works. They are mutually exclusive methods of operation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Your desire to be under the law is not in harmony with Scripture, and here is the scripture. (K. Wuest) The Scriptures represent Abraham as a pioneer of faith and obedience, who walked with God, was a friend of God, and was taken into God's confidence. But his family life was marred by the favoritism and friction of polygamy and concubinage, which were to poison the future with feuds between Israel and his neighbors. (R. Stamm) Paul was far too experienced an expositor of the Scriptures to make a habit of allegorizing them. He does recognize the inherent typology of the Old Testament. The kind of allegorizing that he does here is drastic, but he did have the Holy Spirit's inspiration for the parallels and conclusions that he draws. (J. Phillips) These two women, Hagar and Sarah, and these two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, are an allegory; that is, they have a spiritual application. They are symbolic of law and grace. (M. DeHaan)

Hagar was the personal property of Sarah. (E. Huxtable) The controversy turns on the question

“Who are the heirs of Abraham?” Is the ground of sonship circumcision and law keeping, or faith? These two sons of Abraham illustrate the relation between law and promise, flesh and spirit. Ishmael came into Abraham’s home between the promise and the advent of the true heir. Born of unbelief, he was a continual trial and persecuted the son of promise. But finally the decree went forth: Cast out this maid and her son! (A. Knoch) Paul certainly does not mean that Moses wrote the history for the purpose of being turned into an allegory, but points out in what way the history may be made to answer the present subject. This is done by observing a figurative representation of the Church there delineated. (J. Calvin) Hagar and Sarah are entitled the handmaid and the freewoman because they are accepted types of each class in Scripture. (W. Nicoll)

Gal. 4:22 For (explanatory) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive): Abraham (Subj. Nom.) had (ἔχω, AAI3S, Constative) two (Acc. Measure) sons (Acc. Dir. Obj.), one (Acc. Gen. Ref.) out from a slave girl (Abl. Source; servant, maid) and (connective) one (Acc. Gen. Ref.) out from a free woman (Abl. Source).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:22** γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι Ἀβραὰμ δύο υἱοὺς ἔσχευ, ἕνα ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης καὶ ἕνα ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:22** scriptum est enim quoniam Abraham duos filios habuit unum de ancilla et unum de libera

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:23** Moreover, on the one hand, this one [Ishmael] was born [in ordinary circumstances] out from a slave girl [Hagar] according to the flesh [works]; on the other hand, this one [Isaac] was born [supernaturally after his mother’s 90th birthday] out from a free woman [Sarah] through the promise [grace],

^{KW} **Gal. 4:23** But, on the one hand, the son of the maidservant was one born in the ordinary course of nature. On the other hand, the son of the freewoman was one born through the promise,

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:23** But he *who* was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his compare and contrast between law and grace. On the one hand, Ishmael was born in ordinary circumstances (Descriptive Perfect tense) out from a slave girl. His birth was according to the flesh, representing legalism and human works. On the other hand, Isaac was born in supernatural circumstances out from a 90-year-old freewoman. His birth was through the promise, representing grace and faith-rest. The second verb is there by ellipsis, and because of the supernatural circumstances surrounding his birth, the perfect tense would be dramatic as compared to merely descriptive. By way of typology or allegory, Paul continues to add contrast upon contrast: to explain the superiority of grace over the law, the superiority of the promise over the works of the flesh, and the superiority of freedom over slavery. These contrasts between the two are so pronounced, that in the end, the Galatian believers who were pursuing the law

should have no doubt about the error of their ways.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Ishmael's descendants do not belong to the covenant people, Israel. Isaac's descendants are those that have the promises. In verse 22, Ishmael and Isaac are coupled together as the sons of one father. Here they are contrasted in that they each had a different mother. (K. Wuest) Ishmael came into the world as an ordinary flesh-bound mortal, with no particular spiritual aspirations and no noteworthy contribution to make to the religious life of mankind. It was the Isaac branch of Abraham's family that accepted God's covenant, inherited Canaan, and gave Christ to the world; and all Isaac's good things, even as Ishmael's evil things, had been predetermined and promised before either was born. (R. Stamm) Ishmael and Isaac represent two entirely different approaches to religion: law against grace, flesh against Spirit, self-reliance against divine dependence. (P. Ryken)

Paul skillfully identifies the main point of the story. Abraham acted in the flesh to produce Ishmael. The birth of Ishmael involved nothing of faith. He was the product of fleshly activity and worldly policy. Nor did Ishmael's birth involve anything of the supernatural; Ishmael was produced in the energy of the flesh according to the ordinary working of the laws of nature. Anyone can produce an Ishmael. Our churches are full of them. With the birth of Isaac, however, everything was quite different. Both Abraham and Sarah were too old to have children. The birth of Isaac was supernatural. Faith believed God, and God wrought the miracle. Isaac was born of faith and was the child of promise. (J. Phillips)

Gal. 4:23 Moreover (continuative, explanatory), on the one hand (correlative), this one (Subj. Nom., demonstrative; Ishmael) was born (γεννάω, Perf.PI3S, Descriptive; in ordinary circumstances) out from a slave girl (Abl. Source; Hagar) according to the flesh (Adv. Acc., Noncomplementary; works); on the other hand (contrast), this one (Subj. Nom., demonstrative; Isaac) was born (ellipsis; supernaturally after his mother's 90th birthday) out from a free woman (Abl. Source; Sarah) through the promise (Abl. Means; grace),

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:23** ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης κατὰ σάρκα γεγέννηται, ὁ δὲ ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας δι' ἐπαγγελίας.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:23** sed qui de ancilla secundum carnem natus est qui autem de libera per repromissionem

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:24** Which class of things [historically] are spoken symbolically, for these [two women: Sarah & Hagar] represent two covenants. On the one hand, one is from Mount Sinai [outside the land], which keeps on giving birth to bondage [slavery], which is classified as Hagar [the law].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:24** Which class of things is allegorical. For these are two covenants, one from Mount

Sinai, begetting bondage, which is as to its nature classed as Hagar.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:24** Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Before the questions begin, Paul explains that he is using people and circumstances from the Old Testament to portray symbolically (Attributive Participle) the difference between law and grace. Some translations of this phrase are actually transliterations of the Greek and Latin word “allegory.” That is acceptable as long as you understand that these OT people and circumstances are symbols or types of two covenants that are at odds with each other. Paul is going to compare and contrast the covenant from Mount Sinai (law) with the covenant from heavenly Jerusalem (grace). The covenant from Mount Sinai is outside the land; the covenant from heavenly Jerusalem is inside the land. The covenant from Mount Sinai continues to give birth to spiritual slavery (Iterative Present tense), and is classified as Hagar. This is the covenant of law. Paul uses the Greek word “eimi” in an expanded manner, as representing two different classifications of opposing things. This can either be done in the translation itself, or by imagining a chart with a clear line dividing the attributes of each covenant.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

An allegory is a statement of facts which is to be understood literally, and yet requires or justly admits a moral or a figurative interpretation. Paul, while using the story as an illustration, does so in order to prove his argument to the effect that the law is superceded by grace. (K. Wuest) Paul, having sketched in the historical facts, now draws the parallel. He looks at the first covenant. He sees that it can be summarized in one word – enslavement. He relates it all to Mount Sinai and to the earthly Jerusalem. (J. Phillips) Paul does not deny the literal meaning of the Abrahamic narrative, but he says that the circumstances of the history have another besides the literal meaning. Whether illustration, parable, or allegory should be used to describe the apostle’s interpretation may be debated. Certainly Paul’s use of this OT account does not give the contemporary Bible student license to allegorize a variety of Scripture passages. (H. Vos)

The apostle does not mean to signify that the facts are not historical; nor does he mean to explain them away as if they were allegory like Bunyan’s ‘Pilgrim’s Progress;’ nor does he mean that Moses shaped his narrative in Genesis with a view to this allegorized treatment. It is more correct to say that the lives of these real personages were so shaped by Divine providence as to afford a striking illustration of other events or objects. The two covenants were prefigured in the OT under the image of the two wives of Abraham and their seed respectively. There is nothing in the apostle’s usage to justify the allegorizing methods of Origen and the rabbis, which destroy the true sense of Scripture. (E. Huxtable) Paul does not deny the actual historical narrative, but he simply uses it in an allegorical sense to illustrate his point for the benefit of his readers who are tempted to go under the burden of the law. (A. Robertson)

In denying the legitimacy of the spiritualizing and allegorizing method it can be pointed out, first of all, that the allegory found in Galatians 4:24-31 militates in no sense against a literal interpretation of Scripture, nor does it form any sufficient basis for allegorization and spiritualization. The passage actually confirms the literal sense of the Scriptures, for Hagar and Sarah had a literal existence, and Mount Sinai and Jerusalem were literal places. Moreover, no interpretation can be at all satisfactory that does not allow words to have their natural meaning. Spiritualizers find it hard to explain – and not one has even successfully attempted it – if the Scriptures do not mean what they say, why they do not say what they mean. Is it not passing strange that the God who called light into existence with two words should not be able to say exactly what He means? Typology is not spiritualization. (C. Feinberg)

It is an audacity akin to sacrilege to use the Scripture at our pleasure and to play with them as with a tennis ball, which many before have done ... It is the first business of an interpreter to let his author say what he does say, instead of attributing to him what we think he ought to say. (J. Calvin) There is a difference in interpreting allegories so designated in the Bible and allegorizing much of Scripture. It is in addition to, not in the place of the plain, grammatical meaning of the words ... The following points up the difference between the allegorizing method of interpretation, common throughout centuries of the church, and Paul's use of an allegory.

Allegorizing:

- 1) The historical meaning is insignificant (if even true).
- 2) The “deeper” meaning is the true meaning.
- 3) The “deeper” meaning is the “exposition” of the record.
- 4) Everything in the Old Testament may be allegorized.

Paul's allegory:

- 1) The historical meaning is significant and true.
- 2) Parallels are drawn to make a point.
- 3) Paul did not say the allegory was the “exposition” of Genesis 16.
- 4) When Paul allegorized, he said he was doing so.

Paul's allegory was an illustration or analogy in which he was pointing out that certain facts about Hagar correspond to non-Christians and that certain facts about Sarah correspond to facts about Christians. (R. Zuck)

The third appeal is made by way of allegory. This type of argument is uncongenial to the modern mind, but Paul is meeting on its own ground the method of debate which was urged against him by his opponents. Lest any might be tempted to slip too easily into this mode of eisegesis, it is well to observe that the apostle makes use of allegory only in relation to doctrine which he has already established by careful exegesis! Imagination and ingenuity are poor substitutes for apostolic authority. (F. Coad) An allegory is properly a fictitious way of speaking; but here it designs an accommodation of a real history, and matter of fact, to other cases and things, and seems to intend a type or figure; and the sense to be, that these things which were literally true of Hagar and Sarah, of

Ishmael and Isaac, were types and figures of things to come. (J. Gill)

Origen's allegories are not worth so much dirt, for allegories are empty speculations ... the scum of Holy Scripture. Allegories are awkward, absurd, invented, obsolete, loose rags. Such a method of interpretation degenerates into a mere monkey game. Allegory is a sort of beautiful harlot, who proves herself especially seductive to idle men. (M. Luther) Calvin was not one whit softer on the allegorizers. He blasted every such introduction and foisting of numerous meanings onto Scripture as "a contrivance of Satan." (W. Kaiser) Figures of speech give no cause for spiritualizing Scripture. (C. Ryrie) Paul did not in any sense deny the literal meaning of the story of Abraham, but he declared that that story, especially the matters relating to the conception of the two sons, had an additional meaning. Thus he compared the narrative to the conflict between Judaism and Christianity. (D. Campbell)

Gal. 4:24 which class of things (Nom. Appos.; historically) are (εἰμι, PAI3S, Descriptive) spoken symbolically (ἀλληγορέω, PPPTc.NNP, Static, Attributive), for (explanatory) these (Subj. Nom.; two women) represent (εἰμί, PAI3P, Descriptive) two (Nom. Measure) covenants (Pred. Nom.). On the one hand (correlative), one (Nom. Appos.) is (ellipsis) from Mount Sinai (Gen. Place; outside of the land), which keeps on giving birth to (γεννάω, PAPtc.NFS, Iterative, Attributive) bondage (Adv. Acc.; slavery), which (Subj. Nom.) is classified as (εἰμι, PAI3S, Descriptive) Hagar (Pred. Nom.; the law).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:24** ἅτινά ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα· αὗται γάρ εἰσιν δύο διαθήκαι, μία μὲν ἀπὸ ὄρους Σινᾶ εἰς δουλείαν γεννώσα, ἥτις ἐστὶν Ἀγάρ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:24** quae sunt per allegoriam dicta haec enim sunt duo testamenta unum quidem a monte Sina in servitutem generans quae est Agar

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:25** Now this Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the current [earthly] Jerusalem, for it is in slavery [to the law and Rome] with her children [all believers who place themselves under the law].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:25** Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the Jerusalem which now is, for she is in bondage with her children.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:25** For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues with his use of symbology, telling us that Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia. The importance of this, as mentioned in the prior verse, is that Arabia is "outside the land." Then Paul tells us that this symbol corresponds to (Pictorial Present tense) the current,

earthly Jerusalem, which at that time was in a state of dual slavery: under bondage to the law spiritually and under bondage to Rome physically. Hagar, Mount Sinai and earthly Jerusalem all represent bondage and slavery to the law for all those who were under the law, i.e., her children. The phrase “with her children” expands the state of bondage to all believers who place themselves under the law. If you as a believer today place yourself under the law, you are in effect saying, “I’m related to Hagar, not Sarah; I live outside the land on Mount Sinai in Arabia, instead of inside the land of Israel; I am a citizen of the earthly Jerusalem instead of the heavenly Jerusalem; and I am under bondage to the law instead of under grace.” Are you sure this is the kind of life you want to live?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The poor sinner trying to be saved by law is like a blind horse going round and round a mill, and never getting a step further, but only being whipped continually; yea, the faster he goes, the more work he does; the more he is tired, so much the worse for him. The better legalist a man is, the more sure he is of being damned; the more holy a man is, if he trusts in his works, the more he may rest assured of his own final rejection and eternal portion with Pharisees. (P. Ryken) Hagar – Ishmael – Sinai – the law – earthly Jerusalem, are all pictures of the law. It could not make Hagar free or make Ishmael the heir of promise. Sinai had no message of hope for Israel. God’s covenant of works offered no salvation to Israel, but only condemnation, bondage and judgment. (M. DeHaan)

Paul sees here a parallel between legalism (and the bondage that it engenders) and the birth of Ishmael (the son of the bondwoman). Hagar, he says, represents Mount Sinai, where the Mosaic covenant was enacted. The earthly Jerusalem, from whence the legalists had come – or, at least, from whence they drew their authority – was the world center of Judaism, rabbinism, and legalism. Well did Paul know it! He had once been part of it and had been bound and blinded by it. Then Paul looks at the final covenant. He sees that it, too, can be summarized in one word – emancipation! He relates it all to Mount Zion and to the heavenly Jerusalem. (J. Phillips) The Arabians are descendants of Abraham and Hagar, her name meaning wanderer or fugitive. (A. Robertson)

Gal. 4:25 Now (coordinating) this (Nom. Spec.) Hagar (Subj. Nom.) represents (είμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) Mount Sinai (Pred. Nom.) in Arabia (Loc. Place), and (continuative) corresponds to (συστοιχέω, PAI3S, Pictorial) the current (Adv. Time; present time: earthly) Jerusalem (Dat. Ref.; in slavery to the law and Rome), for (explanatory) it is in slavery (δουλεύω, PAI3S, Descriptive; bondage) with her (Gen. Rel.) children (Gen. Accompaniment; those under the law).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:25** τὸ δὲ Ἀγὰρ Σινᾶ ὄρος ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ· συστοιχεῖ δὲ τῇ νῦν Ἱερουσαλήμ, δουλεύει γὰρ μετὰ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:25** Sina enim mons est in Arabia qui coniunctus est ei quae nunc est Hierusalem et servit cum filiis eius

LWB **Gal. 4:26** But the Jerusalem which is above [the heavenly church] is free [under grace], which is our mother [city].

KW **Gal. 4:26** But the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is our Mother.

KJV **Galatians 4:26** But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Jerusalem Paul is referring to is in heaven and is the home of the heavenly church. It is a church that is free [Latin: liberty], under grace and not the law. The heavenly Jerusalem [grace] is our mother, not the earthly Jerusalem [law]. Our home city is in heaven under grace, not on the earth under the law. By living under grace, a believer is living in the heavenly sphere. By attempting to live by the law, a believer is rejecting his heavenly citizenship and is returning to an earthly, fleshly existence on earth. Since our citizenship is in heaven, we should live our lives in accordance with our heavenly status – by grace, and not the law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul's reference to the "Jerusalem above" draws on the apocalyptic image of a heavenly Jerusalem that will descend to earth when God finally sets all things right. (R. Hays) The heavenly Jerusalem which is free represents Sarah; and finally, grace, and the faith way of salvation, for it is contrasted to the earthly Jerusalem which represents legalistic Judaism. (K. Wuest) Those who try to justify themselves by keeping the law are the slave children of Hagar, but those who are justified by faith in Christ are God's free sons and daughters. (P. Ryken) The earthly Jerusalem was where He was rejected and crucified. The Lord now reigns in the heavenly Jerusalem, the theme of a rapturous passage. (J. Phillips) "Jerusalem which is above" is the New Jerusalem which is presented to us in the 20th chapter of Revelation as it comes down from God out of heaven. As old Jerusalem is the mother city of those under the law, so the New Jerusalem is the mother city of the believer under grace. (J. McGee)

Gal. 4:26 But (adversative) the Jerusalem (Subj. Nom.) which (Nom. Gen. Ref.) is (ellipsis) above (Adv. Place; the heavenly church) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) free (Pred. Nom.; under grace), which (Nom. Appos.) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) our (Poss. Gen.) mother (Pred. Nom.; city).

BGT **Galatians 4:26** ἡ δὲ ἄνω Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐλευθέρᾳ ἐστίν, ἥτις ἐστὶν μήτηρ ἡμῶν·

VUL **Galatians 4:26** illa autem quae sursum est Hierusalem libera est quae est mater nostra

LWB **Gal. 4:27** For it stands written [in Isaiah 54:1]: Receive inner happiness, O infertile one [Sarah] who is not giving birth. Break forth with joyful shouting and cry out loud with gratitude, you [Sarah] who have not travailed in labor [like Hagar under the law]. Because the descendants [Jew & Gentile believers] from the abandoned one [Sarah thought she had

been abandoned by the Lord because she had no child] will be more numerous than from the one [Hagar] who brought forth this man [Ishmael].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:27** For it stands written, Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear. Break forth and cry, you who do not travail, because more are the children of the desolate than of the one who has a husband.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:27** For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This can be a very confusing verse, even though Paul quotes it (Intensive Perfect tense) from Isaiah. The Lord tries to comfort Sarah by telling her to receive inner happiness (Ingressive Aorist tense) even though she was not giving birth (Latin: sterile) to a child (Pictorial Present tense). He was either commanding her to receive inner happiness or pleading with her to receive it (Imperative of Command or Entreaty) in spite of her outward circumstances. Then He commands her to break forth with a joyful shout and to cry out loud with gratitude (Imperative mood) that she was not experiencing labor pains like Hagar (in the law). Can you imagine how difficult this would have been? She was commanded not only to be happy (through grace mechanics), but to be grateful in spite of not having obtained the thing she thought was most important in her life. Why would the Lord command her to be happy and grateful even when she had no child?

Sarah thought she had been abandoned by God because He had not given her a child. No doubt she wore her misery on her sleeve, reminding everyone around her by a dejected look or a jealous remark. The Lord was teaching her about grace. Sarah should have been an example of inner happiness to others - grateful to the grace of God for what she possessed on the inside - whether she had 100 kids or no kids on the outside. Instead, she was miserable and dejected – to the point where she ended up scheming in the flesh to obtain a child through a surrogate mother. She was looking for an outward display in the flesh (a child by legalism) rather than an inward display in the spirit (a child by grace). Eventually Sarah (through grace) would produce billions of descendants (Jew and Gentile believers) while Hagar (through the law) would produce this man (Ishmael). Sarah and Isaac remained in Abraham's tent while Hagar and Ishmael wandered in the wilderness.

Now you might be thinking, "What does this verse have to do with Sarah and Hagar? There's no mention of them in Isaiah 54 that I can see." And you would be correct. But we are dealing with allegories, and the allegory fits in with Paul's thesis. But the real purpose of this passage in Isaiah is to predict the restoration of Jerusalem after the years of Babylonian captivity. The pre-exilic period represents the earthly Jerusalem and the post-exilic period represents the heavenly Jerusalem. The idea is that the blessings of the heavenly Jerusalem will greatly out-number the blessings of the earthly Jerusalem. The blessings of God to the Church will greatly out-number the blessings to Israel. Spiritual production under grace will greatly out-number spiritual

production from the law. The number of children produced by Israel under the dispensation of grace (Christians) will be far greater than the number of children produced by Israel under the dispensation of law (proselytes).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There is no evidence that the verse Paul now quotes (Isa. 54:1) was ever associated with the story of Hagar and Sarah and their children; nevertheless, it is highly appropriate. The verse is a prophecy of Jerusalem's restoration following the years of Babylonian captivity and involves the thought that the blessing of the latter years will be greater than that formerly enjoyed. The pre-exilic Jerusalem and the post-exilic Jerusalem correspond, then, to Paul's distinction between the earthly and heavenly Jerusalems and the promise itself to the blessings of God to Israel under the old covenant as contrasted with the greater blessings to the church under the new covenant. The one element common to these verses is the supernatural intervention of God in order to establish Christianity. The new element is the suggestion, soon to be fulfilled, that the numbers of Christians will out-number those within Judaism. (A. Gaebelein)

The heavenly Jerusalem, or Gospel church state, is the mother of us all, and has brought forth, and still will bring forth, many souls to Christ, even many more than were under the legal dispensation by the Jewish church, though the Lord was an husband to them. (J. Gill) The words are applied to the unfruitful Sarah who answers to the heavenly Jerusalem. (K. Wuest) The force of the allegory of the barren wife (Sarah) becoming fruitful, while the bondwoman (Hagar) being set aside, is that grace supercedes law. (M. DeHaan) The barren woman was Israel in captivity. The woman bearing more children may have pictured Israel restored to the land after the exile, but more particularly it portrays her millennial blessings. (D. Campbell)

Gal. 4:27 For (explanatory) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; in Isaiah 54:1): Receive inner happiness (εὐφραίνω, APImp.2S, Ingressive, Command or Entreaty), O (Descr. Nom.; Sarah) infertile one (Voc. Address; incapable of bearing children) who is not (neg. adv.) giving birth (τίκτω, PAPtc.NFS, Pictorial, Substantival). Break forth with joyful shouting (ῥήγνυμι, AAImp.2S, Ingressive, Command) and (connective) cry out loud with gratitude (βοάω, AAImp.2S, Ingressive, Command), you (Nom. Address; Sarah) who have not (neg. adv.) travailed in labor (ᾠδίνω, PAPtc.NFS, Historical, Substantival; like Hagar). Because (explanatory) the descendants (Subj. Nom.; Jew & Gentile believers) from the abandoned one (Abl. Source; Sarah thought she had been abandoned by God because she had no child, i.e., desolate) will be (ellipsis, predictive) more (superlative) numerous (Nom. Measure) than (comparison) from the one (Abl. Source; Hagar) who brought forth (ἔχω, PAPtc.GFS, Historical, Substantival) this (Acc. Spec.) man (Acc. Rel.; Ishmael).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:27** γέγραπται γάρ· ἐὺφράνθητι, στεῖρα ἢ οὐ τίκτουςα, ῥῆξον καὶ βόησον, ἣ οὐκ ὠδίνουσα· ὅτι πολλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐρήμου μᾶλλον ἢ τῆς ἐχούσης τὸν ἄνδρα.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:27** scriptum est enim laetare sterilis quae non parit erumpe et exclama quae non parturit quia multi filii desertae magis quam eius quae habet virum

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:28** Now you, brethren, are the children of promise according to the standard of Isaac [grace principle].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:28** And, as for you, brethren, after the manner of Isaac are you children of promise.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:28** Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul informs the Galatian believers that they are children of the promise according to the grace principle represented by the birth of Isaac. They are not children of the law represented by the birth of Ishmael. The question behind this statement would, of course, be: If you aren't the children of Ishmael, then why do you want to live under the law as opposed to grace?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul means that Christians (Jews and Gentiles) are children of the promise as Isaac was. (A. Robertson) Paul is assuring the Galatian Christians that they are not like Ishmael the son of a slave woman, but like Isaac who was born according to the promise. (K. Wuest) Just as Isaac was a child of promise in that God willed in advance for him to be the heir of the covenant promises and then worked sovereignly to fulfill His will, so also God wills in advance for particular individuals within Israel to be his "children" and then by His Spirit sovereignly begets them anew. (J. Piper)

Paul compared the birth of Isaac to that of Christians. As "Isaac" experienced a supernatural birth and was a child by means of a promise, so each believer experiences a supernatural birth and is a recipient of the promise of salvation. As children of promise Christians are in a distinct category and should not live as children of bondage. (D. Campbell) Abraham is the biblical type to whom the promise was given, Christ the eschatological antitype through whom the promise becomes effective for those who are "children of promise." (R. Hays)

Gal. 4:28 Now (continuative) you (Subj. Nom.), brethren (Voc. Address), are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Descriptive) the children of promise (Pred. Nom.) according to standard of Isaac (Acc. Manner).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:28** ὑμεῖς δέ, ἀδελφοί, κατὰ Ἰσαὰκ ἐπαγγελίας τέκνα ἐστέ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:28** nos autem fratres secundum Isaac promissionis filii sumus

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:29** But just as when [during the dispensation of promise] he who was born according to the flesh [Ishmael representing the legalistic believer] constantly persecuted he who was born according to the Spirit [Isaac representing the grace-oriented believer], even now [during the Church Age dispensation] it continues in the same manner.

^{KW} **Gal. 4:29** But just as then, he who was born according to the flesh was constantly persecuting him who was born according to the spirit, so also now.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:29** But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Some things never change. The legalistic believer during the dispensation of promise constantly persecuted (Durative Imperfect tense) the grace-oriented believer. And now, during the dispensation of the Church Age, the legalistic believer still persecutes the grace-oriented believer. Grace and law are such contradictory spheres of living that it is impossible for them to co-exist for very long. Invariably, the self-righteous arrogance of the legalist will exert itself in some form of ridicule or persecution against the liberty of the grace-oriented believer. The imperfect tense, however, points to the futility of such persecution. The legalist may have some small victories over an occasional neophyte believer, but in the end, grace reigns. This constant persecution of the legalist over the grace-oriented believer is represented by the birth of Ishmael according to the flesh (Ingressive Aorist tense) as opposed to the birth of Isaac according to the Spirit. This verse is highly elliptical, but the missing verbs are quite easy to ascertain.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Judaizers were persecuting Paul and all those who would not forsake grace for law. (K. Wuest) All through history this Ishmael and his tribe of “flesh-men” have been persecuting Isaac and his “faith-men.” (R. Stamm) Persecution is one way to tell the difference between true and false religion. Persecution is the opposition Christians face for speaking or doing God’s will. It can include ridicule, loss, violence, and even martyrdom. It is false religion that always does the persecuting. (P. Ryken) We always cherish religious projects of our own, even though, as admirable as they might be in many ways, they are the products of our own natural activity and not the work of the Holy Spirit. God, however, will never bless such activity. It can be nourished and developed, it can grow and flourish, and it can look like the real thing, but God can never bless it. He sees it for what it really is – flesh. (J. Phillips) The greatest enemies of the evangelical faith today are not unbelievers, who when they hear the gospel often embrace it, but the church, the establishment, the hierarchy. (J. Stott)

Those who move under a carnal traditional system can never understand those who move under a spiritual traditional system. (K. Lamb) Like Isaac, Christians are children of promise, not law. Their standing with God depends not on natural descent, but on the covenant of grace. Just as in Genesis the son of law mocked the free-born, it is not surprising that heirs of the law should now persecute

the sons of grace. (S. Mikolaski) Allegory should be used with restraint, because men's imaginations can contrive all sorts of foolish speculations. (R. Earle) The believer enslaved to legalism invariably judges the believer living under the freedom of grace ... meddling in the affairs of other believers, trying to control their lives, or attempting to squeeze them into his own mold of pseudo-spirituality. Observing taboos – arbitrary prohibitions imposed by religion – is perhaps the most common mode of legalistic reversionism. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) That which is fleshly lays snares for that which is spiritual. (H. Ridderbos)

Gal. 4:29 But (adversative) just as (comparative) when (temporal; during the dispensation of promise) he (Subj. Nom.; Ishmael representing the legalistic believer) who was born (γεννάω, APpTc.NMS, Ingressive, Substantial) according to the flesh (Acc. Manner) constantly persecuted (διώκω, Imperf.AI3S, Durative) he (Acc. Dir. Obj.) who was born (ellipsis) according to the Spirit (Acc. Manner; Isaac representing the grace-oriented believer), even (ascensive) now (temporal; during the Church Age dispensation) it continues (ellipsis) in the same manner (comparative).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:29** ἀλλ' ὥσπερ τότε ὁ κατὰ σάρκα γεννηθεὶς ἐδίωκεν τὸν κατὰ πνεῦμα, οὕτως καὶ νῦν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:29** sed quomodo tunc qui secundum carnem natus fuerat persequabatur eum qui secundum spiritum ita et nunc

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:30** But what does the Scripture [Gen. 21:10] say? Cast out the servant girl [legalism] and her son [works of the flesh], for the son of the servant girl [works of the law] can certainly not [mutually exclusive] be an heir with the son of the freewoman [grace mechanics].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:30** But what does the Scripture say? Throw out the maidservant and her son. For the son of the maidservant shall by no means inherit with the son of the freewoman.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:30** Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

What does Genesis 21:10 say (Interrogative Indicative mood) about the matter? Cast out (Imperative of Command) the female slave (who represents legalism) and her son (who represents works of the flesh). So before we get too harsh with Sarah, we must remember that she was commanded to toss Hagar out of her house. Why would the Lord command such a thing? Because the son of the female slave (representing the works of the law) can never, not for one moment, be an heir (Predictive Future tense) with the son of the freewoman (representing grace mechanics). Law and grace are mutually exclusive; you cannot mix a little law and a little

grace and produce legitimate spiritual production. And because the legalist always ends up harassing or persecuting the grace-oriented believer, it would be wise for the grace-oriented believer to separate (either mentally or physically) from the legalistic believer. A grace-oriented believer who hangs around with a legalistic believer is only asking for trouble.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The law and the gospel cannot co-exist. The law must disappear before the gospel. It is scarcely possible to estimate the strength of conviction and depth of prophetic insight which this declaration implies. The apostle thus confidently sounds the death-knell of Judaism at a time when one half of Christendom clung to the Mosaic Law with a jealous affection little short of frenzy, and while the Judaic party seemed to be growing in influence, and was strong enough even in the Gentile churches of his own founding to undermine his influence and endanger his life. The truth which to us appears a truism, must then have been regarded as a paradox. (J. Lightfoot) The enmity between the two peoples is illustrated by the Arab claim to the territory deeded by God to the descendants of Isaac's line. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The expulsion of Ishmael gives warning that those who observe the letter of the Law only, and lack the true spirit of sonship, though they render formal obedience to the will of the Father, have no abiding inheritance in His house. (W. Nicoll)

As there could be no join heirship between Ishmael and Isaac, so there could be no fusion or amalgamation of Law and gospel. Judaism could not be combined with Christianity. It was to be utterly cast out, though it then tenaciously held its ground side by side with Christianity even within the Church of God itself. (E. Huxtable) One house could not hold both Ishmael and Isaac. They could not get on together. No more can the legal and the gospel spirit. Self-righteousness and faith in Christ are irreconcilable. Hence the war between the legalists and the apostle. It was war to the bitter end. The principles are antagonistic, and the one must triumph over the other. And liberty is sure to triumph over legalism in the end, as Isaac triumphed over Ishmael. (R. Edgar)

Gal. 4:30 But (adversative) what (interrogative) does the Scripture (Subj. Nom.; Gen. 21:10) say (λέγω, PAI3S, Static, Interrogative Ind.)? Cast out (ἐκβάλλω, AAImp.2S, Dramatic, Command) the servant girl (Acc. Dir. Obj.; female slave representing legalism) and (connective) her (Poss. Gen.) son (Acc. Dir. Obj.; works), for (explanatory) the son (Subj. Nom.) of the servant girl (Poss. Gen.; works of the law) can certainly (neg. particle; never) not (neg. adv.; by no means: mutually exclusive) be an heir (κληρονομέω, FAI3S, Predictive & Gnostic; inherit) with the son (Gen. Accompaniment) of the freewoman (Adv. Gen. Ref.; grace mechanics).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:30** ἀλλὰ τί λέγει ἡ γραφή; ἔκβαλε τὴν παιδίσκην καὶ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς· οὐ γὰρ μὴ κληρονομήσει ὁ υἱὸς τῆς παιδίσκης μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἐλευθέρας.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:30** sed quid dicit scriptura eice ancillam et filium eius non enim heres erit filius ancillae cum filio liberae

^{LWB} **Gal. 4:31** Therefore, brethren [members of the royal family], we are not children of the servant girl [legalism], but of the freewoman [grace].

^{KW} **Gal. 4:31** Therefore, brethren, we are children, not of a maidservant, but of the freewoman.

^{KJV} **Galatians 4:31** So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul sums it up by reminding the Galatian believers that they are not children of the servant girl, but rather children of the freewoman. In other words, they are descendants from grace, not the law. And because they are children of the freewoman positionally, they should also (in chapters five and six) live like children of the freewoman experientially. The Greek word “teknon” can mean children or descendants in this context.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Ishmael represents “that which is born of the flesh.” He is utterly devoid of spiritual life. He lives on, year after year, petted and pampered, fooling himself into believing that God can bless the “believer’s life” he has produced by his own efforts. In the end, however, he betrays his origin, nature, and enmity toward Christ. Isaac represents “that which is born of the Spirit.” He is the product of faith in the promise. Everything about him points to Christ. He represents the Christ-life that only the Holy Spirit can impart. In the end, the future belongs to him ... In terms of the Galatian error, Paul refines the allegory. Hagar represents law keeping, and Ishmael represents its sorry results. The Law, as a means of salvation and sanctification, might offer the soul something, but it will be counterfeit. Sarah represents faith and the promises of God in Christ as a means of salvation and sanctification. This is the real thing. (J. Phillips)

The law prohibits – Grace invites and gives. The law condemns the sinner – Grace redeems the sinner. The law says Do – Grace says It Is Done. The law says, Continue to be holy – Grace says, it is finished. The law curses – Grace blesses. The law slays the sinner – Grace makes the sinner alive. The law shuts every mouth before God – Grace opens the mouth to praise God. The law condemns the best man – Grace saves the worst man. The law says, pay what you owe – Grace says, I freely forgive you all. The law says “the wages of sin is death” – Grace says, “the gift of God is eternal life.” The law says, “the soul that sinneth it shall die” – Grace says, believe and live. The law reveals sin – Grace atones for sin. By the law is the knowledge of sin – By grace is redemption from sin. The law was given by Moses – Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The law demands obedience – Grace bestows and gives power to obey. The law was written on stone – Grace is written on the tables of the heart. The law was done away in Christ – Grace abides forever. The law puts us under bondage – Grace sets us in the liberty of the sons of God. (M. DeHaan)

It is established then, that we (Paul and the Galatians) are not children of a bondwoman who was cast out from the presence of her lord and denied any share in the inheritance. But we are children of the free woman, children of the promise and according to Scripture heirs in the family of God. (H.

Vos) Whereas Jews inherit bondage to the Law, freedom is the Christian birthright, derived from their heavenly mother. Christ bestowed this freedom upon us as an essential principle of our call. (W. Nicoll) This verse serves as the basis upon which Paul builds the practical instruction which follows in chapters five and six. (K. Wuest)

Gal. 4:31 Therefore (inferential), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), we are (εἰμί, PA1P, Descriptive) not (neg. adv.) children (Pred. Nom.; descendants) of the servant girl (Abl. Source; legalism), but (contrast) of the freewoman (Abl. Source; grace).

^{BGT} **Galatians 4:31** διό, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἐσμὲν παιδίσκης τέκνα ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐλευθέρας.

^{VUL} **Galatians 4:31** itaque fratres non sumus ancillae filii sed liberae qua libertate nos Christus liberavit

CHAPTER 5

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:1** Therefore, keep on standing firm and holding fast to the liberty [grace] with which Christ set you free, and stop being loaded down again with a yoke of bondage [the straight-jacket of the law].

^{KW} **Gal. 5:1** For this aforementioned freedom Christ set you free. Keep on standing firm therefore and stop being subject again to a yoke of bondage.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:1** Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This verse could be numbered as the end of chapter 4 or the beginning of chapter 5. Because of everything Paul has covered up to now, he is comfortable issuing a command and a prohibition to them (Imperative mood). On the positive side, he commands them to stand firm and to hold fast to (Durative Present tense) the liberty with which Christ has set them free (Dramatic Aorist tense). On the negative side, he prohibits them from continually being loaded down (Iterative Present tense) with a yoke of slavery. In other words, Christ set them free from the law, so why don't they leave the law alone! Every time someone convinces them to adhere to some legal standard, they place their necks under a yoke of bondage. The law acts as a straight-jacket, preventing them from living the Christian way of life. The law interferes with the grace-mechanics that Christ bequeathed to them. Once we are purchased from the slave market, why would we want to go back and put the shackles on again? That's what some Galatians believers were doing.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The object communicated is redemption (freedom) and the Receivers are those without the law. This description of the Receivers implies that the opponent is law, and that, furthermore, the law may somehow be equated with the beggarly elements of the world ... Paul interprets the Galatian's actions, whatever they may have been, as a reversion to the slavery of the initial sequence. To Paul this is as incomprehensible as it would be for the king's daughter, after being rescued by the knight, to choose to go back to the dragon. (R. Hays) The Galatian Christians, instead of depending upon the indwelling Spirit to produce in their lives the beauty of the Lord Jesus, now were depending upon self-effort in an attempt to obey law. Accordingly, Paul's practical teaching emphasizes the ministry of the Spirit, and the Galatians are exhorted to put themselves again under His control. (K. Wuest) The force of habit wears grooves that become deep ruts out of which we cannot stir. Creeds which were the expression of free thought contending in open controversy in one age become the bonds and fetters of a later age. Ritual, which palpitated with living emotion when it first joined itself naturally as the body to clothe the soul of worship, becomes fossilized, and yet it is cherished and venerated though it hangs about men's necks as a dead weight. The very atmosphere of liberty is too bracing for some of us. (W. Adeney)

No word needs to be singled out in our day and underscored than the word "truth." Take only its human dimensions. An increasing stock pile of lies, false witness, and half-truths has brought about a famine of truth in the land and throughout the world. Mankind cannot long survive in such a famine. The axles of God's universe turn upon truth and will not tolerate the falsehoods of men. Where truth is sought, known, proclaimed, and abided by, only there is freedom. (R. Stamm) If law there must be, then here is law, not law in terms of precepts but law in terms of principles. That is the great difference between the OT and the New. The OT gave rules and regulations; the NT gives principles by which to live. When a believer starts laying down the law for another believer, then we have legalism. (J. Phillips) The liberty won by Christ sets the believer free from the terrors of the old economy, destroys the physical drudgery of religion, and lifts us out of the state of spiritual childhood. It would be an insult to Christ, Who bought it, if His followers were to surrender it. Our firmness will encourage others to a resolute assertion of Christian liberty against all sorts of ritualistic priesthods. (E. Huxtable) The law cannot save, neither can it sanctify. (J. Pentecost)

What Americans really want is the freedom to be left alone. The reason why we want to be left alone is that we are naturally selfish. We want to do what we want to do, whenever, however, and with whomever we please. If this is what freedom means to us, then believing in God becomes extremely inconvenient. If there is a God, he undoubtedly has opinions about what we ought to do, where we ought to do it, and with whom. What many Americans want these days, therefore, is not freedom of religion, but freedom from religion. In other words, you have to be free from God before you can be free at all. Freedom from religion is not freedom at all, of course; it is another form of bondage. Whether freedom is worth having or not depends on what kind of freedom it is. The best and truest freedom is the kind described by John Stott: "Freedom from my silly little self, in order to live responsibly in love for God and others." When the Bible talks about freedom, it always means

freedom in Jesus Christ. Our former state is portrayed as slavery, Jesus Christ as a liberator, conversion as an act of emancipation and the Christian life as a life of freedom. The freedom Jesus has to offer is emancipation from the old slaveholders of humanity: sin, death, and the devil ... True freedom, therefore, is not self-fulfillment. It is not merely political independence or social equality. It is not the kind of liberty that leads to license, the freedom to do whatever we want or believe whatever we choose. True freedom means liberation from sin, death, and the devil. And by the grace of God this is exactly the kind of liberation Christ has come to provide ... Now I am free to be who God wants me to be and to do what God wants me to do. (P. Ryken)

Here were these Galatian Christians, free from the law, having been placed in the family of God as adult sons, indwelt by the Holy Spirit who would enable them to act out in their experience that maturity of Christian life in which they were placed, now putting on the straight-jacket of the law, cramping their experience, stultifying their actions, depriving themselves of the power of the Holy Spirit ... The Judaizers lived their lives by dependence upon self-effort in an attempt to obey the law. The Galatian Christians had been living their's in dependence upon the indwelling Holy Spirit. Now, in swinging over to the law, they were losing that freedom of action and that flexibility of self-determination which one exercises in the doing of what is right, when one does right, not because the law forbids the wrong and commands the right, but because it is right, because it pleases the Lord Jesus, and because of love for Him. (K. Wuest) Unbelievers sometimes arrogate to themselves the proud title of free-thinkers; yet it would seem too often that the only freedom they allow is freedom for expressing ideas with which they sympathize. It is Christ who breaks the fetters of the mind. The Christian dares to think. (W. Adeney)

They that are secure and negligent cannot keep this liberty; for Satan hates most deadly the light of the gospel, that is to say, the doctrine of grace, liberty, consolation, and life. When he sees it begin to appear he fights against it with all his might, stirring up storms to hinder its course and utterly to overthrow it. Wherefore, Paul warns the faithful not to sleep, nor be negligent, but constantly to resist Satan, that he spoil them not of that liberty which Christ has purchased for them ... This is indeed a marvelous and incomprehensible liberty, to have the most high and sovereign majesty so favourable unto us, that He does not only defend, maintain, and succour us in this life, but also, as touching our bodies, will so deliver us, that these bodies which are sown in corruption, dishonor, and infirmity, shall rise again in incorruption, in glory, and power. (M. Luther) The teachings of grace do not include the precepts of the law as such; but that they exclude those precepts. However, no vital principle contained in the law is abandoned. It will be observed that these principles of the law are carried forward and are restated in the teachings of grace; not as law, but as principles which are revised, adapted, and newly incorporated in the issues of pure grace. (L. Chafer)

The actual experience of contending for the preservation of liberty which is in Christ Jesus is foreign to the great mass of nominal Christians. Pressing in on every hand are the false teachings of a law-ridden church, the fleshly ideals of the world and its god, the natural rationalism of the human mind, and the ever-present tendency to depend on self. Against all this, the fact of true liberty in Christ is little known. (L. Chafer) He is saying here that not only are we saved by faith rather than by law, but law is not to be the rule of life for the believer. We are not to live by law at all. The law principle is

not the rule for Christian living. Paul is saying that since we have been saved by grace we are to continue on in this way of living. Grace supplies the indwelling and filling of the Spirit to enable us to live on a higher plane than law demanded ... I have a liberty in Jesus Christ, and that liberty is not a rule, but a principle. It is that I am to please Him. My conduct should be to please Jesus Christ – not to please you, not to please any organization, but only to please Him. That is the liberty that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. (J. McGee)

Gal. 5:1 Therefore (inferential), keep on standing firm and holding fast to (στήκω, PAImp.2P, Durative, Command) the liberty (Dat. Adv.; freedom) with which (Dat. Ref.) Christ (Subj. Nom.) set you (Acc. Adv.) free (ἐλευθερώω, AAI3S, Dramatic), and (continuative) stop (neg. particle) being loaded down (ἐνέχω, PPImp.2P, Iterative, Prohibition; burdened, subjected to) again (temporal) with a yoke (Instr. Manner) of bondage (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the straight-jacket of the law).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:1** Τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν· στήκετε οὖν καὶ μὴ πάλιν ζυγῷ δουλείας ἐνέχεσθε.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:1** state et nolite iterum iugo servitutis contineri

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:2** Behold, I, Paul, am telling you, that if you are being circumcised [as a step for salvation], Christ will be of benefit to you in not one thing [in no way].

^{KW} **Gal. 5:2** Behold, I, Paul, am saying to you that if you persist in being circumcised, Christ will be advantageous to you in not even one thing,

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:2** Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is now issuing an all-points bulletin. Now hear this! I am telling you (Static Present tense) that if you are being circumcised as a step for salvation (Potential Subjunctive mood), then you are not saved. The doctrine of salvation is “by grace alone through faith alone.” If you add anything to “grace alone through faith alone” you are not saved. In this example, it is alright to be circumcised as long as it has no spiritual application to salvation. If you are being circumcised (Dramatic Present tense) as a means or a step in the salvation process, you have just invalidated the salvation mechanics designed by God. Christ is of absolutely no benefit to you (Gnomic Present tense) if you add anything else (eg. circumcision) to salvation. The Greek word “ouden” means that if you add circumcision (or anything else) to the work of Christ, His work does not benefit you in any respect. It is meaningless and invalid, and you are still an unbeliever on your way to hell. And if you are already a true believer “by grace through faith” but are now trying to obtain something special from the Lord by being circumcised, that doesn’t work either. God is not impressed with ritual during the Church Age. He is looking at your soul, not your flesh.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Galatians had not yet submitted to that rite, but were on the verge of doing so. Paul is not speaking here of their standing in grace as justified believers. He is speaking of the method of living a Christian life and of growth in that life. He is speaking of their Christian experience, not their Christian standing. (K. Wuest) The issue is not circumcision as such, as though circumcised persons could not be saved, but circumcision as the Judaists were demanding it of the Gentiles as a condition for obtaining salvation. The sufficiency of Christ's work is what is being challenged. Hence it is necessary now to set the whole matter in sharpest focus and consistency, and to see through its implications. (H. Ridderbos)

A person no more drifts into circumcision than he drifts into having his tonsils or appendix removed. A case has to be made, a decision reached, a surrender accepted, an operation performed, and, in the Gentile world of Paul's day, a stigma accepted. A person might drift into slovenly habits of body or mind, but a person did not drift into waking up suddenly to find himself circumcised. That was the result of thought and action. It was deliberate. The implication is that for a Gentile convert to accept circumcision means that he has thought about it and made a choice. Paul wants his Galatian friends to understand the seriousness of the choice. It is the choice of law over grace, of works over faith, of a legal system over a living Savior. The person who knowledgeably makes such a choice repudiates Christ. (J. Phillips)

Paul is simply telling them that their Christian lives will be back under the legalistic system of the Mosaic code from which they have been liberated. The whole context, indeed the whole thrust of the epistle, is that the "benefit" in view is the freedom of the Christian man, walking under the grace way of life. To return to the law system forfeits the freedom from law which Christ's death accomplished. It does not forfeit salvation. (J. Dillow) Circumcision was one of the types or shadows that was to pass away with the death of Christ. The declaration of the apostle, Christ shall profit you nothing," emphatically applies to the rites and ceremonies of the Romish church, which are not even of Divine appointment like circumcision. (E. Huxtable)

Gal. 5:2 **Behold** (interjection; now hear this), **I** (Subj. Nom.), **Paul** (Nom. Appos.), **am telling** (λέγω, PAI1S, Static) **you** (Dat. Adv.), **that** (introductory) **if** (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe you are, maybe you aren't") **you are being circumcised** (περιτέμνω, PPSubj.2P, Dramatic, Potential; as a step for salvation), **Christ** (Subj. Nom.) **will be of benefit** (ώφελέω, FAI3S, Predictive & Gnostic; advantageous) **to you** (Acc. Adv.) **in not one thing** (Noncompl. Acc; in no respect, in no way, meaningless, invalid).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:2** Ἴδε ἐγὼ Παῦλος λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐὰν περιτέμνησθε, Χριστὸς ὑμᾶς οὐδὲν ὠφελήσει.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:2** ecce ego Paulus dico vobis quoniam si circumcidamini Christus vobis nihil proderit

LWB Gal. 5:3 And I solemnly affirm again to every man who receives circumcision [as a step to salvation], that he is under obligation [as a debtor] to accomplish [carry out] the entire law.

KW Gal. 5:3 And I solemnly affirm again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to do the whole law.

KJV Galatians 5:3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul solemnly testifies once again that every man who receives circumcision (Dramatic Present tense) as an added step to salvation is under obligation as a debtor to carry out (Constative Aorist tense) the whole law. If you are going to pursue the law as a means of salvation, you can't pick-and-choose which parts of the law you want to perform. You are obligated to fulfill the whole (Latin: universal) law in order to be saved – which is, of course, impossible for all men. And if you are unable to accomplish every facet of the law to absolute perfection according to divine standards, then you fail to obtain that for which you were looking for and remain an unsaved sinner. It is much easier, therefore, to throw yourself upon the grace of God for salvation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Not only would the Galatians lose the aid of the Holy Spirit in the living of their Christian lives, but they would be assuming the burden of the entire legalistic system. Paul warns them that the acceptance of circumcision would be in principle the acceptance of the whole of that system ... The Galatians were not obligated to obey any of the law. Submission of the Galatians to the rite of circumcision makes them a party to the covenant of the law, and the law requires from everyone thus committed, a full and perfect obedience. (K. Wuest) Circumcision was the way a Gentile became a Jew under the Mosaic covenant (Exodus 12:44, 48). It was an initiatory rite, and it carried with it the obligation to accept all of the tenets of the Jewish religion. Whatever else that might or might not have embraced, it certainly involved a commitment to keep the Mosaic Law, as not only a standard but a system. All 613 commandments of Sinai became immediately obligatory. Moreover, the Judaizers would have added all of the countless rules and regulations of the rabbis. What was being offered to the Gentiles was not only bondage but hopeless, heartbreaking bondage. (J. Phillips)

According to the Judaizers, the only good Christian was a circumcised Christian. If circumcision was only minor surgery, why did it become such a major issue? Because Paul understood that what was really at stake was the justification of sinners: What makes a person right with God? Getting circumcised was a way of saying that sinners have to DO something to get right with God ... The problem was Gentiles' using circumcision as a means of justification. If circumcision became mandatory for all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, then salvation would be based on a work rather than on God's free grace. Either people are justified before God partly by what they do for themselves or they are justified exclusively by what Jesus Christ has done for them ... Circumcision

was a way of saying that Jesus Christ was not enough for the Galatians, that they needed something more ... If we try to be justified before God by anything we do, no matter how small it is, we are not free. (P. Ryken) The Law has been abrogated as a whole. The entirety of the Law is no longer pertinent and no longer governs any people or nation. The regime of the Mosaic Law has ended. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

They were now urging the Galatians to accept circumcision as the rite by which they could become sons of Abraham and participators in the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant; they had already persuaded them to adopt the cycle of Jewish festivals, perhaps as serving to mark them off from their heathen compatriots, perhaps because of the appeal which these observances would make to the Galatians. (E. Burton) It is not circumcision that is an impediment to Christ, but the legalistic-soteriological motive underlying it. (H. Ridderbos) Paul in the present section exposes the legal and ceremonial spirit as a fall from the moral magnificence of grace. It has been well said that "it is harder to abolish forms than to change opinions. Ceremonies stand long after the thought which they express has fled, as a dead king may sit on his throne stiff and stark in his golden mantle, and no one come near enough to see that the light is gone out of his eyes and the will departed from the hand that still clutches the scepter." (R. Edgar)

Gal. 5:3 And (continuative) I solemnly affirm (μαρτύρομαι, PM1S, Static, Deponent; testify) again (adv.; once more) to every (Dat. Measure) man (Dat. Adv.) who receives circumcision (περιτέμνω, PPPtc.DMS, Dramatic, Substantival; as a step to salvation), that (introductory) he is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static) under obligation (Pred. Nom.; as a debtor) to accomplish (ποιέω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; do, perform, carry out) the entire (Acc. Measure; whole) law (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:3** μαρτύρομαι δὲ πάλιν παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ περιτεμνομένῳ ὅτι ὀφειλέτης ἐστὶν ὅλον τὸν νόμον ποιῆσαι.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:3** testificor autem rursum omni homini circumcidenti se quoniam debitor est universae legis faciendae

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:4** **Apart from Christ you [legalistic, reversionistic believers] have become useless [ineffective in the spiritual life], those of you who are trying to be pronounced righteous [experiential sanctification] in the sphere of the law; you [legalistic believers] have drifted off course from grace [the mechanics of the supergrace spiritual life].**

^{KW} **Gal. 5:4** You are without effect from Christ, such of you as in the sphere of the law are seeking your justification. You have lost your hold upon [sanctifying] grace.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:4** Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This is not a verse on justification; this is a verse on sanctification. Paul is now addressing the problem of those Galatian believers who are not embracing the law in order to be justified positionally, but are embracing the law in an attempt to grow spiritually. This is a completely illegitimate endeavor, just like trying to be justified by the law was an illegitimate endeavor. Apart from being positionally sanctified by Christ, legalistic believers are completely useless in the spiritual life (Culminative Aorist tense). All their effort in the flesh is nothing but a waste of time. They think they are growing spiritually when they adhere to a few select items from the law (do this, don't do that), but they are in fact completely estranged from the precisely correct protocol of the spiritual life mandated by God.

Those who are trying to be pronounced experientially righteous in the sphere of the law (Conative Present tense) have drifted off course (Culminative Aorist tense) from grace. Believers who think they can grow spiritually by keeping the law have run aground in the spiritual life. By pursuing the law instead of the Person of Christ, legalistic believers have separated themselves from both Christ and the grace mechanics for living the Christian life. Jesus Christ bequeathed to all born-again believers a precisely correct system of protocol for growing in the spiritual life. The law is totally absent in this system of protocol. Just as we are not justified by the law, neither are we sanctified by the law. We are saved both positionally and experientially by grace alone. We are not saved by grace in order to be sanctified by the law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These words must be understood in their context to refer, not to their justification, but to their spiritual lives as Christians. The apostle is not here speaking of their standing, but of their experience ... The idea is that the Galatian Christians, by putting themselves under law, have put themselves in a place where they have ceased to be in that relation to Christ where they could derive the spiritual benefits from Him which would enable them to live a life pleasing to Him, namely, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Thus, Christ has no more effect upon them in the living of their Christian lives ... The Galatian Christians had lost their hold upon the grace for daily living which heretofore had been ministered to them by the Holy Spirit. But because they had lost their hold upon sanctifying grace, does not mean that God's grace had lost its hold upon them in the sphere of justification. Because they had refused to accept God's grace in sanctification is no reason why God should withdraw His grace for justification. (K. Wuest) Punishment is designed to motivate the believer "drifting off course" to rebound and execute His plan. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Justification is a judicial act of God done once for all. Sanctification is a process which goes on through the Christian's life. Just because the process of sanctification is temporarily retarded in a believer's life, does not say that his justification is taken away. If that were the case, then the retention of salvation would depend upon the believer's works, and then salvation would not depend upon grace anymore. And we find ourselves in the camp of the Judaizers, ancient and modern. (K. Wuest) The law disallows the promise of the presence of the Spirit. And it is the anointing of the Spirit that brings the believer into sonship. You remain a child without the power of the Spirit

working in you, so the law keeps you in perpetual childhood, arrested spiritual development. (K. Lamb) All of the initial convicting work of the Holy Spirit is of no avail to such a person. All such professions of faith in Christ are shown to be mere worthless words. Paul piles up the words to underline the terrible spiritual peril in which people stood who were willing to sell the birthright offered to them in Christ for a dish of Jewish pottage. (J. Phillips)

We're saved by grace, we learn by grace, we mature by grace, and so forth ... "Falling from grace" is not losing your position in Christ; it is arrested maturity due to trying to keep the law. You can forget truths you once knew when you pursue the law, as well as lose your rewards for what you've already built ... People under legalism never come to know the Lord. Sonship is obtained by the work of the Spirit and no one comes into experiential sonship or maturity by walking under the law. Law arrests growth. "The law made nothing perfect – mature," Paul said. I don't care how many moral stipulations you put on people, no matter how many rules you've got; you cannot know the Lord through legalistic rules and stipulations. You may have adapted them out of honor for the Lord, and they may have really straightened your life out, and you might be living an impeccable kind of life before the Lord – but if you don't know the Lord, you won't stand. And the law won't bring you into a knowledge of God. If you don't know Him, I don't care how many rules and regulations you have, they don't prove you are the least bit spiritual. (K. Lamb)

Christ's method of justification is wholly of grace, and those who rely on law and merit are in opposition to grace – are fallen out of it. The clause really has no bearing on the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, or on their possible apostasy. (J. Eadie) One can not with intellectual consistency conceive of God as the bookkeeping God of legalism and at the same time the gracious God of the Pauline gospel, who accepts men because of their faith. One can not live the life of devotion to the keeping of statutes, which legalism calls for, and at the same time a life of faith in Jesus Christ and filial trust in the God of grace. This strong conviction of the incompatibility of the two conceptions, experientially as well as logically, is doubtless grounded in the apostle's own experience. (E. Burton) It is not law and grace – but law or grace. It must be all grace, or it is not grace at all ... The word "fallen" in this verse means literally to have been driven out of one's course, as of sailors who have been driven out of their normal lane. (M. DeHaan)

"Fallen from grace" has nothing to do with the Arminian doctrine that a Christian can lose his salvation. Whatever one may say about that subject in connection with other Scripture passages, it is not the topic of discussion here. If one has stood in grace he has fallen from it at the moment he seeks justification by legalism. To put it another way, if one is perched on the high platform of grace, he may be said to have fallen from it on to the ground of self-righteousness when he puts himself under law. (H. Vos) The phrase does not mean that if a Christian sins, he falls from grace and thereby loses his salvation. To fall from grace, as seen by this context, is to fall into legalism. Or to put it another way, to choose legalism is to relinquish grace as the principle by which one desires to be related to God. (A. Gaebelein) The mode of existence based on works of the law is eschatologically obsolete ... The law as a redemptive-historical period has come to an end. (M. Silva) They are in danger of being severed from the sanctifying effects of a relationship with Him, and not from a saving relationship. (J. Dillow)

An examination of the context of this passage shows that Paul is addressing the problem of false teaching that had been introduced into the Galatian churches by a party of legalistic Jews. They were insisting that circumcision and other Jewish practices had to be followed if the believers in Galatia were truly to be saved. Here the contrast with grace is law, and Paul is saying that if the believers allow themselves to be seduced by this false teaching, they will be led away from grace into legalism. This is not the same thing as saying that they will lose their salvation, though the doctrine of the legalists was indeed a false doctrine by which nobody could be saved. (J. Boice) “Falling from grace” is not, as usually supposed, a loss of the benefits of Christ’s salvation through breaking the law, but, on the contrary, through attempting to keep the law ... He falls out of the sphere where grace operates. This is what “falling from grace” really means. (A. Knoch)

Marshalling his full authority as an apostle, he tells these Galatians that it is possible for true believers to fall from grace, come under the yoke of slavery, and become alienated from Christ! These strong words fly directly in the face of the claim that true believers cannot fall and could never become alienated from Christ because they will persevere in faith to the end of life ... To be severed from Christ and to fall from grace logically required a former standing in grace and connection with Christ from which to fall and be severed! It is possible for those who are regenerate to deny the faith and forfeit their share in the coming kingdom. There is no need to assume that they lose salvation, as the Arminian maintains ... The danger Paul’s readers faced was not loss of salvation or even lapse into immorality. Rather, it was a return of the bondage of the law. It is clear that falling from grace is not a reference to loss of salvation. The only thing Paul stresses is that they are about to return to a yoke of slavery. Nowhere in this context does Paul say that loss of salvation is possible. Rather, he is trying to prevent the return to a law system as a way of life. (J. Dillow)

To “fall from grace” is to fall from the grace way of living the Christian life and into a lower, legal way of living it. What has Paul been contrasting? Grace and law. Therefore, to fall from grace is to fall into law, not into damnation. (J. Dillow) The same error is repeated today when a believer leaves a church that emphasizes salvation by grace through faith and joins one which teaches that salvation depends on repentance, confession, faith, baptism, and church membership. (D. Campbell) The choices you make – to rebound, to remain filled with the Spirit, to learn and apply Bible doctrine – guarantee inequality of results in your spiritual life and in eternity. Even though you have equal spiritual opportunity, your volition ensures no equality on earth or in heaven ... When you drift off course, you will have no rewards, no decorations, no hundred-fold harvest, no vast estates. You will be low on the totem pole in heaven. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 5:4 **Apart from Christ** (Abl. Separation) **you** (legalistic believers, reversionists) **have become useless** (καταργέω, API2P, Culminative; ineffective casualties in the spiritual life, wasted effort), **those of you who** (Subj. Nom.) **are trying to be pronounced righteous** (δικαιώω, PPI2P, Conative; vindicated) **in the sphere of the law** (Loc. Sph.); **you** (legalistic believers) **have drifted off course** (ἐκπίπτω, AAI2P, Culminative; run aground) **from grace** (Abl. Separation; the supergrace spiritual life).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:4** κατηγορήθητε ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ, οἵτινες ἐν νόμῳ δικαιοῦσθε, τῆς χάριτος ἐξέπέσατε.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:4** evacuati estis a Christo qui in lege iustificamini a gratia excidistis

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:5** But we [grace-oriented believers], through the Spirit [walking by the Spirit as opposed to keeping the law], are assiduously and patiently looking [for our resurrection bodies] with confidence for righteousness [experiential sanctification leading to ultimate sanctification] out from the source of faith(fulness) [as opposed to works of the flesh].

^{KW} **Gal. 5:5** For, as for us, through the agency of the Spirit, on the ground of faith, a hoped-for righteousness we are eagerly awaiting,

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:5** For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his contrast between legalistic believers and their *modus operandi* and grace-oriented believers and their *modus operandi*. The Greek conjunction “gar” is usually used to present an explanation or a cause for something, but it is occasionally used to express a contrast or an affirmation about a chosen line of action. In this case, the grace-oriented believer is pursuing precisely correct protocol, as opposed to the legalistic believer who has drifted off course and run aground in the spiritual life. The legalistic believer hopes to be pronounced righteous by keeping the law, while the grace-oriented believer assiduously and patiently looks to be pronounced righteous (Customary & Durative Present tense) through walking in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit and keeping the law are mutually exclusive.

Paul also adds the word “confidence” to the experience of the grace-oriented believer, as opposed to the unfulfilled hope of the legalistic believer. Because the grace-oriented believer rests on the power of the Spirit to produce righteousness in him, he can be absolutely confident that he will reach the ultimate goal. The legalistic believer, however, is relying on his own ability to keep the law; this relying on oneself will not produce the righteousness he is looking for. Keeping the law will not produce either experiential sanctification or ultimate sanctification. While the legalistic believer tries to “beat his body into submission,” the grace-oriented believer waits patiently for the day when he receives his resurrection body. The Spirit and faith (our faithfulness) are the winning team; the law and works of the flesh are the losing team.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The logic of the story moves forward toward a final sequence in which Christians, empowered by the Spirit in the role of Helper, become free Subjects. Paul sees himself and the Galatians (and all Christians) as the Receivers of the topical sequence. This means, however, that he and they are now thrust into the actantial role of Subject in the final sequence, with a new mandate from God: with the Spirit as Helper, they are charged to stand fast in their new freedom (5:1), to be servants of one

another (5:13), to love their neighbor (5:14), and to bear one another's burdens (6:2). The mandate is addressed to a community which is thereby called to live in a disciplined and loving manner or, as Paul liked to put it, to walk by the Spirit – here in Gal. 5:5 and in 5:16 and 25. (R. Hays) Paul says that it is through the agency of the Spirit that we can hope for the presence of an experimental righteousness in the life, not by self-effort. (K. Wuest) We must exercise patience. Sudden perfect holiness is impossible. The idea that it has been attained is one of the most awful delusions that has ever ensnared the minds of good men. The law of life is progress by gradual development. (W. Adeney)

The Law was deceptive because it seemed to offer some kind of immediate return for the sinner's investment. If offered, at least to some people, a kind of smug satisfaction in not having stolen, sworn, seduced another man's wife, slain someone, or succumbed to idolatry. It ministered, in some people, to a false pride in having kept the feasts and fasts, in having tendered one's tithe, or in having sanctified the Sabbath ... This, of course, is the very essence of all false religion. It is a way as old as Cain. However great the delusion, those who look to baptism, confession, penance, good works, Sabbath keeping, and the like do get a false sense of having done something to win the approval of God. The reward, although quite worthless, is immediate and does last sometimes for some time. But the price always goes up ... The demands are incessant and increasing and can never be met. The feeling of accomplishment gives way to a sense of failure. The goal is absolute perfection, something that is impossible outside of Christ. So hope fades, despair moves in, and conscience awakens. Sinai thunders, failure reigns, death comes, and a lost eternity yawns. And, for this, the Galatians were prepared to abandon Christ. (J. Phillips)

His declaration that "we eagerly await the hope of righteousness" expresses the same eschatological longing found in Romans 8:18-25, a hope that looks for a redemption we do not yet see ... In light of other Pauline texts, we should certainly also infer that the "hope of righteousness" includes the resurrection of the dead. A fresh reading of the narrative sub-structure of Galatians would have to factor all this into the analysis. (R. Hays) The word "wait" speaks of an attitude of intense yearning and an eager waiting for something. Here it refers to the believer's intense desire for and eager expectation of a practical righteousness (objective genitive) which will be constantly produced in his life by the Holy Spirit as he yields himself to Him. (K. Wuest) Most certainly, what the apostle here calls "hope" is not the sentiment which we so often thus name when we intend thereby an imperfectly assured expectation of some probably coming good. In the apostle's vocabulary it denotes a confident anticipation unclouded by doubt. The preposition "apo" in this compound verb is probably intensive, expressing thoroughgoingness; an entirely assured, steadfast expectation, persistent to the end. (E. Huxtable)

The righteousness spoken of here is not justifying righteousness, and for three reasons. First, it is a righteousness which finds its source in the operation of the Holy Spirit. Justifying righteousness is a purely legal matter and has to do with a believer's standing before God. The Holy Spirit has nothing to do with that. That is a matter between God the Father and God the Son. The Father justifies a believing sinner on the basis of the work of the Son on the Cross. Second, the context is dealing with the Christian's experience, not his standing – with the method of living a Christian life, not the

relation of that person to the laws of God. Third, love as a fruit of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian, is spoken of in verse 6, which verse is bound up with verse 5. This again shows that the grace spoken of in verse 5 is sanctifying grace, of which latter the Galatian saints were depriving themselves by their act of depending upon self-effort in an attempt to obey the law. (K. Wuest) The creation of capacity is called regeneration. The biblical evidence that faith itself is a gift is impressive and has often been repeated. It comes not of one's own strength or virtue but only to those who are chosen of God for its reception (1 Thess. 2:13); hence, it is a gift (Eph. 6:23, Phil. 1:29). It comes through Christ (Acts 3:16, 1 Peter 1:21), by means of the Spirit (2 Cor. 4:13), and by means of the preached Word (Rom. 10:17, Gal. 3:2, 5). Because it is thus ordained from God (2 Peter 1:1, Jude 3), thanks are to be returned to God for it. (J. Dillow)

Christ is the ground of faith because He is the One who, in fulfillment of the prophecy, lives by faith. He thus proves to be the one true seed of the faithful Abraham and the heir of all the promises. His destiny, however, is not a merely individual one, because He acts as a universal representative figure, enacting by faith a pattern of redemption which then determines the existence of others, to whom Paul refers as "those out from faith." These others participate in Him and in His destiny not only vicariously, but also actually: they are baptized into Christ (3:27) and they receive the Spirit, which in turn enables them to live "out from the source of faith," in conformity to the pattern grounded in Jesus Christ. This is the meaning of Gal. 5:5. The Christian's life is a reenactment of the pattern of faithfulness revealed in Jesus. (R. Hays) The Spirit gives personal guiding, especially in and by the reason and conscience in connection with the Word. (R. Finlayson) In the sphere of divine power we live through the Spirit, by faith: what is believed, Bible doctrine. The mind of Christ, or Bible doctrine in the soul, is the material the Spirit uses to manufacture the virtues of Christ in our lives. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 5:5 **But** (continuation, affirmation, contrast) **we** (Subj. Nom.; grace-oriented believers), **through the Spirit** (Instr. Means; walking by the Spirit as opposed to keeping the law), **are assiduously and patiently looking** (ἀπεκδέχομαι, PMI1P, Customary & Durative, Deponent) **with confidence** (Acc. Manner) **for righteousness** (Obj. Gen.; experiential sanctification) **out from the source of faith** (Abl. Source; as opposed to works of the flesh).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:5** ἡμεῖς γὰρ πνεύματι ἐκ πίστεως ἐλπίδα δικαιοσύνης ἀπεκδεχόμεθα.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:5** nos enim spiritu ex fide spem iustitiae expectamus

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:6** **For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision [rituals are irrelevant] have any inherent power, but rather faithfulness [in executing the precisely correct protocol plan of God for the spiritual life] which is empowered by means of virtue love.**

^{KW} **Gal. 5:6** For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision is of any power nor uncircumcision, but faith coming to effective expression through love.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:6** For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If a person is positionally in the sphere of Christ Jesus, he is a believer. If he is a believer, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision have any meaning or inherent power for him. Paul uses circumcision (or the lack thereof) as a representative for ritual in general. There is no ritual by which a person may become a believer in Christ Jesus. There is no ritual by which a believer can grow experientially in Christ Jesus. All rituals, like circumcision, are without power to transform the adherent. Believers grow experientially in the spiritual life by faithfulness which is empowered (Attributive Participle) by virtue love. Virtue love is produced in the soul by the filling of the Spirit, and expresses itself in impersonal love for mankind and personal love for God the Father. The virtue love of God flows through the believer (Gk: energizing) who is faithful in executing (Latin: operating) the precisely correct protocol plan for the spiritual life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The world established by the gospel story is not the frozen and unchangeable order which is usually associated with the world of “myth.” The fixed order was precisely the state of slavery under the beggarly elements, whose power has now been broken, according to Paul’s gospel story, by Christ’s intervention; the new order thus created is one in which Christians live by the power of the Spirit, in freedom from the restraints of the law. This new order is not a status quo to be protected, but a vision to be realized – we might even say a task to be achieved – by faith working through love. (R. Hays) The fact that he is circumcised or is not circumcised, has no power for anything in the believer’s life. The thing that is of power to effect a transformation in the life is faith, the faith of the justified person which issues in love in his life, a love produced by the Holy Spirit. (K. Wuest) Only love, given birth by the Word of God, can cause faith to work in us and bring us to maturity. (K. Lamb) No legal apparatus will produce a Christian life. (J. McGee)

The Romanist “faith” is not faith in the Biblical sense of the term. The Romanist doctrine is not understood until one understands what Romanist faith is. Rome hurls its anathema against the teaching that faith consists of knowledge, assent, and fiducia, confidence or trust. It cancels the first and third factors, especially the third. It leaves only assent, namely blanket assent to whatever Rome teaches, whatever that may be. Such assent is indeed informata and needs something to make it formata, to give it form and substance. Rome declares that this substance is love and good works. When assent has enough of these it is fully formed. Since we seldom know when we have enough we cannot be certain of salvation. Hence also justification is not forensic, not instantaneous and complete but medicinal, gradual, for the most part completed in purgatory; any certainty is doubtful in this life according to Rome’s own teaching. Luther uses strong language when he writes on this subject: “Therefore faith is not such an etiosa qualitas, that is, a thing so entirely useless, lazy, dead, that it may lie hidden in the heart of a mortal sinner like light, useless chaff or like a fly in wintertime sticking in a crack so long until the dear sun comes to it and wakes and makes it alive.” (R. Lenski)

Many opponents of Rome live on Roman contraband although they deny the source of their goods. In any dispute about what faith does it is essential to lay bare with exactness what “faith” is conceived to be. A Romish, a Pelagian, a Semi-Pelagian, a synergistic, a rationalistic or modernistic “faith” is not the faith of Scripture. It is a waste of effort to dispute about the predication made about such a “faith.” Get back to faith itself, define that from the Scriptures; then true agreement is reached, and the predication will fall in line. (R. Lenski) The Spirit alone can make even the love of Christ thus influential with our souls, which but for his quickening grace remain, even in sight of the cross, still numbed and cold. (E. Huxtable) “Through love” is occasionally taken as referring to God’s love. (G. Duncan)

Gal. 5:6 For (explanatory) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.), neither (coordinating) circumcision (Subj. Nom.) nor (coordinating) uncircumcision (Subj. Nom.; previous state) has any inherent power (ἰσχύω, PAI3S, Descriptive; meaning), but rather (contrast) faith(fulness) (Subj. Nom.) which is empowered (ἐνεργέω, PMPTc.NFS, Descriptive, Attributive) by means of virtue love (Abl. Means).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:6** ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ οὔτε περιτομή τι ἰσχύει οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ πίστις δι’ ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:6** nam in Christo Iesu neque circumcisio aliquid valet neque praeputium sed fides quae per caritatem operatur

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:7** You were making great progress [rapidly advancing in the spiritual life]. Who detained you [cut you out of your lane] so that you stopped obeying the truth [following precisely correct spiritual protocol]?

^{KW} **Gal. 5:7** You were running well. Who cut in on you and thus hindered you from obeying the truth?

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:7** Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Before the legalistic teachers interfered with them, the Galatian believers were making great progress in the spiritual life. They were successfully residing and functioning in the sphere of God’s power (Iterative Imperfect tense) - right up to the point where they began to listen to the legalists and crashed-and-burned. They took their eyes off the Lord and His precisely correct protocol plan for the spiritual life and they began substituting various forms of legalism for the truth Paul had taught them. They were ambushed by false teachers in the cosmic system. The Greek word “egkopto” is a term used for an athlete who is running a race and somebody next to him bumps him out of his lane and disqualifies him from the race. The Galatians were running a good race and were way out front, but certain legalists came alongside them and bumped them out of their spiritual walk (Dramatic Aorist tense) by substituting heresies for truth.

The Galatians were suckers for legalism. They had abandoned grace mechanics for works of the flesh. Paul asks them who did this to them, in a most sarcastic manner. He knew he hadn't changed one principle of God's precisely correct protocol plan in any of his letters. He knew none of his missionary team had led them astray either. What he remembered was that they were obeying the truth (Latin: *veritas*) when he last saw them (Inchoative Present tense). They were following his precise instructions and were making progress when he left town. Now they had stopped obeying his instructions and were, in effect, still running the race but running it out of bounds. When they crossed the finish line, the Judge would have to tell them they were disqualified. All that struggle to compete in the spiritual life by keeping the law was illegitimate; they had substituted law-works for grace mechanics and had disqualified themselves.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Galatian Christians were running the Christian race well, but the Judaizers cut in on them and now were slowing up their progress in their growth in the Christian life. They had deprived the Galatians of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the latter had been thrown back upon self-effort in an attempt to obey a set of legal restrictions, with the result that their lives had lost the fragrance of the Lord Jesus and the enabling power for service which the Spirit formerly gave them. (K. Wuest) The picture is not one of halting the runners but one of throwing them off their course. One may run with all his might, but if he gets off the course he is automatically disqualified and might as well never have run at all. The course is narrow and never broad so as to allow running over to works of the law. The runners do not lay out the course, nor can they change it while they are running. (R. Lenski) To recover them from their backslidings, and engage them to greater steadfastness for the future, he puts them in mind of their good beginnings, and calls upon them to consider whence it was that they were so much altered from what they had been. (M. Henry)

The race is not to obtain regeneration; the race is to obtain the prize. The prize is the reward that belongs to the believer. The issue is not whether you are on the team; the issue is: Are you going to obtain the prize? Being cut out of your lane in the race is not losing your justification; it is being disqualified from the race, benched from the game. The law arrests the work of the Spirit in a believer ... Our knowledge of Him in that day will be no greater than where we left off here on earth. So if we are cut out of our lane here, we will pick up at the same point in heaven. If I can begin to know Him here, then I can begin to see something about the nature of the prize that's before me. Part of the prize is the ability to expand on the inheritance given to us in Christ. But this cannot be done by preaching grace and living law. (K. Lamb) Who has checked you in your mid career? Whence this disloyalty to the truth? (J. Lightfoot) Justification is the doctrine of our *standing* in Christ Jesus; this of our *running* in Christ. We *rest* on acceptance obtained; we *run* toward obtaining the kingdom. (R. Govett)

Gal. 5:7 You were making great (Adv. Degree) progress (τρέχω, Imperf.AI2P, Iterative; rapidly advancing in the spiritual life). Who (Subj. Nom.) detained (ἐγκόπτω, AAI3S, Dramatic, Interrogative Ind.; hindered, interfered with, thwarted, cut you out of your

lane, disqualified) you (Acc. Disadv.) so that you stopped obeying (πείθω, PPInf., Inchoative, Result; following correct protocol) the truth (Dat. Ind. Obj.)?

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:7** Ἐπρέχετε καλῶς· τίς ὑμᾶς ἐνέκοψεν [τῇ] ἀληθείᾳ μὴ πείθεσθαι;

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:7** currebatis bene quis vos inpedivit veritati non oboedire

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:8** This [legalistic] persuasion did not come from the One [God the Father] Who called [elected] you.

^{KW} **Gal. 5:8** This persuasion is not from the One who calls you.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:8** This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul knew another thing for certain. The Galatian believers did not receive their latest legalistic ideas from God the Father. He elected them in eternity past (Historical Present tense) by grace and placed grace mechanics before them as the divine system to live by during the Church Age. There is no way their legalistic notions came from heaven – so guess where they must have come from? You are correct. Legalism comes from Satan’s cosmic system and is spread by those who are functioning as his evangelists.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This negative statement indicates that the influence which was turning them away from grace was hostile to God. God who called them, called them to freedom in Christ, not to the enslaving tenets of the Judaizers. (K. Wuest) You obey not the truth but choose to obey the hinderers. Be assured that this persuasion has been due to mere human effort; it has not come from the One who called you at first unto salvation and continues to call you. Whatever voice you have been hearing, it is not the voice of God. (H. Vos)

The message of legalism must come from the father of lies, the devil himself. For if anyone wants us to trust in ourselves, it is Satan. He knows that no matter how hard we work, we will never be able to work our way to heaven. Thus whenever we are persuaded to trust ourselves rather than to trust in Jesus, the persuasion is not divine, but demonic. (P. Ryken) They must nevertheless bethink themselves that their listening to the new voice is not merely an exchange of it for the divine one: it is to become apostate from the voice of God. The pressure being put upon them this time comes from an entirely different quarter from that from which they were once called. (H. Ridderbos)

Gal. 5:8 This (Nom. Spec.; legalistic) persuasion (Subj. Nom.) did not (neg. adv.) come (ellipsis) from the One (Abl. Source) Who called (καλέω, PAPtc.GMS, Historical, Substantial; elected) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:8** ἡ πεισμονὴ οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος ὑμᾶς.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:8** persuasio non est ex eo qui vocat vos

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:9** A little leaven [legalism] will always permeate [corrupt] the whole lump of dough [the spiritual life of the believer].

^{KW} **Gal. 5:9** A little yeast is permeating the whole lump.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:9** A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There have always been believers who adhered to the philosophy that a little bit of legalism never hurt anyone. There have been untold millions of believers who have actually adhered to the philosophy that some rules and regulations to live by are actually a needed thing, especially for adolescents. Scripture says a little bit (Latin: modicum) of legalism will always corrupt the spiritual life of the believer. Salvation begins (justification), proceeds (sanctification) and ends (glorification) under grace, with no help from the law. A pinch of yeast will always ferment (Gnomic Present tense) an entire lump (Latin: mass) of dough. In the same manner, a pinch of legalism here-and-there will always corrupt the spiritual life of a believer. Legalism does not work hand-in-hand with grace; legalism does not work in tandem with the Holy Spirit. Legalism frustrates the grace of God and quenches the Holy Spirit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Leaven is always a symbol of evil in the Bible. Leaven, which operates on the principle of fermentation, is an apt symbol of moral and spiritual corruption. A very small lump readily permeates the entire bread loaf. Our Lord used it as a symbol of the false doctrines of the scribes and Pharisees in Matt. 16:6-12. In 1 Cor. 5:6 Paul uses the symbol, of the immoral conduct of a few in the church which was endangering the life of the entire church, and which unrebuked, would spread throughout that local assembly ... The insidious work of these Judaizers was slowly permeating the spiritual life of the Galatian churches. (K. Wuest) The Judaizers were spoilers. They put their hindrances in the way of those who were making progress in the truth. That is the problem with false doctrine. It spreads. It does its corrupting work until it has taken over the whole. Not a major denomination in Christendom has not eventually been taken over by liberalism, legalism, fanaticism, formalism, ritualism, or some other such corrupting influence. (J. Phillips)

He is not placing one doctrinal system over against the other but is issuing the warning: Principiis obsta, resist the beginnings. The Judaizers were not so foolish as to unload their entire doctrine upon the Galatians at one time; they injected it little by little. Paul refers to the little leaven that had already been injected, the fact that the Galatians had begun to observe times (4:10) although they had not as yet yielded to circumcision. If it be not stopped, that little would eventually leaven and

alter everything. (R. Lenski) It is dangerous for Christian churches to encourage those among them who entertain, especially who set themselves to propagate, destructive errors. This was the case here. The doctrine which the false teachers were industrious to spread, and which some in these churches had been drawn into, was subversive of Christianity itself, as the apostle had before shown. (M. Henry) Satan's stratagem is, that he does not attempt an avowed destruction of the whole gospel, but he taints its purity by introducing false and corrupt opinions. Many persons are thus led to overlook the seriousness of the injury done, and therefore to make a less determined resistance. The apostle proclaims aloud that, after the truth of God has been corrupted, we are no longer safe. (J. Calvin)

By its third generation, every new movement, born of revival by the Spirit of God, needs a fresh moving of the Holy Spirit if it is to survive. With the first generation, freshly discovered truth is a conviction; those who see it and embrace it propagate it with zeal. By the time the second generation takes over, what was once a conviction has become a belief. The second generation has been taught these truths. They have heard the first generation tell tales of battle, fire and sword, of persecution and pioneering, of the high price that was paid for these truths. They have been brought up in them, drilled in them, made to memorize them, and urged to accept them for themselves. And so they do, but not with the same fire and fervor of the first generation. By the time the third generation is in charge, what was first a conviction and then a belief has become an opinion. The truths are now lightly held. Compromise is acceptable. Things are watered down, distinctives disappear, and an accommodation is reached with dissenters and other groups who hold some things in common. The power has gone; the drive has gone. There is talk of renewal. New methods are tried. More money is poured in. Projects are announced. Doctrines are tinkered with. The emphasis is on education. The Holy Spirit moves out. Error moves in. The lump is now thoroughly leavened ... Paul could see the deadly leaven at work in Galatia. It was spreading. It wasn't even the third generation. (J. Phillips)

This leaven had already begun to work, embodying itself in the observance, pedantically and ostentatiously, of the days and feasts of the Jewish calendar. Now, a movement of mind manifesting itself in some form of external religionism, when once it begins to show itself in a Christian community, has a great tendency to spread. For always, in every Church, there are unstable souls, too often not a few, never able to come to the knowledge of the truth; which have never truly discerned Christ's all-sufficiency for their spiritual needs, or have lost any superficial persuasion of it once enjoyed; and which, consciously unsatisfied with what they as yet possess, and nevertheless only toying with spiritual things, are ready to adopt almost any novelty of religious behavior offering itself for their acceptance. The particular form in which the external religionism of seekers after another gospel clothes itself varies according to varying tastes or circumstances. Among the Galatian Christians such persons were now beginning to feel attracted by that venerable kind of outward piety exhibited by devout or professedly devout Jews; but in their own practice committing the fatal blunder of mistaking the external shows of saintliness for the reality of saintliness, and but too willing to make the former serve in lieu of the latter. The danger of the leaven spreading was, in the present case, increased by the instability of character and the quick impulsiveness belonging to the Celtic temperament. The true antidote to this leaven is in every age the same, namely, that which the apostle in this Epistle strives to administer – the gospel of the righteousness and Spirit of Christ crucified. (E. Huxtable)

Gal. 5:9 A little (Nom. Measure) leaven (Subj. Nom.; yeast: legalism, infection) will always permeate (ζυμώω, PAI3S, Gnostic; fermenting, corrupting, contagion) the whole (Acc. Measure; entire) lump of dough (Acc. Dir. Obj.; spiritual life of the believer).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:9** μικρὰ ζύμη ὅλον τὸ φύραμα ζυμοῖ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:9** modicum fermentum totam massam corrumpit

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:10** I have confidence in the Lord with respect to you [Galatian believers], that in no way will you form a different [contrary to grace] opinion. But the one [legalist] who continues to trouble and confuse you [with false doctrine] will bear his own judgment [pay the penalty which the law demands], whoever he is.

^{KW} **Gal. 5:10** As for myself, I have come to a settled persuasion in the Lord with respect to you, namely, that you will take no other view than this. But the one who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:10** I 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now gives two predictions, one positive and the other negative. He has complete confidence in the Lord (Static Present tense) that He will take care of the Galatian believers. He is confident that the Galatians will read this letter again-and-again and will agree with his position on grace mechanics. In the end, he does not think they will form an opinion favorable to the law and contrary to grace (Predictive Future tense). But while he has a favorable impression about their outcome, he does not have a favorable impression about the final state of the legalists in their midst. Paul believes the legalist who continues to trouble and confuse them (Durative Present tense) will pay the full penalty that the law requires (Predictive Future tense).

The law demands absolute and perfect adherence, or else condemnation. Paul knows that no man can keep the law perfectly, so the outcome is already certain in his mind: condemnation. The legalist will therefore be condemned by the very law he insists on upholding, and will face the inevitable consequences. If the legalist is an unbeliever, he will ultimately end up in hell. If the legalist is a believer, he will go to heaven, but he will be severely disciplined on earth for rejecting grace and failing to fulfill the law. Paul doesn't name the person, perhaps because he doesn't know him. But whoever he is, his judgment will arrive on schedule. Nobody rejects grace mechanics and pursues the law for sanctification and gets away with it.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Circumcision may not seem like a big deal, but if the Galatians allowed themselves to be circumcised, they would end up denying two central doctrines of the Christian faith: the doctrine of the atonement and the doctrine of justification. They would be saying that Christ's death on the cross was not enough, that they needed something more to atone for their sins. They would be saying that they could not be justified by faith alone, but only by faith plus works, and thus they would deny the biblical doctrine of justification. (P. Ryken) The indefinite relative clause "whosoever he is" is intended for any disturber. Every disturber of the Galatians shall bear his judgment for his nefarious work. Excuses, pleas of good intention, etc., shall not avail. The future tense is prophetic. It may come in part already in this life, but will come surely and fully at death. It is no light thing to scatter the heaven of false doctrine; it never was. (R. Lenski)

The swerve toward ritualism was in its mere incipency. Therefore he assumes a hopeful tone in dealing with the Galatians as a church. He fears the worst, but hopes the best. (E. Huxtable) Do not mistake me: I do not confound you with them; I confidently hope in Christ that you will be true to your principles. But the ringleader of this sedition – I care not who he is or what rank he holds – shall bear a heavy chastisement. (J. Lightfoot) Paul believed that the Galatians would ultimately reject the teaching of the Judaizers. He says, "I have confidence in you" that when you get your feet back on the ground, and your head out of the clouds, you will return to the gospel that was preached to you, and you will see that the teaching of the Judaizers was an intrusion, that it was leaven. (J. McGee)

Gal. 5:10 **I** (Subj. Nom.) have confidence (πίθω, Perf.AI1S, Static) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.) with respect to you (Acc. Gen. Ref.; Galatian believers), that (subordinating) in no way (Acc. Manner) will you form a different (Acc. Spec.; contrary to grace) opinion (φρονέω, FAI2P, Predictive; set your mind upon). But (adversative) the one (Subj. Nom.; legalist) who continues to trouble and confuse (PAPtc.NMS, Durative, Substantial) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) will bear (βαστάζω, FAI3S, Predictive; pay the penalty) his own (Poss. Acc.) judgment (Acc. Disadv.; condemnation), whoever (Nom. Appos.) he is (εἰμί, PASubj.3S, Descriptive).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:10** ἐγὼ πέποιθα εἰς ὑμᾶς ἐν κυρίῳ ὅτι οὐδὲν ἄλλο φρονήσετε· ὁ δὲ ταράσσων ὑμᾶς βαστάσει τὸ κρίμα, ὅστις ἐὰν ᾖ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:10** ego confido in vobis in Domino quod nihil aliud sapietis qui autem conturbat vos portabit iudicium quicumque est ille

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:11** And I, brethren, if I am still preaching circumcision [but I'm not], why am I still being persecuted? For then the offense that causes revulsion with reference to the cross [the gospel message about Jesus Christ] would be brought to an end [nobody is offended by the teaching of circumcision].

^{KW} **Gal. 5:11** And I, brethren, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I in spite of this fact still being persecuted? Then the stumblingblock of the Cross has been done away.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:11** And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is not preaching circumcision (2nd class conditional clause) like he used to (Customary Present tense) before he became a Christian. Now he is preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. Nobody was offended when he preached circumcision and other precepts of the law. But now that he is preaching the cross, and its related grace doctrines, many people hate him and persecute him (Durative Present tense). If he abandoned the gospel and went back to preaching circumcision, nobody would be angry at him anymore and the offense (Latin: scandal) that the cross brings would be brought to an end (Intensive Perfect tense). Everyone would be happy and nobody would persecute him anymore. But Paul can't do that, because the gospel message is the truth. The age of circumcision and the law is over.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To preach circumcision is to preach salvation by human merit. Circumcision says that I can be saved by some ritual I undergo or some work that I do. Whether that work involves removing a foreskin, keeping a commandment, undergoing a penance, or performing an act of devotion, the underlying theology is the same. To preach circumcision is to say that my contribution is essential to my salvation. Over against preaching circumcision stands the preaching of the cross. To preach the cross is to preach salvation in Christ alone. One can preach either circumcision or the cross, but not both ... Often, the choice comes down to this: Do you want to be popular or do you want to be faithful? The problem with preaching the cross is that it has a way of offending people ... To preach Christ crucified is to invite ridicule, opposition, hardship, persecution, and even death. For people throughout the ancient world, the cross was THE major stumbling block to accepting Christianity. To this day, the cross remains a stumbling block to every moral individual. It is offensive because it is so unflattering. People hate to be told they need to go to the cross. The cross offends people because they do not want to admit that they need someone else to save them. Most people would rather think that they can do something to save themselves than to admit that they need Christ to save them ... What most people dislike about Christianity is the exclusive claim of the crucified Christ. The only Christianity they will accept is based on a Christ without a cross. (P. Ryken)

The fact of his being persecuted by the Jews and Judaists was surely a proof that he was neither preaching circumcision, nor was regarded by them as preaching it. Had he been preaching circumcision, would not they have joyfully clung to him? (J. Eadie) "Scandalon" is the trigger stick of a trap, to which the bait is affixed, which springs the trap when the bait is touched. It has nothing to do with "stumbling block" despite our versions. The difference is not one of the figure only but of the sense. A "scandalon" is a fatal, deadly thing, it kills and is intended to kill; a stumbling block (for which the Greek has a different word: proskomma) at most causes a fall from which one arises and generally designates a lesser hurt. In Romans 9:33 the two are found together so that our versions could not repeat their usual translation. (R. Lenski) The offense of the cross to Judaizers and others

sprang less from the shame of it, great though that was, than from the pride of the human heart, which always longs to vindicate its power of religious performance and its present religious predilections, with all the outward trappings that accompany them, whatever else these are. Anti-Paul Judaizing is now dead, but religious pride remains very much alive, and a sovereign-grace understanding of Christianity is still felt as a stumbling block by many religious people. The atonement, says Paul, is foundational to the true gospel of Christ, which totally excludes self-reliant self-effort in all its forms. (J. Packer)

Gal. 5:11 And (continuative) I (Subj. Nom.), brethren (Voc. Address), if (protasis, 2nd class condition, "but I'm not") I am still (adv.) preaching (κηρύσσω, PAI1S, Customary) circumcision (Acc. Dir. Obj.), why (interrogative) am I still (adv.) being persecuted (διώκω, PPI1S, Durative)? For then (inferential) the offense that causes revulsion (Subj. Nom.; scandal, stumbling-block) with reference to the cross (Adv. Gen. Ref.) would be brought to an end (καταργέω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; nullified).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:11** Ἐγὼ δέ, ἀδελφοί, εἰ περιτομὴν ἔτι κηρύσσω, τί ἔτι διώκομαι; ἄρα κατήργηται τὸ σκάνδαλον τοῦ σταυροῦ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:11** ego autem fratres si circumcisionem adhuc praedico quid adhuc persecutionem patior ergo evacuatum est scandalum crucis

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:12** **I wish they [the legalists] who are constantly troubling you [about circumcision] would castrate themselves [as the logical outcome of or next step in their doctrine].**

^{KW} **Gal. 5:12** I would that they who are upsetting you would even have themselves mutilated.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:12** I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a tongue-in-cheek phrase to ridicule the legalists who insist on circumcision as part of (or a replacement for) the gospel message. His wish is that those legalists who are constantly troubling the Galatian believers (Iterative Present tense) would go the next step as a logical outcome of their doctrine and castrate themselves! Paul is using either a deliberative or progressive future tense. If he is using a deliberative future tense, the idea would be, "they should think seriously about doing this." If he is using a progressive future tense, the idea would be, "if removing a little foreskin renders such an important spiritual benefit, then removing the entire member would bring even greater spiritual benefits."

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Judaizers wanted Paul's converts to be circumcised, to submit to a minor amputation to enhance

their religious standing. Scornfully, Paul says in effect, “What they need is to go all the way and emasculate themselves.” That is literally what he means. They should emasculate themselves, make eunuchs of themselves. That would put an end to their pernicious teaching, for then, according to the Law itself, they would be cut off from “the congregation of the Lord” (Deut. 23:1). We might think such an exclamation to be radical and not what we would expect from a great apostle. But it was precisely because he was an apostle, the very apostle to the Gentiles, indeed, that Paul did make such a statement. What the Judaizers were trying to effect was the cutting off of those Gentile believers from the body of Christ. (J. Phillips) To maintain that the dispensation of grace did not abrogate the Law as a rule of life is to misunderstand completely the force of the argument in the entire epistle to the Galatians. Those addressed were believers in the churches of Galatia; they were not trying to be saved by the Law but seeking to live under it. Paul anathematizes such a course of action. (C. Feinberg)

They desire to make a fair show in the flesh, so they constrain you to be circumcised. In other words, they want some fleshly evidence that you’re a believer. They demand some fleshly evidence or some religious rite that shows you’re a believer. And so they require that of you because they’ve got one. And if you’ve got peace and you’re walking in the joy of the Lord and you don’t have one, then you make them look bad. So they’ve got to bring you under the same kind of religious ritual and activity that they practice, so you can look like the kind of Christian that they are. Because if you don’t do that, then there is obviously some difference between you and them - and here you are having a good time in the Lord and enjoying it, while not going through all of that self-effort – and what’s that make them look like? So they want you to come under their bondage. (K. Lamb)

Whoever means to do God a service and to foster holiness by the circumcision of the pagans must not do half-work. He had better follow the example of the pagan priests who in their raving antics yielded themselves to unnatural abominations. In this way Paul disqualifies the effort of the Judaizers in the severest way: he puts the circumcision of the Gentiles on the same level as the most abysmally sunken pagan superstition. (H. Ridderbos) Sacral castration was known to citizens of the ancient world; it was frequently practiced by pagan priests as in the cult of Attis-Cybele, which was prominent in Asia. But for Paul to compare the ancient Jewish rite of circumcision to pagan practices even in this way was startling. For one thing, it puts the efforts of the Judaizers to have the Gentiles circumcised on the same level as abhorred pagan practices. For another, it links their desire for circumcision to that which even in Judaism disbarred one from the congregation of the Lord. (A. Gaebelein)

With their circumcision these Judaizers want to outdo Paul and take the Galatians away from him. But if they have no more to offer than Paul offers, if, as they claim, he, too, still preaches circumcision, how will they be able to outdo him? Well, there is a way – would that they might try it! Let them have themselves castrated! Then they would, indeed, leave Paul behind who, as they say, still preaches only circumcision ... These Judaizers, who are unsettling the Galatians in order to get them away from Paul, who boast that they have something better than he has, can outdo him only by going to the full length of their claim: if they can say that Paul still advocates

circumcision they should adopt castration. (R. Lenski) Legalism, asceticism, and a martyr complex impose unnecessary suffering on believers, but such self-induced misery has no place in divine protocol. The saving work of Christ eliminates all human works for salvation; rebound by grace excludes all penance; the marvelous doctrines of royal privilege and opportunity expose the arrogance of self-abnegation, self-flagellation, and self-mutilation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 5:12 I wish (fixed form particle introducing an unattainable wish) they (Subj. Nom.; the legalists) who are constantly troubling (PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Substantial) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; about circumcision) would castrate themselves (ἀποκόπτω, FMI3P, Deliberative or Progressive, Potential Ind.; as the logical outcome of or next step in their doctrine).

BGT **Galatians 5:12** Ὅφελον καὶ ἀποκόψονται οἱ ἀναστατοῦντες ὑμᾶς.

VUL **Galatians 5:12** utinam et abscidantur qui vos conturbant

LWB **Gal. 5:13** But as for you, brethren, you were called to freedom [liberty]. Only do not turn your freedom into an occasion [base of operations] for the flesh, but keep on serving one another by means of virtue love.

KW **Gal. 5:13** For, as for you, upon the basis of freedom you were called, brethren. Only do not turn your liberty into a base of operations for the evil nature, but through love keep on constantly serving one another,

KJV **Galatians 5:13** For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Galatian believers and all other believers were called (Constative Aorist tense) to liberty, not to the law. But Paul anticipates that there are some antinomian believers who will engage in unbridled licentious activity of all kinds if he doesn't add a warning. He issues a prohibition against using their liberty in Christ as a pretext (Latin: occasion) for living in the flesh. Instead, he commands them to keep on serving one another by means of virtue love. They should continue to reside and function in the sphere of divine power, in the love complex. If they follow his command (or entreaty) to do this, they will not use their freedom (Latin: liberty) as a base of operations for nefarious deeds.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The central task of the Christian church in Galatia and across the centuries is to produce Christlike minds, and so enable men to out-think the world; to produce Christlike character, and so enable men to out-live the world. Men who out-think and out-live the world out-love and overcome the world: they are the uncommon men. The uncommon man is the free man. (R.

Stamm) Originally the word “aphormen” designated a point from which to launch an attack. In the name of liberty sin could use the weakness of human nature as a foothold from which to scale the defenses of the soul. (ibid) If we reject the conscience to gratify our carnal desires, the next time we are faced with a choice, the conscience becomes less capable of discerning right from wrong. We go from a defiled conscience, to an evil conscience, to a seared conscience. At that point, we no longer respond to the dictates of the moral nature of God that are written on the heart of every man, whether he is regenerated or not. (K. Lamb) Royal liberty exists within the framework of God’s protocol for the Church Age. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

We are set free from the law in order to produce a righteousness that corresponds to the righteousness that the law demanded. This is because the teaching that serves as our guide to righteousness – the teaching of Christ and His apostles – is in effect an exposition of the ultimate meaning of the Mosaic Law ... The content of the law, then, has not fundamentally changed. It is only the dynamic – the means by which we can arrive at righteousness – that differs dramatically. Living out the righteousness of the law does not result in a right relationship with God; rather, being in a right relationship with God through faith in Christ results in living out the righteousness of the law. The Christian – through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and not through the dynamic of his or her own efforts to be righteous by keeping the law – manifests a life of increasing growth in righteousness. (P. Ryken) The Christian lives under a new law initially announced by Christ and executed in the power of the Holy Spirit. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 5:13 But (contrast) as for you (Ind. Nom.), brethren (Voc. Address), you were called (καλέω, API2P, Constativ) to freedom (Dat. Adv.; liberty). Only (adv.) do not (neg. particle) turn (ellipsis; use, convert) your (Acc. Poss.) freedom (Acc. Dir. Obj.) into an occasion (Adv. Acc.; pretext, opportunity, springboard) for the flesh (Dat. Disadv.), but (adversative) keep on serving (δουλεύω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command) one another (Reciprocal Dat.) by means of virtue love (Abl. Means).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:13** ὑμεῖς γὰρ ἐπ’ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἐκλήθητε, ἀδελφοί· μόνον μὴ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν εἰς ἀφορμὴν τῇ σαρκί, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:13** vos enim in libertatem vocati estis fratres tantum ne libertatem in occasionem detis carnis sed per caritatem servite invicem

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:14** **For the entire law stands fulfilled in this one principle: Keep on exercising impersonal love [maintaining a relaxed mental attitude in the filling of the Spirit] towards your neighbor [fellow human being] as you do yourself.**

^{KW} **Gal. 5:14** For the whole law in one utterance stands fully obeyed, namely, in this, Love your neighbor as you do yourself.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:14** For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The whole law stands fulfilled (Intensive Perfect tense) in one basic principle. Keep on exercising impersonal love (Iterative Future tense) towards your neighbor as you do yourself. You exercise impersonal love by maintaining a relaxed mental attitude in the filling of the Spirit, especially when you are around a fellow human being. The word “neighbor” means anyone in your general periphery – where you work and live (Latin: proximity). We’re not talking about a fake expression of “peace, love, dove” as promulgated by the sixties generation, nor a gushing emotional outburst by glad-handing holy-rollers. We’re referring to a relaxed, polite, respectful attitude towards someone you know nothing about – or toward someone you know and don’t get along with! You treat yourself with mercy, grace and ease, so you should do the same towards others.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Spiritual self-esteem is prerequisite to the function of impersonal love. The mandates to “love your neighbor as yourself” imply that spiritual self-esteem is the essential foundation for impersonal love. Then, as the believer advances to spiritual autonomy, he builds the spiritual muscle to comply with every divine mandate regarding impersonal love for all mankind. Capacity for impersonal love is acquired through providential preventative suffering, which carries the believer into spiritual autonomy. Impersonal love is then tested through the people test as part of momentum testing on the way to spiritual maturity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 5:14 For (explanatory) the entire (Nom. Measure) law (Subj. Nom.) stands fulfilled (πληρώω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive) in this (Dat. Spec.) one (Dat. Measure) principle (Loc. Sph.): Keep on exercising impersonal love (ἀγαπάω, FAI2P, Iterative; maintaining a relaxed mental attitude in the filling of the Spirit) towards your (Gen. Rel.) neighbor (Adv.; fellow human being) as (comparative) you do (ellipsis) yourself (Acc. Gen. Ref.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:14** ὁ γὰρ πᾶς νόμος ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ πεπλήρωται, ἐν τῷ ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:14** omnis enim lex in uno sermone impletur diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:15** But if you keep on biting [cosmic I: arrogance complex of sins] and devouring [cosmic II: hatred complex of sins] one another of the same kind [fellow believers], be careful [beware] not to be consumed [eaten alive] by one another.

^{KW} **Gal. 5:15** But if, as is the case, you are biting and devouring one another, take heed lest you be consumed by one another.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:15** But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Galatian believers were involved in a bad habit (Durative Present tense) of biting and devouring one another. The protasis of a first class condition means it was indeed going on at that very moment. No doubt the debate on grace mechanics versus legalism was causing a lot of commotion, argumentation and shouting matches. “Biting” is a metaphor for the arrogance complex of sins; “devouring” is a metaphor for the hatred complex of sins. Both sin complexes began with mental attitude sins and eventually expanded to verbal sins. The Greek word “*analothe*” is used to describe wild animals in a deadly struggle, clawing and gnashing each other to pieces in the process.

It’s a shame when believers treat each other this way, but it happens more often than you might think. Sometimes it is covert gossiping and maligning; other times it is overt arguments and brawls in a public forum. Paul begs them to be careful (Imperative of Entreaty) not to be consumed (Culminative Aorist tense) by one another. In a manner of speaking, the first step would be (in our vernacular) to agree to disagree on a matter. The second step would be to realize that neither party is likely to change their mind about something (grace or legalism) that is dear to them. The third step is to make sure you are confessing mental and verbal sins regularly.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Conflict in the church is a kind of spiritual suicide. Sin is always self-destructive, and the sin of divisiveness inevitably leads to the destruction of the church. It means the death of Christian witness and fellowship. Sadly, the history of Christianity includes many tragic stories of factions and divisions, splits and schisms. How unhappy, how mad it is, that we who are members of the same body should voluntarily conspire together for mutual destruction. (P. Ryken) The Galatian churches seem to have been not only facing a seductive error from without but also were being torn apart from within. The believers were quarreling with one another, probably over the whole question of law keeping. This was one of the sad side effects of the teaching of the Judaizers. Even if the majority was delivered from the delusion, the squabbles that this insidious teaching engendered among the believers threatened to destroy the fellowship altogether. (J. Phillips)

To bite is to satisfy a feeling of anger, but to devour is a proof of extreme savagism. (Chrysostom) Mutual destruction is the natural result of fierce mutual quarrel. Neither gains the victory – both perish ... Spiritual devastation and wreck. (J. Eadie) To bite (wound, inflict pain) and to devour (leave no room for) and to consume constitute a climax. It is to be understood of various gradations of social hatred and jealousy ... It is the life which becomes dominant when the freedom in Christ is denied or abused. Then it goes from bad to worse. (H. Ridderbos) The figure is taken from the jungle and the forest where tooth and claw reign and the denizens are exterminated by each other. (R. Lenski) The contest will not end in a victory to either party, but will end in the common extinction of

both. The idea is taken from wild beasts which tear their victims to pieces till nothing is left. (E. Huxtable) The ritualistic or legal spirit which the Galatians had temporally fallen manifested itself in strife and bickerings. This is, in fact, its natural outcome. (R. Edgar)

The Galatians were biting and devouring one another, while they supposed themselves to be keeping the law. The law usually acts thus. It makes men self-righteous and contentious. Instead of fulfilling its letter they destroy its spirit. Law should lead to regard for others and find its fruition in love. But it leads its votaries to despise others and finds its fruit in hate. (A. Knoch) I have always wanted to preach a sermon on this text, and I would entitle it “Christian Cannibals.” Did you know that in many churches today the Christians bite, eat, and devour one another? And the bite is as bad as that of a mad dog. There is nothing you can take that will cure the wound. All you can do is suffer. There are a lot of mad dogs running around today. They will bite and devour you. (J. McGee)

Gal. 5:15 But (adversative) if (protasis, 1st class condition, “and it’s true”) you keep on biting (δάκνω, PAI2P, Durative; cosmic I: arrogance complex of sins) and (connective) devouring (κατεσθίω, PAI2P, Durative; cosmic II: hatred complex of sins) one another of the same kind (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fellow believers), be careful (βλέπω, PAImp.2P, Static, Entreaty; beware, see to it) not (neg. particle) to be consumed (ἀναλίσκω, APSubj.2P, Culminative, Potential) by one another (Gen. Relationship).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:15** εἰ δὲ ἀλλήλους δάκνετε καὶ κατεσθίετε, βλέπετε μὴ ὑπ’ ἀλλήλων ἀναλωθῇτε.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:15** quod si invicem mordetis et comeditis videte ne ab invicem consumamini

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:16** Now I say: Keep on walking by the Spirit and you will not execute the desire of the flesh [sin nature].

^{KW} **Gal. 5:16** But I say, through the instrumentality of the Spirit habitually order your manner of life, and you will in no wise execute the passionate desire of the evil nature,

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:16** *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Instead of biting and devouring each other, Paul wants us to utilize impersonal love as a problem-solving device. This won’t happen by adhering to the law. It will only happen by walking by the Spirit (Iterative Present tense) on a daily basis. Paul, therefore, commands (Imperative mood) the Galatian believers to keep on walking by the Spirit. By fulfilling this mandate, they will not be as likely to execute the desire of the flesh (Potential Subjunctive mood). Walking by the Spirit is the secret to executing the protocol plan of God for the Church Age. It is equivalent to living in the sphere of divine power. Refusing to walk in the Spirit ensures that the loser believer will operate under the dictates of the old sin nature in Satan’s cosmic system. The desire of the flesh is fulfilled by residing and functioning in the sphere of

Satan's system.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

We are to be like Jesus, which, of course, is exactly what God intended Adam to be like (Gen. 1:26). Now that we are regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, the potential of being like Jesus is restored to us. We are to make ourselves available as He makes Himself available to us. The key to all this is obedience, availability, a willingness to let God be God in us. (J. Phillips) Over against the danger spoken of in verse 15 and the possible suggestion of the Judaizers to the Galatians, or the fear of the Galatians themselves, that without the pressure of the law constraining them to do right they would fall into sinful living, Paul enjoins them to continue to govern their conduct by the inward impulse of the Spirit, and emphatically assures them that so doing they will not yield to the power within them that makes for evil. (E. Burton) If we walk, we make progress in our journey. This implies an entire surrender of ourselves to the authority and guidance of the Spirit. The traveler in a strange land must follow his guide. So the believer is led by the Spirit with the Word, which is the chart of his journey through life. The term implies, not an isolated act of the Spirit, but a continuous help provided through all parts of a believer's life. (E. Huxtable)

At salvation the Third Person of the Trinity personally takes up residence in our bodies. From his permanent headquarters in the body, the indwelling Spirit seeks to control the soul. The Bible describes the believer under the Spirit's silent, energizing control as "spiritual," filled with the Spirit, walking in the Spirit. The grace apparatus for perception (GAP) functions only under the filling of the Holy Spirit. The filling of the Spirit is therefore the link between salvation and the eventual understanding of Bible doctrine that constitutes spiritual maturity. The filling of the Holy Spirit is mandatory for both the intake and the application of the Word of God. Once the inner equipment of the grace apparatus for perception is in place, we can learn more of God and His plan ... Since the sin nature is dead to us positionally but not experientially, we face an inner conflict as long as we live. The sin nature seeks to control the soul, opposes our adherence to God's plan, and disrupts our adjustment to the justice of God. Therefore, God the Holy Spirit fills every Church Age believer's soul to provide the power needed to combat the inherited, resident, and continually active sin nature. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Some – probably most – of Paul's critics feared that his repudiation of law as a means of salvation would lead to an orgy of bad living cloaked with the pretext of a higher spirituality. So he reassured them, saying in effect, "But, I say, walk in the Spirit, and you will not give way to the evil drive in human nature." What the Galatians needed was assurance that if they abandoned the law and trusted their all to the Spirit, they would not go down to defeat in the civil war between their good and evil impulses ... One of the first experiences that may come to a man who gives up the binding power of rules and traditions is for his physical impulses to run riot. Perhaps that is why Paul puts strong emphasis upon flesh and Spirit. The presence of the Spirit became the safeguard of Paul's freedom. The source of Paul's morality no longer resided in an external authority such as a lawbook, but in an internal Presence. (R. Stamm) The warfare between the flesh and the Spirit demands extreme care on our part to be always in the Spirit's complete disposal. (E. Huxtable)

God made man to be indwelt by Him. The human spirit was to be the home of the Holy Spirit. The human spirit, in harmony with the indwelling Holy Spirit, was to control the soul, mind, emotions, will, as well as the senses, functions, and needs of the body ... The potential for living a holy life is now ours ... because of the permanent residency of the Holy Spirit. It all becomes a matter of obedience, of yielding to the Holy Spirit, of making ourselves available to Him, moment by moment, situation by situation, and decision by decision. Paul does not see this as optional but as mandatory. It is the only way the Christian life can be lived ... The way to learn the Christian life is to walk with the Holy Spirit every day, “to order our lives according to the direction, and motion of the Spirit.” (P. Ryken) The terrible mistake made by so many misinformed Christians is trying to gain the victory by their own efforts, by the works of the law, instead of a complete yielding and surrender to the Spirit of God. (M. DeHaan) To be filled with the Spirit involves yieldedness and then, whenever there is departure from the will of God, confession of sin. (J. Walvoord)

All of Paul’s letters deal with belief and behavior, with principles and practice. Teaching that emphasizes only our beliefs can become hard and cold; teaching that emphasizes only our behavior can become merely an exercise in psychology. Paul’s letters maintain a proper balance between faith and practice. He has now made the full transition in Galatians to the practical side of his teaching. (J. Phillips) The apostle’s goal in this passage is to describe liberty in daily life and how it is to be achieved. “Walk by the Spirit” is the preferred translation. The difference between the authorized version – “Walk in the Spirit” – is important. Walking in the Spirit implies more dependence on self; walking by the Spirit properly emphasizes the energizing power within. To walk by the Spirit is to allow the Spirit to be the governing principle in one’s life. (H. Vos) The only way we can experience the practical outworking of God’s salvation is to surrender to that indwelling life rather than follow an external code. (K. Lamb)

Inherent in the concept of “walk” is the idea of making progress. We walk one step at a time. Our progress might not be fast, but it should be steady. We might stumble and fall, but we get up, seek cleansing, and keep moving forward ... The Holy Spirit is seen as the special divine adversary of the flesh ... The war has been going on for a long time, but we are on the winning side. All of the infinite resources of the Godhead are available to us. In our struggle with the flesh, the Holy Spirit is our special Helper. He knows all of the subtle wiles of the flesh. He knows where it lurks, knows its deceptions and disguises, knows its incorrigible wickedness, and knows its pretended virtues. The Holy Spirit is on our side. He is our ally against this subtle foe. He dwells within, where the battle is to be fought. We are not left hopeless in this battle, nor are we simply the battleground between these two foes. (J. Phillips) When believers are admonished to “live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature,” clearly the implication is that they may choose not to live by the Spirit’s power, thus resisting the gracious and transforming work he wishes to accomplish in their lives. Not all grace, then, is irresistible. (T. Schreiner)

He must walk by the Spirit, that is, he must in fellowship with Christ let himself be ruled by the Spirit. The principle of the Spirit does not make human effort unnecessary, but arouses it and equips it to put all its forces into the service of the Spirit. The tense of “walk” points to a continuing

condition. (H. Ridderbos) The term “flesh” encompasses all the desires of the natural man and spirit the desires of the spiritual man or regenerate or new nature. The old nature is still under the influence of the Prince of this world who energizes the children of disobedience. The new nature is enabled by the Holy Spirit to overcome the downward pull of the old nature. (H. Vos) It is not enough that we begin the Divine life; we must maintain it through all its stages and experiences. The exercises of a believer are only effectual by the Spirit. Our life must be in harmony with the mind of the Spirit. His will must be our constant guide. (E. Huxtable)

The word “live” is literally “walk.” Walking by the Spirit involves continued dependence. Christians going through life must likewise walk spiritually in constant dependence upon the Holy Spirit. Variations in conscious dependence upon Him correspond to the variations in people’s experience of being filled with the Spirit. The exhortation teaches clearly that the spiritual life must be lived moment by moment in relationship to the Holy Spirit as the Christian’s source of strength and direction for life. The program of God for the Christian’s sanctification must be viewed in the context of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit both in salvation and in the everyday life of the Christian, with full recognition, on the one hand, of the believer’s new nature secured in salvation and, on the other hand, of the believer’s sin nature carried over from the former life. (J. Walvoord) United with Christ and granted the same power system in which His humanity constantly lived, we are equipped to be imitators of God and to walk just as Christ walked. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

To say that this refers to a contrast between Christians and non-Christians rather than between two kinds of Christians not only contradicts the facts of Christian experience but the rest of the NT as well. This contradicts Paul’s teaching that walking in the Spirit is not automatic and inevitable. It is not the automatic possession of each Christian. Furthermore, what Christian since Pentecost has ever unconditionally experienced this abundant life, peace, and the fulfillment of the requirements of the law? To say these things are true of all Christians is a mockery of Christian experience. (J. Dillow) One of the commonest errors among believers is the belief that, having been saved, we have the power to live a life of godliness and holiness by ourselves. It is only as we walk by means of the Spirit of God that the righteousness of Christ can be reproduced in us. (J. Pentecost) Some Christians are said to be “carnal” because they can receive only the milk of the Word, in contrast to the strong meat; they yield to envy, strife and divisions, and are walking as men, while the true child of God is expected to “walk in the Spirit.” (L. Chafer)

The power gate is the silent, invisible, enabling ministry of the Holy Spirit. Omnipotent God the Holy Spirit sustains the believer, supplying the supernatural means of executing the supernatural Christian way of life ... In carnality, grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit, your advance halts – you cannot grow spiritually, resist the temptations from the lust patterns and trends of the old sin nature, or use the divine problem-solving devices. But from the filling of the Holy Spirit comes the source of the spiritual life. Under His mentorship you can “walk by the Spirit” – learn the Word of God and apply Bible doctrine to circumstances ... The Christian chooses to apply doctrine in the circumstances of his life. The Holy Spirit aids in the recall of the truth so that the believer walks by means of the Spirit. As far as conscious experience is concerned, the believer listens to Bible teaching, thinks about it, mulls it over, accepts what he believes is true, and lives by the truth. He

recognizes the importance the Bible gives to remaining filled with the Spirit, so he obeys this mandate by faith. The Holy Spirit's indispensable aid operates below the surface. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 5:16 Now (transitional) I say (λέγω, PA1LS, Static): Keep on walking (περιπατέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command) by the Spirit (Instr. Means) and (continuative) you will not (neg. adv./particle, strong double negative) execute (τελέω, AASubj.2P, Culminative, Potential; carry out) the desire (Acc. Dir. Obj.; lust) of the flesh (Gen. Spec.; sin nature, function of the cosmic system).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:16** Λέγω δέ, πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:16** dico autem spiritu ambulate et desiderium carnis non perficietis

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:17** For the flesh [old sin nature] desires to oppose the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, because these [two opposing spheres of operation] are constantly opposed to one another, so that you cannot keep on executing those things [divine protocol] that you desire.

^{KW} **Gal. 5:17** For the evil nature constantly has a strong desire to suppress the Spirit, and the Spirit constantly has a strong desire to suppress the evil nature. And these are entrenched in an attitude of mutual opposition to one another so that you may not do the things that you desire to do.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:17** For 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The old sin nature (flesh) has an insatiable desire to antagonize the Spirit (Customary Present tense), and the Spirit is by nature always opposed to the old sin nature (Durative Present tense). They are two spheres of operation that are totally opposed to each other (Latin: adversary). If there was no conflict between them, you could perhaps keep on executing the protocol plan of God without ceasing. But because they are constantly at war with each other, you are not able to do those things (divine good) that you want to do in your human spirit (Customary Present tense). The potential subjunctive mood points to the desire being present to always follow divine protocol for the Christian life, but the presence of the sin nature must be battled every day of our lives.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The flesh is to become increasingly subdued as the Christian learns by grace to walk in the Spirit. But it is never eliminated. So the Christian is never released from the necessity of consciously choosing to go in God's way. There is no escape from the need to depend on God's grace. (A.

Gaebelein) Throughout this passage the “pneuma” is evidently the Divine Spirit; for the human spirit in itself and unaided does not stand in direct antagonism to the flesh. (J. Lightfoot) Are we going to spell it with a capital S and thus refer to the Holy Spirit, or are we going to spell it with a small s and refer it to the human spirit? Such distinctions are not indicated in Greek. So the problem becomes one of interpretation. Since the article occurs in vs. 17, it is rather clear that the translation here is “the Spirit.” (R. Earle) The Spirit delivers by an unceasing conflict. (L. Chafer)

A man is free to jump from the fifteenth floor of a building, but he does not have the freedom to jump back up again. This is a graphic illustration of the limitations upon our freedom. (D. Barnhouse) Because of the impartation of a new capacity to the will, the child of God is in constant conflict. There is an unrelenting and ceaseless warfare going on within him all the time ... What the old mind loves, the new hates; and what the new desires, the old despises. That same warfare is true in the realm of the heart ... will ... personality ... and mind. You, therefore, as a child of God, are facing constant, ceaseless, unrelenting warfare in the areas of mind, heart, and will every moment that you live. (J. Pentecost) There exists a perpetual antagonism between our ex-ruler and the Agent who freed us, between the sin nature and the Holy Spirit. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

As the resident antagonist against the indwelling Holy Spirit, the old sin nature is Satan’s inside agent for distracting us from God’s game plan. The sin nature is the source of temptation, but our volition is the source of sin. When the sin nature tempts us to commit a sin, we can resist the temptation and remain filled with the Spirit inside the sphere of divine power. The Biblical mandates to resist the temptation are incorporated into the love complex ... The Holy Spirit and the old sin nature compete for control of the soul. The believer’s volition decides the issue: to sin or to resist temptation, to remain in a state of carnality after committing a sin or to rebound back into the sphere of divine power. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 5:17 For (explanatory) the flesh (Subj. Nom.; old sin nature) desires to make war (ἐπιθυμέω, PAI3S, Customary) against the Spirit (Gen. Opposition), and (continuative) the Spirit (Subj. Nom.) against the flesh (Gen. Opposition), because (causal) these (Subj. Nom.; two opposing spheres of operation) are constantly opposed to (ἀντίκειμαι, PMI3S, Durative, Deponent) one another (Dat. Ind. Obj.), so that (result) you cannot (neg. particle) keep on executing (ποιέω, PASubj.2P, Iterative, Potential) those things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; divine good) that (Acc. Gen. Ref.) you desire (θέλω, PASubj.2P, Customary, Potential).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:17** ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα κατὰ τῆς σαρκός, ταῦτα γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντίκειται, ἵνα μὴ ἂ ἐὰν θέλητε ταῦτα ποιῇτε.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:17** caro enim concupiscit adversus spiritum spiritus autem adversus carnem haec enim invicem adversantur ut non quaecumque vultis illa faciatis

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:18** But if you are being led by the Spirit [grace mechanics], you are not under the law [legalism has no hold on you].

^{KW} **Gal. 5:18** But if you are being led by the Spirit you are not under the law.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:18** But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a 1st class conditional clause, which means he assumes that the Galatian believers are indeed being led by the Spirit. They are being filled with the Spirit repeatedly (Iterative Present tense) and consistently for as long as they can keep up the internal battle (Durative Present tense). And by keeping up this walk by the power of the Spirit, the law has no authority over them. They are free to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ without legal stipulations.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul wants to emphasize that living a holy life is not achieved by self-effort or by trying to keep the Law. It is achieved by responding to the leading of the Holy Spirit. The specter of the Law keeps making its appearance because of the subtlety of the flesh. If the flesh is not allowed to indulge its repulsive side, it will indulge its religious side. It will dress up in its Sunday best and go to church. It will walk the aisle, submit to baptism, sing in the choir, teach a Sunday school class, and indulge in good works. It will sing, pray, and take communion. It will wear a hair shirt, fast, and deprive itself. It will carry a Bible and go on visitation. It will go to Bible school and seminary and get ordained to the ministry. It will write articles for Christian magazines and review books. It will even become a missionary. There is nothing that the flesh will not do. It is a great doer. It will persuade us that all of this “doing” is just what God wants. It is just another way of putting us under the law. Holy living, however, is not to be achieved by doing but by being. The only way we can be what God wants us to be is to cooperate with the Holy Spirit. (J. Phillips)

To be led by the Spirit, in the full sense of it, is to be under His benign and powerful influence in all thoughts, aspirations, and acts – to be yielded up to His government without reserve – to have no will without His prompting it, no purpose without His shaping it, - is to be everywhere and in all things in willing submission to His control, and always guarding against any insubordination which may “grieve the Holy Spirit of God.” To be led by the Spirit is much the same as to walk by the Spirit in verse 16. (J. Eadie) In this verse the emphasis is on the spiritual inability in which man lives, if he has only the law. He is defenseless against the flesh. In this lies the connection with the preceding verse. If one is to offer resistance in the struggle between Spirit and flesh, one must be in the service of the Spirit and not in that of the law. (H. Ridderbos) Men do not enhance the true unity of Scripture by attempting to fuse two contrary principles into one system. (C. Feinberg) It was important for the Galatians to know that just as justification is not possible by works so sanctification cannot be achieved by human effort. (D. Campbell)

The Holy Spirit never coerces, never compels, never puts on the pressure, and never bullies. He does not drive; He leads. He leads; we follow. He leads us into all truth. He leads us in the paths of

righteousness. He leads us step-by-step. He leads gently, understandingly, and unerringly. He leads us in our daily quiet time. He leads us by the godly counsel of Spirit-taught men. He leads through the circumstances of life. He leads by gently witnessing with our spirit in the innermost recesses of our being. He leads by quickening our conscience. He leads by encouraging us or by restraining us, by assuring us or by reproving us. He leads, but He never drives. He never gives us that “now-or-never” feeling or that “do-this-or-else” urging. He leads. We follow one step at a time. (J. Phillips) Any manner of life, or service, which is lived in dependence on the flesh, rather than in dependence on the Spirit, is legal in character and has passed during the present period in which grace reigns. The law made its appeal only to the flesh, and, therefore, to turn to the flesh, is to turn to the sphere of the law ... The law could give no enabling power; but the Spirit can. (L. Chafer)

The life under the law (legalistic obedience) cannot be imported into the life by the Spirit (faith and love). The former involves externally imposed rules, while the latter involves the new dynamic of the indwelling Spirit. (S. Mikolaski) The children of Israel were redeemed and delivered out of Egypt and He gave to them their rule of life which should govern them in their land. These particular rules were never addressed to any other people than Israel, and these rules addressed to Israel made their appeal to the “natural man.” They ceased to be in effect, as the required rule of life, after the death of Christ – John 1:17, Romans 6:14, 2 Corinthians 3:1-13 and Galatians 5:18. (L. Chafer)

Gal. 5:18 But (adversative) if (protasis, 1st class condition, “assumes it is true”) you are being led (ἄγω, PPI2P, Iterative & Durative) by the Spirit (Instr. Means), you are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Descriptive) not (neg. adv.) under the law (Acc. Separation; it has no authority or hold on your life).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:18** εἰ δὲ πνεύματι ἄγεσθε, οὐκ ἐστὲ ὑπὸ νόμον.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:18** quod si spiritu ducimini non estis sub lege

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:19** Now the works [production] of the flesh [sin nature, cosmic system] are well-known, which are, for example: sexual activity outside of marriage, sensual impurity [stopping just short of sex], debauchery [wanton behavior, acknowledging no restraints],

^{KW} **Gal. 5:19** Now the works of the evil nature are well known, works of such a nature as, for example, fornication, uncleanness, wantonness,

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:19** Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul gives a list of examples of well-known (Customary Present tense) works of the flesh. These are activities that both believers and unbelievers engage in that are sinful, meaning their source is the old sin nature (Latin: carnal) and the various lures of the cosmic system. The first example is any sexual activity outside of marriage (Gk: porneia), either by married persons (adultery) or

single persons (fornication). This includes prostitution, homosexuality and lesbianism. The next example is sensual impurity, which is activity that stops just short of actually having sex with another person (flirting, stalking and various perversions). The third example is debauchery (Latin: luxury), which is any wild, wanton behavior that acknowledges no moral or ethical restraints. A believer is grieving the Holy Spirit by engaging in such behavior; an unbeliever is ignoring the dictates of his conscience by engaging in such behavior.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word “porneia” means “prostitution,” but includes sexual vice and unfaithfulness to the marriage vows. (R. Stamm) “Sensuality” is indecency, a lack of respect for what is right and good. It involves not only engaging in wanton behavior, but flaunting it in public. “Idolatry” is the quest to find our identity and security in anything or anyone besides the one true God. (P. Ryken) Impurity, planted in mind and memory, is notoriously hard to uproot. “Uncleanness” describes the person who is so besotted by lust that he simply does not care what people think or say. He abandons all restraint. He has neither shame nor fear. People who march for so-called “gay rights” fit into this category ... There is a progression. First, there is immorality, then a general state of mental impurity, and finally a scornful disregard of all things decent. (J. Phillips) When you put together the concepts contained in the expressions “flesh, the old man, and sin” then you get a picture of the adversary which we are called to war. (J. Pentecost)

The two following words (akatharsia and aselgeia) probably describe some of the sexual perversions (such as the practice of homosexuality and lesbianism) which, as Paul reminds us in Romans 1:26-27, were common in the pagan world, and indeed often characterize the world of today. (R. Cole) Note that hatred and wrath are not deeds of the body, but dispositions of the soul and affections of the heart; thus the flesh cannot be restricted to our physical structure. This evil principle or corruption is divinely labeled a root. (A. Pink) There is no biblical ground for a distinction between the Adamic nature and a “human nature.” The unregenerate have but one nature, while the regenerate have two. There is but one fallen nature, which is from Adam, and one new nature, which is from God. (L. Chafer)

Gal. 5:19 Now (transitional) the works (Subj. Nom.; production) of the flesh (Gen. Spec.; sin nature, cosmic system) are (εἰμί, PAI3S, Customary) well-known (Pred. Nom.; plain to see), which are (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) for example (Nom. Appos.; relative): sexual activity outside of marriage (Pred. Nom.; adultery & fornication, unlawful), sensual impurity (Pred. Nom.; uncleanness, sensual immorality: stopping just short of sex), debauchery (Pred. Nom.; wanton, acknowledging no restraints),

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:19** φανερά δέ ἐστιν τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός, ἅτινά ἐστιν πορνεία, ἀκαθαρσία, ἀσέλγεια,

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:19** manifesta autem sunt opera carnis quae sunt fornicatio inmunditia luxuria

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:20** Idolatry [worship of anything in place of God], witchcraft [drug addiction & sorcery], hostilities [all kinds], quarrels [discord], jealousy [party strife], outbursts of anger [rage], inordinate ambition [strife], dissensions [conspiracies], schisms [heretical sects],

^{KW} **Gal. 5:20** Idolatry, witchcraft, enmities, strife, jealousy, angers, self-seekings, divisions, factions,

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:20** Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues with a list of well-known production of the flesh, expressions of the old sin nature at work. The fourth item is idolatry or the worship of anything in place of God. This could be money, power or material possessions. The fifth item is witchcraft (Gk: pharmakeia), which includes drug abuse, sorcery and magic. The sixth item is all known categories or types of hostility. The seventh item is quarrels, contentions and other types of discord. The eighth item is jealousy, particularly the kind exhibited in a public forum through party strife and factionalism. The ninth item is angry outbursts, fits of rage and revenge motivation. The tenth item is strife and inordinate ambition. The eleventh item is dissensions, especially those caused by engaging in conspiratorial activities. The twelfth item is schisms, those that end up as outright cults and those that become heretical sects within the church.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Behind all idolatry are demons. Invisible evil spirits give power to idolatry. This is why graven images hold countless millions of people in thrall. Those who worship idols worship demons that make them slaves to every kind of superstition and suggestion. Even more subtle is the form of idolatry that substitutes men's own thoughts and philosophies for God. Men become worshipers of themselves. Humanism, communism, and rationalism are all forms of this kind of idolatry. All of them are works of the flesh. All of them dethrone God and enthrone man ... Witchcraft is very real. It has resurfaced, with all of its age-old fascination and power in our day. The so-called New Age movement is its most popular front. The Bible makes clear that occultism will increase in the post-Christian era. In the Apocalypse, we get, indeed, a terrible glimpse of a God-hating, demon-drug culture hardened in its sin. (J. Phillips) Sorcery is the secret tampering with the powers of evil. (J. Stott) In spiritual things two sins are named: "eidololatria" the open recognition of false gods and "pharmakeia" the secret tampering with the powers of evil. (J. Lightfoot)

Another man gets the promotion we were anticipating; someone else gets a louder round of applause than we do; another preacher outshines us in the pulpit, draws bigger crowds, pastors a larger church, or drives a better car, and, at once, we face the crossroads where "zelos" stands. Zelos can draw us into admiration and a desire and determination to emulate our rival, or it can lure us down the road to bitter animosity and resentment ... Those who split churches often think themselves spiritual. The Holy Spirit bluntly labels this spirit as one of the works of the flesh. It is often a direct result of the party spirit that is condemned under the previous word in this list. We can see this kind

of work in all walks of life. All religious systems split and divide. (J. Phillips) Since witches and sorcerers used drugs, the word came to designate witchcraft, enchantment, sorcery, and magic. The law of Moses prescribed the death penalty for it. Next to state worship, magic was the most dangerous competitor of true religion. It was human nature's attempt to compel God to do its bidding instead of praying as Jesus did, "Thy will be done." (R. Stamm)

Hardly an issue in life exists over which men will not squabble and divide. It is this very divisive factor in the sin equation that ruins every one of Satan's attempts to produce that one-world society toward which he has been working throughout the ages of time. Even when he does manage to force all people into one empire, ruled by his special agent, the Antichrist, it will not last long. The eastern half of the empire will split off and set the stage for Armageddon. (J. Phillips) Indeed, the more outrageous the error, the more people seem to be disposed to believe it. Mormons believe that a dissolute character named Joseph Smith found some plates written in Egyptian hieroglyphics that he was able to translate – with the aid of some magic glasses – into the Book of Mormon, which was composed in imitation King James English style. They believe that God has a body and that Jesus was a polygamist. They believe the lie of the Devil: "Ye shall be as gods." (ibid) Who cares to review the entire hydra? When one of its many heads is cut off, two grow in its place. (R. Lenski)

To seek escape, stimulation, or happiness through chemicals is another facet of reversionism. This blatant manifestation of spiritual degeneracy destroys the mentality of the soul, corrupts doctrinal norms and standards in the conscience, and neutralizes volition. Alcohol and narcotic abuse is also linked to sexual reversionism. This catalog of carnal deeds includes the sin of drug addiction, a better translation of the Greek word "pharmakeia." "Sorcery" or witchcraft originally included the use of drugs to induce a trance for contacting the spirit world and eventually came to mean drug addiction. Hallucinogenic drugs were employed in many cultic rituals to achieve ecstatic states for the worship of demons. Likewise, excessive amounts of alcohol dulls the senses and lowers the inhibitions, making the cultic participants vulnerable to orgiastic rites. Thus, drug use or alcohol abuse are often additional stimuli for the licentious debauches of the phallic cult. This danger that existed among the Galatians also existed in the Southern Kingdom in Jeremiah's day. When the God of Israel was rejected and the worship of Baal in the phallic cult was substituted, the decline of divine establishment values, along with spiritual and social decay was inevitable. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 5:20 Idolatry (Pred. Nom.; worship of anything in place of God), witchcraft (Pred. Nom.; drug addiction, sorcery), hostilities (Pred. Nom.; all types), quarrels (Pred. Nom.; all types of contentions, discord), jealousy (Pred. Nom.; party strife, factionalism), outbursts of anger (Pred. Nom.; wrath, rage), inordinate ambition (Pred. Nom.; strife), dissentions (Pred. Nom.; sedition, conspiracy, party spirit), schisms (Pred. Nom.; cults, heretical sects),

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:20** εἰδωλολατρία, φαρμακεία, ἔχθραι, ἔρις, ζῆλος, θυμοί, ἐριθείαι, διχοστασίαι, αἰρέσεις,

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:20** idolorum servitus veneficia inimicitiae contentiones aemulationes irae rixae dissensiones sectae

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:21** Envyings [lust of the eyes], drunkenness, riotous parties [carousing], and other things of similar nature [works of the flesh], concerning which I am warning you in advance [at this very moment] just as I have warned you before [when I was last with you in person], that they who engage in such things [practice without any inner restraint] will not inherit [share in] the royal power [kingdom] of God.

^{KW} **Gal. 5:21** Envyings, drunkenness, carousings, and the things of such a nature which are like these things, respecting which things I am telling you beforehand even as I told you in advance, that those who are in the habit of practicing such things of that nature shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:21** 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues and completes a list of well-known production of the old sin nature. The thirteenth item is envy, otherwise known as the lust of the eyes. The fourteenth item is drunkenness (Latin: inebriation). The Latin Vulgate has an additional item for murder (homicide), but the word is not in the original Greek. The fifteenth item is riotous parties, including carousing and binges. Then Paul adds a sixteenth generic category (etcetera) that includes all other works of the flesh that are similar to the ones he has been specifically naming. In other words, his list of fifteen items wasn't an all inclusive list; the flesh produces a myriad of similar worthless and sinful production that he is not listing specifically but they are also included. He warned them about this type of sinful behavior (Constative Aorist tense) when he was with them face-to-face. This is not the first time they have heard this lecture. But since there is obviously still a problem with this type of activity, he is warning them again, right now at this very moment (Dramatic Present tense), so they will have no excuse when divine discipline ultimately arrives.

Those believers who engage in such activities (Iterative Present tense) on a regular basis, ignoring the inner restraint of the mentorship of the Holy Spirit, will not inherit the kingdom of God (Predictive Future tense). This warning has absolutely nothing to do with losing your salvation. Believers cannot lose their salvation no matter what they do (doctrine of eternal security). The word "inherit" means to take possession of or to share in something. The Greek word "basileia" means royal power, kingdom or rule. The Kingdom of God is righteousness produced in the believer by the filling of the Holy Spirit. The Kingdom of God is not justification. Failure to understand this important doctrine has destroyed many Christian walks and has created some of the most abominable, legalistic heresies. Arminian preachers have been trying to send born-again believers back to hell for centuries due to their misunderstanding of the

word “inherit” and their erroneous ideas about the Kingdom of God. So I prefer to translate (legitimately) the word “kingdom” as “royal power,” to hopefully eliminate the confusion between the phrases “Kingdom of Heaven” and the “Kingdom of God” – and to emphasize the experiential nature of the filling of the Spirit (royal power) as opposed to works of the flesh.

The single most important clue to what “inheriting the Kingdom of God” means is the contrast in the next verse. The contrast is not between those who go to hell and those who go to heaven. The contrast is between those who produce works of the flesh from the old sin nature and those who produce fruit from the filling of the Spirit. “Entering” the kingdom is about going to heaven; “inheriting” the kingdom is about “having heaven to go to heaven in.” This is a pericope about experiential sanctification, not about positional justification. Paul begins another list in the next verse, but this time he contrasts the production of the Spirit-filled believer with that of the carnal believer. Forfeiting your inheritance is a reference to losing rewards at the Judgment or Evaluation Seat of Christ, not losing your salvation. Disobedient and sinful believers will still go to heaven, but they will lose their rewards by living a life by the flesh instead of by the Spirit. Losing your inheritance (rewards) is not the same thing as losing your place in heaven, so quit using this verse as an illegitimate totality transfer to put born-again believers in hell.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul does not mean that a person who commits one of these sins will not enter heaven. It does mean, if he commits such a sin and persists in it without confessing and receiving cleansing (1 John 1:9), he will lose his right to rule with Christ. Those walking in such a state, without their sin confessed, face eternal consequences if their Lord should suddenly appear and find them unprepared. They will truly be ashamed “before Him at His coming” (1 John 2:28) ... The notion of merit and obedience is connected with the inheritance. There is no contextual justification for assuming that those in danger of losing their inheritance are non-Christians who have only professed faith in Christ. That is a theological notion, derived from the doctrine of perseverance in holiness, which must be forced into the text. If inheriting the kingdom refers to going to heaven, then the apostle’s sublime exhortation to these believers is reduced to the banal observation: “Remember, non-Christians do not go to heaven.” A profound thought! And one which would have little relevance to these Galatian Christians who (Gal. 5:24) “belong to Christ Jesus.” (J. Dillow) The position of being a child of God is, indeed, not forfeitable, but not the total fullness of the heavenly birthright, the inheritance. (E. Sauer)

Are we to say that anybody who does any of these things (e.g. envying, strife) is not going to heaven? Not at all. But such things as covetousness, foolish talking, as well as sexual immorality forfeit one’s inheritance in God’s kingdom. (R. Kendall) In Matthew 25:34 we find once again that inheriting the kingdom is conditioned on obedience and service to the King, a condition far removed from the NT teaching of justification by faith alone for entrance into heaven ... Inheriting the kingdom does not refer to the entrance into life at regeneration; these sheep are saints already. Subsequent to becoming saints, they will enter into eternal life. They (faithful Christians) are entering into an enriched experience of that life which they have already received at regeneration. (J.

Dillow) The Kingdom of Heaven is justification; the Kingdom of God is salvation. (K. Lamb) While “entering” the kingdom has often been equated with “inheriting” the kingdom, there is no semantic or exegetical basis for the equality. Even in English we acknowledge a distinction between entering and inheriting. A tenant, for example, may live or enter a landowner’s great estate, but he does not own or inherit it. To inherit means to “possess.” (J. Dillow)

There is no reason to assume that entering the kingdom and living there is the same thing as owning it and ruling in it. The heirs of the kingdom are its owners and rulers not just its residents. (J. Dillow) In other words, salvation is unchangeable but our inheritance in the kingdom of God is not unchangeable. Once saved, always saved, but our inheritance in God’s kingdom may change considerably. (R. Kendall) The loss of one’s inheritance is not the same as a loss of salvation. Yet there is a real danger. It is possible for Christians to lose their inheritance. Esau forfeited his inheritance, but he was still Isaac’s son. He did not forfeit his relationship to his father. Furthermore, at the end of his life Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau regarding their future. (J. Dillow) Doubtless, birthright [inheritance right] is not identical with sonship. Esau remained Isaac’s son even after he had rejected his birthright. In fact, he received, in spite of his great failure, a kind of secondary blessing. (E. Sauer) A Christian can deny his inheritance rights. While this is not the same as losing one’s justification, the consequences for eternity are serious. The apostle tells us that at the Judgment Seat of Christ our works will be revealed by fire (1 Cor. 3:13). It is possible for a Christian’s life to be burned up because the building materials were wood, hay, and stubble. Only those works done in obedience to the Lord, out of proper motivation and in dependence upon Him (gold, silver, and precious stones), will survive the searing heat! Some will survive with very little to carry with them into eternity. (J. Dillow)

Three things, according to Paul, are characteristic of these “flesh works”: (a) They all violate the love which is the constitutive principle of the kingdom of God. (b) They are done in the name of freedom, but they enslave those who delude themselves with such a misconception of liberty. (c) They cannot be eradicated by law, but only by the Spirit of God ... The real issue is the question of control. Who is in control, the Spirit or the flesh? The seat of evil and of good is not in the flesh, but in the will. (R. Stamm) The society that Cain founded was so filled with violence that, after the Flood, God instituted capital punishment for the crime of murder. That punishment was formally ratified in the Mosaic Law. God has never revoked this requirement that society execute the murderer. It is ratified in Paul’s letter to the church in the legislative capital of the world (Romans 13:1-4). One reason why murder is so common in our modern society is that modern sociologists think that they know better than God does. They are more concerned with the “rights” of the murderer than with the rights of his victim. (J. Phillips)

Paul is not talking about Christians who from time to time commit one of these sins against their better judgment, all the while knowing that they are grieving the Holy Spirit and wishing that they could stop. Rather, he is talking about people whose lives are dominated by sin, who are committed heart and soul to immorality, idolatry, sorcery, and envy. (P. Ryken) Whereas jealousy desires to have what someone else has, envy simply wishes that he could be deprived of it. (J. Phillips) Factions are intrigues, machinations, the use of objectionable methods. (J. Eadie) It is probably that

the apostle thought of the kingdom of God both as present and as future, in the latter case to be inaugurated at the return of Christ. (E. Burton) This is not to say that his list is exhaustive, for he ends it by saying “and the like.” But those he includes seem to belong to at least four realms – sex, religion, society and drink. (J. Stott) The Bible does not prohibit alcohol, any more than it prohibits food, but it always condemns getting drunk. The term used here refers to drinking bouts – what people today would call “getting wasted.” (P. Ryken)

Gal. 5:21 Envyings (Pred. Nom.; lust of the eyes), drunkenness (Pred. Nom.; alcoholism), riotous parties (Pred. Nom.; carousings, binges, nocturnal rioting), and (connective) other things (Dat. Disadv.; works of the flesh) of similar nature (Descr. Nom.), concerning which (Acc. Appos.) I am warning you (Dat. Adv.) in advance (προλέγω, PAI1S, Dramatic; at this very moment) just as (comparative) I have warned you (ellipsis) before (προλέγω, AA11S, Constative; when I was last with you), that (introductory) they (Subj. Acc.) who engage in (πράσσω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Substantial; practice) such things (Acc. Appos.) will not (neg. adv.) inherit (κληρονομέω, FAI3P, Predictive; come into possession of, share in) the royal power (Acc. Dir. Obj.; kingdom) of God (Poss. Gen.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:21** φθόνοι, μέθαι, κῶμοι καὶ τὰ ὅμοια τούτοις, ἃ προλέγω ὑμῖν, καθὼς προεῖπον ὅτι οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες βασιλείαν θεοῦ οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:21** invidiae homicidia ebrietates comesationes et his similia quae praedico vobis sicut praedixi quoniam qui talia agunt regnum Dei non consequentur

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:22** But the fruit [production] of the Spirit is virtue love, inner happiness, spiritual prosperity [relaxed mental attitude], longsuffering [stability of temper], gentleness [generosity], kindness [grace-oriented behavior], faithfulness [doctrinal confidence],

^{KW} **Gal. 5:22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit (Latin: fructose) of the Spirit. The word “fruit” (collective singular) refers to spiritual production, thoughts and behavior generated in the filling of the Spirit. Paul lists this nine-fold fruit here and in the following verse. Seven of them are mentioned in this passage. They are virtue or impersonal love, inner happiness, maintaining a relaxed mental attitude due to spiritual prosperity, longsuffering or having a stable temper, being gentle or generous, kindness or grace-oriented behavior, and faithfulness or trustworthiness exhibited through the faith rest drill.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In introducing this list of character traits of the Christian, Paul uses the singular “karpos” (fruit), whereas in speaking of the flesh-works he used the plural “ta erga” (works). Each fruit of the Spirit was simply love in another form, a revelation of the character of God through Christ and through the Christians who produced it ... Those who bore this fruit turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6), and the enemy did not know how to deal with such unheard of patience and persistence. (R. Stamm) Longsuffering is the capacity of self-restraint in the face of provocation. The person who has developed the fruit of long-suffering does not rush to retaliate or avenge a wrong suffered. Paul uses the word longsuffering to describe the way God still holds His hand back from visiting His wrath upon the human race for its terrible sins. God’s longsuffering is not to be mistaken for weakness, indulgence, or indifference. On the contrary, people who abuse this feature of God’s character are really storing up wrath for themselves to be visited surely and certainly at last upon the unrepentant. (J. Phillips)

There is a reason why the flesh produces such bad behavior. It is simply “doing what comes naturally.” The sinful nature produces sin because it was a bad tree to start with. The Spirit, by contrast, is a good tree producing lush and abundant virtue. We do not grow this fruit on our own. This is why it is called the fruit of the Spirit rather than the works of the Spirit. This does not mean that the Spirit issues a command for every situation. Indeed, if we think of this list as a how-to guide for the Christian life, we are in danger of slipping back into works-righteousness. Remember, we are not under the law. The Holy Spirit does not produce fruit in the Christian life without our cooperation. (P. Ryken) The word “fruit” indicates more plainly even than “work” that the issue in this matter is not what man himself can do. A fruit is not something that is made or done. It comes up out of a definite principle, in this instance, the principle of the Spirit. The singular stresses the fact that what the Spirit works constitutes a unity. In all this, human responsibility is not, of course, eliminated. Rather, the possibility is indicated by which this responsibility can be fruitfully assumed. (J. Eadie)

Meekness or gentleness in the Bible is the prerogative of strength, not weakness. Meekness is the attitude of heart that accepts the Lord’s dealings with us as good, perfect, and acceptable, and are not open for dispute or resistance. The Hebrew word for meekness means “to endure with submission what might be evaded,” in contrast to another Hebrew word that means, “to bear what cannot be avoided.” ... Faith has no particular virtue in itself. What is important is the object of our faith. Faith can be misplaced and result in disaster. Ordinary, everyday faith becomes saving, securing, and sanctifying faith when it is placed in the Lord Jesus Christ. (J. Phillips) Fruit is not the result of mechanical effort but the natural expression of life and growth. If we love others we will need no legal restrictions to keep us from injuring them. Law is a useless incumbrance to those who walk after the Spirit. They need no promptings to do good and are above the penalties imposed on evil doers. (A. Knoch)

Notice the contrast: works of the flesh and fruit of the Spirit. The works of the flesh are what you do.

The Ten Commandments were given to control the flesh. But now the Christian life is to produce the fruit of the Spirit ... The fruit is produced by the Lord Jesus using the Spirit of God in our lives. He wants to live His life through us. That is the reason I keep saying that you are never asked to live the Christian life. You are asked to let Him live through you. No believer can live the Christian life himself. The old nature cannot produce the fruit of the Spirit ... Notice it is singular: is, not are. You can argue about the grammar used here, but it happens to be singular in the Greek. This indicates that love is the fruit, and from it stems all other fruits. (J. McGee) The attempt to secure perfect righteousness through obedience, in mere human strength, to any precepts will always fail. Grace provides that its heaven-high standards shall be realized through the energizing power of the Spirit. (L. Chafer)

The Holy Spirit reproduces in us the virtues of Christ when we advance in the sphere of divine power. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) When Galatians 5:22 states that “the fruit of the Spirit is love,” some believers expect the fruit of the Spirit to appear, as if by magic, as soon as they rebound and regain the filling of the Spirit. When a feeling of love for all mankind does not materialize instantaneously, they assume that something is wrong with the rebound technique. They then resort to remorse, penance, self-effacement, or self-reproach in an attempt to deserve God’s forgiveness and feel restored to fellowship with Him. This common practice among immature Christians is an exercise in futility. (ibid) The singular form stresses that these qualities are a unity, like a bunch of grapes instead of separate pieces of fruit. (A. Gaebelein)

Gal. 5:22 But (contrast) the fruit (Subj. Nom.; production) of the Spirit (Abl. Source) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) virtue love (Pred. Nom.), inner happiness (Pred. Nom.), spiritual prosperity (Pred. Nom.; relaxed mental attitude, wellbeing, tranquil assurance), longsuffering (Pred. Nom.; stability of temper, patience, no retaliation), gentleness (Pred. Nom.; generosity), kindness (Pred. Nom.; grace-oriented behavior), faithfulness (Pred. Nom.; doctrinal confidence, faith rest drill in action, dependability),

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:22** ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐστὶν ἀγάπη χαρὰ εἰρήνη, μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη, πίστις

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:22** fructus autem Spiritus est caritas gaudium pax longanimitas bonitas benignitas

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:23** Genuine humility [grace-oriented thinking], self-control [discipline]. The law [precepts] is not in opposition to such things [doctrinal principles].

^{KW} **Gal. 5:23** Meekness, self-control. Against such things as these there is no law.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:23** Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul finished his list of nine-fold fruit or production from the filling of the Spirit by adding genuine humility (Latin: modesty) and disciplined self-control (Latin: continence). Grace-oriented thinking produces grace-oriented behavior. Obviously these two examples of fruit belong in the prior verse. They are all separate examples, yet bunched together as a single fruit from the source of the Spirit. Many commentators emphasize the indwelling of the Spirit in this passage, but the real emphasis is on the filling of the Spirit. There is no guarantee that a believer will actually produce this fruit. All believers are indwelt by the Spirit, but not all believers are continually filled with the Spirit.

The flesh, the world and the devil encourage many believers to live in carnality so that they do not produce this spiritual fruit. In other words, the Holy Spirit is the source of fruit, but your volition determines whether you allow the Spirit to do His job. Paul is also contrasting the precepts of the law against the underlying doctrinal principles of the Spirit. Believers are supposed to walk by principles, not precepts. If you allow the Spirit to express Himself in your life (principle), your spiritual production will be in agreement with the law (precepts) without your having to pursue the law in the flesh. By walking in the Spirit (principle) you fulfill the requirements of the law (precepts), and then some – because life by/in the Spirit is vastly superior to life by/in the flesh.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Persons who embody these virtues cannot be described or handled by law. They represent a quality of life that is above the law. And how may one become a person like that? Not by attempting to cultivate directly the virtues Paul names, but by welcoming Christ, whose coming into a man's life can bring those virtues to him. (R. Stamm) The legalist measures a man by the law and finds him to come short, and so resorts to criticism and condemnation. The believer who knows the grace of God, however, is gracious, tolerant, merciful, longsuffering and kind, and forgiving. The most caustic and condemnatory letters we receive (and we receive plenty of them) are from those ungracious people who object to our preaching of salvation by grace alone, and complete deliverance from the law. (M. DeHaan) The mind of Christ, or Bible doctrine in the soul, is the material the Spirit uses to manufacture the virtues of Christ in our lives (Rom. 13:14). In a different metaphor, doctrine is the nutrient that the Holy Spirit uses to produce the "fruit of the Spirit." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Although a believer in Christ still has the potential for grievous sin and personally cannot attain anything corresponding to God's standard of sanctification, yet because of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit and His power and direction, a Christian can progressively grow in sanctification. Although the old nature is present, by the power of the Spirit the new nature can be enabled to manifest the fruit of the Spirit. (J. Walvoord) It is the supreme purpose of the indwelling Spirit to reproduce Christlikeness in the believer. The most comprehensive statement of the reproduction of Christ in the believer is found in Galatians 5:22-23 ... The way to a victorious life is not by self-development; it is through a walk in the Spirit. (L. Chafer) Meekness is not mildness and it is not weakness. Meekness means that you will do God's will, that you are willing to yield your will to the will of God. (J. McGee)

Gal. 5:23 Genuine humility (Pred. Nom.; grace-oriented thinking), self-control (Pred. Nom.; disciplined, temperance, calm poise, dignity). The law (Subj. Nom.; precepts) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnomic) not (neg. adv.) in opposition to (adversative) such things (Gen. Opposition; principles).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:23** πραύτης ἐγκράτεια· κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:23** fides modestia continentia adversus huiusmodi non est lex

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:24** Moreover, those who belong to Christ Jesus [retroactive positional truth] have crucified the flesh [old sin nature] once and for all together with its sufferings and defiling lusts.

^{KW} **Gal. 5:24** And they who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the evil nature with its dispositions and cravings once for all.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:24** And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Positionally, those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed their flesh to the cross (Culminative Aorist tense) once and for all. Experientially, however, the old sin nature still resides within us and continues to fight against the Spirit in our life. What we are attempting to do in experiential sanctification is to bring our spiritual condition up to our position, our sinful state up to the level of our perfect standing in Christ. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we battle the flesh every day of our lives – along with its continual sufferings and defiling lusts. The old sin nature, which resides in the DNA of our flesh, is one tough customer.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

They have not yet obtained a complete victory over it; they still have flesh as well as Spirit in them, and that has its affections and lusts, which continue to give them no little disturbance, but as it does not now reign in their mortal bodies, so as that they obey it in the lusts thereof. (M. Henry) The relation between our faith and the faith of Christ is similarly metaphorical: our faith answers and reflect His – indeed, participates in His – because according to Paul it is God’s design (Rom. 8:29) for us “to be conformed to the image of His Son.” (R. Hays) The doctrine of sanctification is greatly illumined by Paul’s eschatological approach. The conflict between the flesh and the Spirit experienced by believers reflects a struggle not precisely between two parts of each individual but rather between two forces of cosmic proportions. The Spirit of Christ has freed us from sin and death. May we learn to “put to death the misdeeds of the body” as children of God who are led by His Spirit. (W. Kaiser, M. Silva) The act by which they crucified the flesh with its lust is already accomplished in principle; but the outward confirmation of the life must harmonize with the tendency given to the inward life. (R. Jamieson)

The conditions and habits of the mind, we know, have a direct effect on physical health; i.e., the mind can assist in physical healing. But that is only half the story. As the mind helps to heal the body, so the body helps to heal the mind. One's mental health directly affects his physical health; one's physical health affects his mental health. Body and mind are both sacred. The conception which the NT presents is that the body is the temple of the Spirit. The seat of evil is not in the flesh, but in the will. (R. Stamm) The fruit of the Spirit cannot be generated by any energy or efforts of the flesh. The Judaizers were offering the Galatians the Law as a means of restraining the evil tendencies of the flesh. Paul knew only too well that the Law, far from restraining such tendencies, only stimulated them to greater activity. The fruit of the Spirit cannot be produced by any human efforts to keep the commandments. (J. Phillips)

In this union we have a salvation that is not only positional through the cross, and relational through our sustained faith-communion with our Lord, but is also transformational through the regenerating and indwelling Spirit, Who stirs and motivates and empowers us to express our new hearts' desires in new habits of action and reaction constituting Christlike character. Indirectly, to be sure, all of this derives from the atonement, for only in the seedbed of peace with God can this fellowship with Christ and these Christlike habits grow. Directly, however, the transformation springs from the new creation of the heart through union with Christ, as well as the believer's crucifying of the flesh in true repentance and thereafter "keeping in step" with the Spirit (the image embodied in "walk" in Gal. 5:25). When we discuss salvation, all the aspects of it as we have now stated them, plus all three of its tenses (past, present and future) must ever be kept in view. (F. James, III)

This astonishing metaphor illustrates graphically what our attitude to our fallen nature is to be. We are not to coddle or cuddle it, not to pamper or spoil it, not to give it any encouragement or even toleration. Instead we are to be ruthlessly fierce in rejecting it, together with its desires. That is what Paul means, and clearly he chooses the metaphor in order to link the crucifying of our "flesh" with the crucifixion suffered for us by our Saviour. He is telling his readers that being Christ's by faith through the atonement entails repudiating all forms and fancies of future sinning. The idea that since Christ's sacrifice covers all sins, including future sins, as indeed it does, we may now sin freely is out: it is a monstrous mistake. Knowing that Christ was crucified as sin-bearer for us, we crucify sin in our personal moral system for Him. Atonement is thus foundational to Christian holiness. (J. Stott, F. James III) When Christ was crucified, the believer was crucified at the same time. The believer is now joined to the living Christ, and the victory is not by struggling but by surrendering to Christ. (J. McGee)

They [Christians] have not yet obtained a complete victory over it; they still have flesh as well as Spirit in them, and that has its affections and lusts, which continue to give them no little disturbance, but as it does not now reign in their mortal bodies, so as that they obey it in the lusts thereof (Rom. 6:12), so they are seeking the utter ruin and destruction of it, and to put it to the same shameful and ignominious, though lingering death, which our Lord Jesus underwent for our sakes ... Our Christianity not only obliges us to die unto sin, but to live unto righteousness; not only to oppose the works of the flesh, but to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, too. (M. Henry) This does not refer to

self-crucifixion or self-mortification. Rather, it refers to the fact that by means of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Christians were identified with Christ in His death and resurrection. Paul declared that this had been his experience and that of all believers. While co-crucifixion took place potentially at the cross, it becomes effective for believers when they are converted. This does not mean that the sin nature in them is eradicated or even rendered inactive, but that it has been judged, a fact believers should reckon to be true. (D. Campbell)

Gal. 5:24 Moreover (continuative), those (Subj. Nom.) who (Gen. Appos.) belong to (ellipsis) Christ Jesus (Gen. Poss., Rel.; retroactive positional truth) have crucified (σταυρώω, AAI3P, Culminative; nailed to the cross once and for all) the flesh (Acc. Dir. Obj.; old sin nature) together with its sufferings (Dat. Assoc.; passions) and (connective) defiling lusts (Dat. Assoc.; sinful cravings).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:24** οἱ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] τὴν σάρκα ἐσταύρωσαν σὺν τοῖς παθήμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:24** qui autem sunt Christi carnem crucifixerunt cum vitiis et concupiscentiis

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:25** **If we continue to live by means of the Spirit [residence in the sphere of divine power], let us keep on walking [according to precisely correct protocol] by means of the Spirit [function in the sphere of divine power].**

^{KW} **Gal. 5:25** In view of the fact that we are being sustained in spiritual life by the Spirit, by means of the Spirit let us go on ordering our conduct.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:25** If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his explanation on our purpose for remaining on earth. If we continue to reside inside the sphere of divine power by the filling of the Spirit, we should also keep on functioning inside the sphere of divine power by the filling of the Spirit. The protasis of a 1st class condition assumes we are indeed filled with the Spirit (residing in the sphere of divine power) as often as possible. When we sin we exit the sphere of divine power, the filling of the Spirit. When we acknowledge our sins before God (1 John 1:9), we re-enter the sphere of divine power and regain the filling of the Spirit. The iterative present tense points to this as a dotted line; we sin and exit, we confess and reenter, over and over again. The durative present tense points to our goal of converting all the “dots” to a solid line, which means we should try to remain in fellowship (inside the sphere of divine power) as long as possible.

The filling of the Spirit is our spiritual house, our royal palace. We should try to reside in it as much as possible! And not only should we reside in it (Latin: vivify), but we should also (Volitive Subjunctive mood) attempt to walk in it (Latin: ambulate). We should not just sit there

on a chair all day trying to remain filled with the Spirit; we should go about our daily life maintaining the filling of the Spirit wherever we are and whatever we are doing – just as if we were still at home in our royal palace. In fact, since the filling of the Spirit is our royal palace, we are actually trying to take it with us everywhere we go. The Greek word “stoicheo” means walking in an orderly rank, adhering to specific rules. Walking in the Spirit is not a haphazard endeavor. You must adhere to precisely correct divine protocol. The spiritual life for the Church Age believer is outlined in great detail, leaving nothing to chance and allowing no creative human substitutes.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Christ was the foundation of the temple of the Spirit, but Paul and his fellow Christians had to make the blueprints and specifications and furnish the materials and labor for the superstructure. The legalists wanted a building code in which all the plans and decisions were set down in black and white. They would have reduced the gospel to rules by which to walk in assurance and comfort. They argued that most men were not yet ready for Paul’s freedom, and they thought that walking in the Spirit ought to be safeguarded by the directions for walking contained in the Jewish law, lest the Christian be misled by his own fallible aims and desires while imagining that he was doing the will of God. (R. Stamm)

The chiastic construction gives this short statement unusual force. The first clause points out the principal relation to the Spirit. He is the new life-principle of freedom. He grants the effectual power of divine grace which operates through Christ in the believers. The second clause speaks of the activity of believers which they exercise in the strength of the new principle granted them. In accordance with that they must live. The Spirit must also become the norm, the rule, of this manifestation of life. He creates a new life-style. And this new manner of life must be made manifest, must be distinguishable. Paul includes himself. For the believers this walking by the Spirit remains a constantly renewed mandate and a continuous exertion. (J. Eadie)

The Greek term for “keeping in step” comes from the military. It means to stay in formation. First, soldiers would line up in ranks and files. Then, in order to maintain good military discipline, they would stay in line as they marched. Soldiers not only march in formation, but also run in formation. When they do, there is only one thing they have to worry about, which is keeping in step. They do not need to worry about where they are going, or how they will get there. They do not need to guess how much farther they have to go. Their commanding officer will give them their orders as necessary. The only thing soldiers need to know how to do is step in time. It is the same way in the Christian life. The Holy Spirit is God’s drill sergeant. It is His job to keep us in line. As he barks out the cadence, all we have to do is keep our place in the formation, running in step with His commands. (P. Ryken)

The verb signifies walking according to a rule. (J. Eadie) It is a great mistake to suppose that our whole duty lies in passive submission to the Spirit’s control, as if all we had to do was to surrender to His leading. On the contrary, we are ourselves to walk, actively and purposefully, in the right

way. And the Holy Spirit is the path we walk in, as well as the guide who shows us the way. (J. Stott) Walking IN the Spirit implies more dependence on self; walking BY the Spirit properly emphasizes the energizing power within. To walk by the Spirit is to allow the Spirit to be the governing principle in one's life. (H. Vos) The Spirit gives personal guiding, especially by the reason and conscience in connection with the Word. (E. Huxtable)

Gal. 5:25 If (protasis, 1st class condition, assumes it is true) we continue to live (ζῶω, PAI1P, Iterative & Durative, Potential Ind.; residence inside the power sphere) by means of the Spirit (Instr. Means), we should also (adjunctive) keep on walking (στοιχέω, PASubj.1P, Iterative & Durative, Volitive; function inside the power sphere, marching in rank and order according to precisely correct protocol) by means of the Spirit (Instr. Means).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:25** Εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι, πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:25** si vivimus spiritu spiritu et ambulemus

^{LWB} **Gal. 5:26** Let us not be conceited [legalistic pride], provoking [challenging] one another of the same kind [fellow believers], envying [being jealous of] one another of the same kind [fellow believers].

^{KW} **Gal. 5:26** Let us stop becoming vain-glorious, provoking one another, envying one another.

^{KJV} **Galatians 5:26** Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul knows the Galatian believers are having difficulties living and walking by the Spirit because some of them have become conceited due to their attempts to live under the law. Pride and arrogance are the calling card of the legalistic believer. Give the flesh a few rules to live by and it thinks highly of itself for its performance. Once a legalistic believer keeps a few rules for awhile, his arrogance tries to challenge other believers (Iterative Present tense) to live under the law with him. The Volitive Subjunctive mood is a mixture between potentiality and an entreaty. In other words, every believer has the volition to choose in which direction he will go in the Christian life. Paul takes the knowledge of that volition and encourages (entreaty) the Galatian believers not to go in the way of legalism. Walking by means of the Spirit is all about grace mechanics, not attempting to keep the law. You cannot choose to walk by the Spirit and walk by the law at the same time. They are not partners in Church Age experiential protocol; they are antagonists.

Legalistic believers hate grace oriented believers. Grace oriented believers put them to shame because they are living and walking according to precisely correct divine protocol - while the legalist is living and walking outside the Christian way of life. The old sin nature of the legalistic

believer can't stand to see a fellow believer happily walking in freedom by grace. He is sorely jealous (Iterative Present tense) of the believer whose life is making spiritual progress. So he provokes the grace oriented believer. This provocation and jealousy comes and goes as often as the believer leaves the sphere of divine power (filling of the Spirit) and places himself under the law again (trend toward asceticism) or succumbs to the lusts of the flesh (trend toward antinomianism). Whichever pole the believer tends to gravitate towards, whether legalism or antinomianism, once he is out of fellowship he envies the grace-oriented believer and provokes him whenever possible.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Challenging” means daring one another to do things against which some had conscientious scruples, calling each other down. (R. Stamm) A person is vainglorious when he swaggers in vain things, when he brags. Such an attitude is provoking, challenging, precisely because the one is so eager to amount to more than the other. The other side of the same thing is envy, jealousy. The person who wants to be first cannot stand the success of another. Self-glorification goes hand in hand with jealousy and provokes it. (J. Eadie) I know people who base their entire estimate of another's salvation on how the Lord's Day or the so-called Sabbath is spent, while they forget that the worst way to spend the Sabbath or Lord's Day is in finding fault, criticizing and condemning those who do not see eye to eye with them in their legalistic, hairsplitting traditions of men. (M. DeHaan) The Christian life is not a balloon ascension with some great overpowering experience of soaring to the heights. Rather it is a daily walk; it is a matter of putting one foot ahead of the other, in dependence upon the Holy Spirit. (J. McGee)

“Boastfulness” means setting value on things not really valuable, whether possessed, supposed to be possessed, or desired. It is the almost exact antithesis of “sophron” which means seeing things as they are, estimating them at their true value. (E. Burton) This word denotes somebody who has an opinion of himself which is empty, vain or false. He is cherishing an illusion about himself or is just plain conceited ... “Prokaleo” means to challenge somebody to a contest. It implies that we are so sure of our superiority that we want to demonstrate it. So we challenge people to dispute it in order to give ourselves a chance to prove it. (J. Stott) Provocation describes the spirit of defiance which animates rival parties amid the heated atmosphere of religious controversy. (W. Nicoll) He who aspires to the highest rank must of necessity envy all others, and disrespectful, biting, stinging language is the unavoidable consequence. (J. Calvin)

Gal. 5:26 Let us not (neg. particle) be (γίνομαι, PMSbj.1P, Descriptive, Volitive, Deponent) conceited (Pred. Nom.; arrogant and proud due to their attempts to live under the law), provoking (προκαλέω, PMPtc.NMP, Iterative, Modal; challenging) one another of the same kind (Acc. Assoc.; fellow believers), envying (φθονέω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Modal; being jealous of) one another of the same kind (Dat. Assoc.; fellow believers).

^{BGT} **Galatians 5:26** μὴ γινώμεθα κενόδοξοι, ἀλλήλους προκαλούμενοι, ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες.

^{VUL} **Galatians 5:26** non efficiamur inanis gloriae cupidi invicem provocantes invicem invidentes

CHAPTER 6

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:1** Brethren [members of the royal family], if a man is surprised and overtaken by a particular [any will do as an example] transgression [personal weakness], you who are spiritual [spiritually mature] restore such a person [encourage him to confess his sin] by means of a spirit of genuine humility [grace-orientation, poise, dignity], keeping your eyes on yourself so that you are not also tempted to sin [placing you out of fellowship along with the person you are trying to help].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:1** Brethren, if, however, a man be overtaken in a sin, as for you who are the spiritual ones, be restoring such a one in a spirit of meekness, taking heed to yourself lest you also be tempted.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:1** Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul adds a few practical commands (Imperative mood) towards the end of his letter, addressed primarily to those who have matured in Bible doctrine. The phrase “you who are spiritual” refers to those who have walked with the Lord for many years and who have maximum doctrine on the launching pad of their soul. This category of believers is equipped to listen to the problems of young believers and to know how to restore them (Dramatic Present tense) to fellowship. This category of believers has enough doctrine to teach and encourage other believers to acknowledge their sins and re-enter the love complex (filling of the Spirit). Many young believers are often surprised by the strength of their sin nature and are overtaken by some weakness (Potential Subjunctive mood). They get entangled in something from their former life and stumble in their walk with the Lord. Spiritually mature believers should step in and help them out.

This is not a verse for busybodies. This is not a verse that gives you permission to invade the privacy of another believer’s priesthood. Notice some of the requirements Paul adds. The mature believer who offers to assist the believer who is in trouble must do so with a spirit of genuine humility. He must be kind, courteous, considerate and grace-oriented. He (or she) must also keep his eyes on himself (Iterative Present tense), making sure he doesn’t stumble and fall into sin with the believer he is trying to help! Just because you are a spiritually mature believer doesn’t mean you have eradicated the sin nature residing in your own body. The last thing you want to happen when helping a fellow believer is to listen to his story and be tempted to join him in his

sin (Culminative Aorist tense). If the problem at hand is one that you also face on a regular basis, be careful that you aren't pulled out of fellowship, too.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word "overtaken" seems to suggest that temptation comes upon us unawares. Most sin is committed not by deliberate intention or planning but in weakness and surprise, in the passion of a rash moment. And who are quickest to judge those who err? The ones who are only slightly, if any, better than the man who is recognized as fallen. People who are weak at the very same point as the fallen are often his severest critics ... And who are slowest to condemn and the most charitable in judgment? Those whose ideals are highest, those who are living on higher levels themselves. The loftiest are the most considerate. The holiest are the most understanding ... They do not have to fall into the ditch themselves in order to be able to help the sinner, but they do need the sympathy for him which avoids snap judgments and takes into account all the circumstances that led to his fall. Paul warns against over-confidence: the spiritual too must be vigilant against temptation, but in such a way as not to live in morbid fear of falling. (R. Stamm) This is not a task for such as are not able to master their own flesh. Each case may take time and patience ... Pour in oil and wine and with gentle fingers bind up the wounds. (R. Lenski)

The Greeks used the word "restore" to describe the action of a physician setting a broken bone. Such a procedure called for knowledge, skill, and care. It was not a task for just anyone. Mishandling of a fracture could make it worse. Hence, Paul declares that "you which are spiritual" must undertake the task of correcting faults and failings among the brethren. (J. Phillips) Being spiritual does not automatically protect one against sin. (H. Ridderbos) Those ruled by the "sarx" could not do this duty; the spirit of provocation and envy already referred to quite unfitted them for such delicate work; they might only taunt, rebuke, and glory over an offending brother taken "flagrante delicto." The "pneumatikoi" were therefore the best class in the church – the ripe, the experienced, the advanced in Christian excellence. (J. Eadie) It is easy to talk about the fruit of the Spirit while doing very little about it. So Christians need to learn that it is in the concrete situations, rather than in the emotional highs, that the reality of the Holy Spirit in their lives is demonstrated. (A. Gaebelein)

Setting sinners back to rights is a job for Christians who have the fruit of the Spirit in abundant supply. The reason only spiritual people should restore sinners is that only spiritual people can ... Even spiritual people may stumble. The particular temptation that Paul seems to have in mind is spiritual pride. It is hard not to feel at least a little self-righteous when we are correcting someone else's sin. The more we learn about someone else's depravity, the easier it is to look down on him or her. This temptation must be resisted, and the way to resist it is by examining our own hearts. We are as prone to fall into sin as anyone else, maybe more so. (P. Ryken) Meekness in the Bible is the prerogative of strength, not weakness. Meekness is the attitude of heart that accepts the Lord's dealings with us as good, perfect, and acceptable and are not open for dispute or resistance ... Self-control in all things was used to describe the person who had powerful passions but kept them under control. (J. Phillips)

This is exactly the predicament which many Christians are in today, since they do not have an intelligent understanding of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the needful and correct adjustment of the Christian to the Spirit, and are consequently depending upon self effort to obey the ethics of the Pauline epistles, or the legal enactments of the Mosaic Law. (K. Wuest) It is harder to get a Christian back in fellowship with his Lord, the longer he is out of fellowship ... A child of God cannot put himself back into fellowship with the Lord Jesus, but must go to the great Physician of souls, confess that sin, be cleansed from its defilement, and be restored by his Lord. (K. Wuest) To place him in his former condition will never be accomplished by violence, or by a disposition to accuse, or by fierceness of manner or language; and consequently, we must display a gentle and meek spirit, if we intend to heal our brother. (J. Calvin)

The more you are mindful of the Lord's upholding hand, the more compassionate will you be unto those with feeble knees. Call to mind how patiently the Lord has borne with you. Remember how ignorant you were but a short time ago, and expect not too much from babes in Christ. Has not the Lord often recovered you when you did wander? Have not your brethren still occasion to bear with many blemishes in you? If so, will you be hyper-critical and censorious toward them! Despise not small grace in any, but seek to encourage, to counsel, to help. Christ does not break the bruised reed, nor must we. (A. Pink) Brazen courage enough to force one into fleshly undertakings is not the condition of true Christian service. (L. Chafer) He leaves it to the readers' own conscience whether or not they answer to this designation. (M. Vincent) The thought is that of someone running from sin but sin, being faster, overtakes and catches him. (D. Campbell)

Gal. 6:1 Brethren (Voc. Address; spiritually mature members of the royal family), if (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe he is, maybe he isn't") a man (Subj. Nom.) is surprised and overtaken (προλαμβάνω, APSubj.3S, Constatative, Potential) by a particular (Dat. Spec.; any one will do as an example) transgression (Dat. Disadv.; personal weakness, stumbles in his spiritual walk with the Lord), you (Subj. Nom.) who (Nom. Appos.) are (ellipsis) spiritual (Pred. Nom.; mature) restore (καταρτίζω, PAImp.2P, Dramatic, Command; train) such a person (Acc. Adv.; teach and encourage him to acknowledge his sin and get back into fellowship) by means of a spirit (Instr. Means) of genuine humility (Gen. Descr.; grace-orientation, courteous, considerate, poise, dignity), keeping your eyes on (σκοπέω, PAPtc.NMS, Iterative, Modal; considering, contemplating) yourself (Acc. Dir. Obj.) so that you (Subj. Nom.) are not (neg. particle) also (adjunctive) tempted to sin (πειράζω, APSubj.2P, Culminative, Purpose; enticed, put to the test).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:1** Ἀδελφοί, ἐὰν καὶ προλημφθῇ ἄνθρωπος ἐν τινι παραπτώματι, ὑμεῖς οἱ πνευματικοὶ καταρτίζετε τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος, σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν μὴ καὶ σὺ πειρασθῆς.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:1** fratres et si praeoccupatus fuerit homo in aliquo delicto vos qui spirituales estis huiusmodi instruite in spiritu lenitatis considerans te ipsum ne et tu tempteris

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:2** Keep on bearing patiently one another's burdens [listening to the important issues of other believer's lives], and in this manner you will fulfill the mandate of Christ [to reside in the love complex and function in virtue love].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:2** One another's burdens be constantly bearing, and thus you will fully satisfy the requirements of the law of the Christ.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:2** Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The primary mandate of Christ is for all believers to reside and function inside the love complex (with virtue love). The love complex is synonymous with the sphere of divine power, the divine dynasphere, the continuous filling of the Holy Spirit, the royal palace, etc. If you are able to reside and function in this complex, you will fulfill (Predictive Future tense) His primary mandate for the Christian life. But Paul adds another piece to this experiential puzzle. He commands all believers (Imperative mood) to keep on bearing patiently the burdens, weights and important milestones in each other's lives. The iterative present tense points to a habit, a manner of life, something that happens now and then during your earthly sojourn. This is a follow-up to his enumeration of the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. No matter what stage you are at in the Christian life, you will be experiencing or will experience both positive and negative events that are important to you. On occasion, wouldn't you like to share them with somebody?

This is not a passage addressed to pastors; it is addressed to all believers. So don't use this verse to unload all your problems on your pastor! His primary responsibility is to study and teach so you can take his teaching and solve your own problems with it. Nor is this the durative present tense as some babes in Christ would like for it to be. That interpretation would seem to allow others to take every minute of your life to "dump" their daily problems on you. This is not a mandate to allow everyone in your periphery to unload their cares on you without consideration. Nor is this a verse that tells you to broadcast your sins to everyone in the congregation! Believers are commanded to unload their cares on the Lord in prayer, not on fellow believers. This verse is about sharing the big ups-and-downs (milestones) you experience in your walk with the Lord, some of which will warn or encourage fellow believers should similar things happen to them.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The law of Christ is not a law in the legal sense of the word, but the life principle of all who take up His cross of creative suffering. (R. Stamm) The spiritual life is not something that one defines for oneself. Rather, it is a life defined by the existence and character of the one true God. Contrary to what some Christians seem to think, this spiritual life is not something that we produce within us through some ritual or method. To put it very simply, spiritual life flows from the third person of the Trinity. (P. Ryken) Spirit dominated saints should follow the responsibility of rescuing their brethren who have put themselves under legalism, from an abject slavery to law, and of transferring their

dependence again upon the Spirit. (K. Wuest) There are some burdens you can share; there are burdens that you must bear and you cannot share them with anyone. (J. McGee)

In the Church Age the operative divine law is not the Mosaic Law but “the law of Christ.” This also is called “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:2), which I designate the protocol plan of God for life in the divine dynasphere. Christ fulfilled the entire Mosaic Law in the power of the Holy Spirit in the prototype divine dynasphere. The Church Age believer obeys the new “law of Christ” by following His precedent: filled with the Spirit in the operational divine dynasphere. Because Christ fulfilled and abrogated the Mosaic Law (Heb. 8:13, 10:9), practices instituted for the nation of Israel are not included in the post-salvation plan of God for the Church Age. They do not contribute to the Christian way of life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 6:2 Keep on bearing patiently (βαστάζω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; sharing) one another's (Gen. Poss.; of the same kind: believers) burdens (Acc. Dir. Obj.; weights, important matters in life), and (continuative) in this manner (adv.) you will fulfill (ἀναπληρώω, FAI2P, Predictive) the mandate (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of Christ (Abl. Source; to reside in the love complex and function in virtue love).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:2** Ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:2** alter alterius onera portate et sic adimplebitis legem Christi

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:3** For if anyone thinks [self-evaluation] that he is someone important [a spiritual giant], when he is a nobody, he is deceiving himself [arrogant self-deception].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:3** For if anyone thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he is deceiving himself.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:3** For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Anyone who contemplates helping a fellow believer with his problems should make sure he is spiritually mature enough to offer sound biblical advice - and strong enough to avoid entering into sin himself. There is obviously an important spiritual self-evaluation necessary before offering to help someone out. Paul uses a 2nd class conditional clause which means his hypothetical person thinks (Static Present tense) he is a spiritual giant and is qualified to help a fellow believer who is in trouble. But in reality, this believer has erroneously evaluated himself; he is really a spiritual neophyte - a nobody. He doesn't have enough doctrine to handle his own problems let alone help somebody else with theirs.

This person is deceiving himself (Static Present tense) and is asking for divine discipline. He has

been seduced (Latin) by his own inflated opinion of his spiritual status or was goaded by another spiritual moron to intrude where angels dare not tread. The problems and sins of his fellow believer will likely be placed on his head (cursing by association) for intruding where he didn't belong and where he wasn't sufficiently prepared to handle the situation appropriately. Having a desire to help others out of compassion is not enough. Having a spiritual gift of encouragement or helps or mercies is not enough. If you aren't saturated with Bible doctrine, keep your mouth shut and let someone with spiritual knowledge and experience handle the situation. What you can do to help in the matter is called prayer.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Satisfaction with self makes poor helpers for those in need of fraternal support. (R. Lenski) Seen by himself, no one amounts to anything, measured by the true, divine norm. And in the positive sense, all that anyone is he is by the grace of God. That is something which an arrogant self-inflation cannot see. Else self-esteem would not exist. Consequently, too, it exalts itself on the basis of nothing, and so its folly becomes manifest. (H. Ridderbos) Perhaps Paul's choice of the word here is governed by the fact that such a person has been too clever. He has succeeded in taking himself in, although deceiving nobody else. (R. Cole) It is not remarkable that a man should be the dupe of others, but strange that he should be the dupe of himself. It is a fatal delusion while it lasts, for it stands in the way of all improvement. He lives in a fool's paradise. (E. Huxtable) Legalism brings in a sense of "I have attained" and all manner of error creeps in after it. Self-righteousness creates a vacuum that all manner of doctrines of demons may enter. (K. Lamb)

Mankind's great enemy is a thought called arrogance. Arrogance can inflate or deflate man's opinion of himself. He thinks he is better or worse than he actually is. Both self-aggrandizement and self-denigration distort and deny reality, which is the realm in which God's plan is effective. God's grace deals with us as we are, but an egocentric believer who does not live in objective reality will never use God's grace provisions to advance in the protocol plan. There is a grim irony in arrogance. A person who thinks more of himself than he has a right to think is actually depriving himself of his greatest advantages, the benefits that come with the fulfillment of God's plan for his life ... Arrogance is illusion, unreality, and when perpetuated, arrogance becomes insanity. The preventative is the truth of Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 6:3 For (explanatory) if (protasis, 2nd class condition, "but he's not") anyone (Subj. Nom.) thinks (δοκέω, PAI3S, Static; considers, supposes) that he is (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Inf. as Dir. Obj. of Verb) someone important (Pred. Nom.; a spiritual giant, arrogance), when he is (εἰμί, PAPtc.NMS, Descriptive, Temporal) a nobody (Pred. Nom.; erroneous self-evaluation), he is deceiving (φρεναπατάω, PAI3S, Static) himself (Acc. Disadv.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:3** εἰ γὰρ δοκεῖ τις εἶναί τι μηδὲν ὧν, φρεναπατᾷ ἑαυτόν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:3** nam si quis existimat se aliquid esse cum sit nihil ipse se seducit

LWB Gal. 6:4 But let each person put his own [spiritual] production to the test for the purpose of approval [self-examination according to divine standards], and then he will have reasonable grounds for peace and inner happiness with respect to himself alone [his success in the spiritual life in the privacy of his priesthood is his own responsibility], and not with respect to another [comparing his successes and failures to another person's life].

KW Gal. 6:4 But his own work let each one put to the test and thus approve, and then with respect to himself alone will he have a ground for glorying, and not with respect to the other one [with whom he had compared himself],

KJV Galatians 6:4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Every believer is responsible for his own spiritual life first and foremost. Nobody is responsible for your progress in the Christian life but you. If you reject doctrine and fall flat on your face, you cannot blame your pastor, your spouse or your best friends. And only when you “get your act together” are you truly able to help another believer in their spiritual walk. So Paul encourages each believer (Imperative of Entreaty) to put his own spiritual production to the test (Iterative Present tense). This means you should be examining your life on a daily basis, looking for successes according to divine standards (divine good) and acknowledging failures (human good). The only way you will ever know if you have succeeded is by measuring your thoughts and activities against the Word of God.

Paul is encouraging every believer to become responsible for his own spiritual life. The person who knows he is filled with the Spirit and is walking daily by correct protocol will have reasonable grounds for having the inner happiness and peace (Predictive Future tense) that comes from a successful walk with the Lord. This is encouraging to those believers who have been living this way for a prolonged period of time (“those who are spiritual”) and to those who are just beginning the Christian life (neophyte believers or recovering reversionists). Although we attend Bible class with others and share our life with select individuals in our periphery, the Christian walk is a solitary experience. In the end, it is just you and the Lord. Paul emphasizes this by the phrase “with respect to himself” and the word “alone.”

How well are you doing in your walk with the Lord? Nobody really knows but you and Him. There may be occasional external things that a friend may observe and say, “You’re doing splendid.” But don’t make the mistake of comparing and measuring your progress or failure with another believer’s life. The Christian way of life is not a competition. We are not playing king of the spiritual mountain. Your spiritual life is between you and the Lord, not between you and Mister Jones who lives down the street. Outwardly, Mr. Jones may look like he is prosperous, but inwardly he may be shriveled up spiritually. Nobody is going to stand with you at the Evaluation Seat of Christ. You will not be able to call witnesses to the stand for your defense.

The Lord provides you with the circumstances in your life, different from everyone else, and He alone will sort out your successes and failures when that time arrives.

The accusative of general reference “with respect to another” can also refer to your not being responsible for another person’s spiritual life. If you are the mature believer who is trying to help the struggling believer, you must know that in the end he is responsible for his own spiritual life – not you. You cannot enter his body and live life for him. You cannot control his volition and ensure that he properly utilizes doctrine to solve his problems. Your inner happiness should remain because of the spiritual life you are living, and not dissipate because the person you are trying to help continues to fail in spite of your sound, biblical advice. Do not let the struggling believer cause you to sin, nor allow him to interrupt your inner happiness. If this begins to occur, it is time to switch to impersonal love and invoke the doctrine of separation. If you “get in over your head,” your first priority is to preserve your own walk with the Lord.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“To kauchema” is not rejoicing, but the inner satisfaction and exultation of which rejoicing is the manifestation; and “boast” is an outward expression of the inner “glory” which comes from true self-knowledge and consciousness of work done so well that it stands the test of time and meets the Master’s approval. Justified by the data from the laboratory, this kind of “glorying” is never out of place; yet the man who is entitled to it prefers to keep it to himself, whereas “boasting” is always lacking in good manners and is never quite free from the implication of being excessive or unjustified. (R. Stamm) Every life, in one sense, is separated, it is isolated, it is segregated, it is quarantined from every other life. There are certain burdens that you and I will have to bear alone. You will have to suffer alone. No one can suffer for you. You will have to face certain problems alone. (J. McGee)

Those who are determined to live the Christian life should also mind their own business. This is simply a caution to everyone who is engaged in some form of Christian ministry. (J. Phillips) The measure he must apply in making the proof is the true norm given by God Himself. To use the faults of others as a norm is to make it too easy for oneself! (H. Ridderbos) Galatians 6:1-5 shows how easily Paul can move from the need for spiritual self-concern (looking to yourselves in vs. 1) to concern for others (bear one another’s burdens in vs. 2) and back again (let each one examine his own work in vs. 4). (M. Silva)

Gal. 6:4 But (contrast) let each person (Subj. Nom.) put his own (Poss. Gen.) production (Acc. Dir. Obj.; spiritual) to the test for the purpose of approval (δοκιμάζω, PAImp.3S, Iterative, Entreaty; self-examination according to divine standards), and (continuative) then (temporal) he will have (έχω, FAI3S, Predictive) reasonable grounds for peace and inner happiness (Acc. Adv.; grounds for boasting) with respect to himself (Acc. Gen. Ref.) alone (Acc. Spec.; his success in the spiritual life), and (adversative) not (neg. adv.) with respect to another (Acc.

Gen. Ref.; comparing his life with another person's life).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:4** τὸ δὲ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμαζέτω ἕκαστος, καὶ τότε εἰς ἑαυτὸν μόνον τὸ καύχημα ἔξει καὶ οὐκ εἰς τὸν ἕτερον.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:4** opus autem suum probet unusquisque et sic in semet ipso tantum gloriam habebit et non in altero

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:5** For each person [believers only] will endure the evaluation of his own private spiritual production [is responsible for his own achievements and failures in the spiritual life at the Evaluation Seat of Christ].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:5** For each shall bear his own private burden.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:5** For every man shall bear his own burden.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Every believer will be responsible for his own spiritual production at the Evaluation (Judgment) Seat of Christ. The Greek word “phortion” is a shipping term which means goods, weight, duties, tasks, or obligations. The emphasis is not on how troublesome living the spiritual life is or how difficult it will be to stand before the Lord for evaluation in that day. The emphasis is on individual responsibility for what you accomplish in the spiritual life. Every believer will stand alone and receive an evaluation of his own spiritual life (Predictive Future tense) at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Nobody else will stand with you. This will be a face-to-face event with the Lord and none of your friends or family will be called to support you. Your spiritual cargo, whether large or tiny, will be yours at inspection time.

You will not be able to request assistance from the various pastors you have learned from. You will not be able to blame anyone for your lack of spiritual growth - just yourself. The root word “burden” emphasizes the negative aspect of losing rewards due to your failure to utilize Bible doctrine in your life. But on the positive side, those who have studied the Word of God and applied it to their life with continued success will be rewarded for their achievement. The pastors and teachers you learned from may share in your success due to their faithful teaching of the Word, but in the end, you and only you made the daily decisions to listen and apply Bible doctrine to your life. Every opportunity you received to learn and apply Bible doctrine in your life will be reviewed by Jesus Christ. You will be unable to offer any excuses, bribes or cons.

The Greek word “idion” means personal, individual or private. The activities at the Evaluation Seat of Christ will be public, but when it is your turn, you will be alone for the evaluation. There will be no defense attorney standing in for you. You will not be able to turn to your spouse, pastor, or friend and ask them to speak for you. You will not be able to point to your pastor and say, “I had a great teacher, so please take his spiritual maturity into consideration in my case.” You will not be able to point to your spouse in the crowd and say, “My wife studied the Bible

every day and I was her husband, so please take her spiritual maturity into consideration in my case.” You cannot live off the doctrine in someone else’s soul and they cannot live off the doctrine in your soul. Your decision to accept or reject doctrine on a daily basis is yours alone.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Each one of us has a job to do which we only can do. All of us have our own talents, gifts and opportunities. If we fail in our personal faithfulness, no one else can help bear the burden, for it is ours alone. This is the meaning of “Every man shall bear his own burden.” As the preceding verse indicates, it has to do with work. (M. DeHaan) His own burdens will absorb his whole attention, and will leave him no time to compare himself with others. (M. Vincent) Sin is that burden which we can neither share nor bear. It is too heavy for us. There is only one place you can get rid of it, and that is at the cross of Christ. He alone can lift the heavy burden of sin today, and it is because He paid the penalty for it. He alone can lift it; He alone can take it from you. (J. McGee)

Each man has certain responsibilities imposed on him individually, which he cannot throw off. (J. Lightfoot) At the great day (Judgment Seat of Christ) every one shall be reckoned with according as his behavior here has been. Judgment will proceed, and the sentence pass, not according to the sentiments of the world concerning us, or any ungrounded opinion we may have of ourselves, or upon our having been better or worse than others, but according as our state and behavior have really been in the sight of God. (M. Henry) Everything that we have done in the flesh as a Christian is to be judged to see whether or not we receive a reward. It is the works of the believer that are to be judged at the Bema Seat. (J. McGee) We cannot do a service which God has assigned to another. In this each one must bear his own load. (A. Knoch)

Gal. 6:5 **For** (explanatory) **each person** (Subj. Nom.; believers only) **will endure the evaluation of** (βαστάζω, FAI3S, Predictive; bear the judgment of, put up with, go through, pay the penalty for) **his own private** (Acc. Poss.; individual) **spiritual production** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; achievement, burden, responsibility, obligation).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:5** ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσει.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:5** unusquisque enim onus suum portabit

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:6** Therefore, let the one [student] who is repeatedly being taught the Word [Bible doctrine] keep on sharing in the spiritual enterprise by concentrating on the one [pastor-teacher] who is continually teaching in the sphere of all [the whole realm of doctrine] good things [the entire Bible, verse-by-verse].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:6** Moreover, let the one who is being taught the Word constantly be holding fellowship with the one who is teaching in all good things.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:6** Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

One of my pet peeves is to question the erroneous concept of fellowship held by almost every congregation of believers I hear about or come across. Social life with other believers is not the true meaning of fellowship. It may or may not be beneficial to those involved, but it is not the type of fellowship commanded (Imperative mood) or advised (Entreaty) by the Apostle Paul. True Christian fellowship is described in this verse as the spiritual enterprise designed by God for teaching and listening to Bible doctrine. God provides the teachers and God provides the listeners. When both teaching and listening to Bible doctrine is occurring, that is true fellowship. Fellowship is centered on the dissemination of the Word, not social life. The sobering thought of the Evaluation Seat of Christ in the prior verse is met by Paul's encouragement for all of us to refocus our priorities to learning Bible doctrine, the mind of Christ.

This verse highlights the primary requirements for both the teacher and the listener – namely, faithfulness. The pastor or teacher who is continually teaching the Word of God (Iterative Present tense) is being faithful. The member of the congregation or Bible study who is concentrating on what is being taught and keeps on coming back for more (Durative Present tense) is being faithful. This is the divinely designed spiritual enterprise for the Church Age. The true spiritual enterprise is not a building, a tent, a chapel, a synagogue, a temple or a seminary. These are just meeting places, occasions for exercising the goal of the true spiritual enterprise – teaching and learning Bible doctrine. True fellowship is with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This fellowship is centered on the Word and prayer.

Going to the church basement for a pot luck supper is not fellowship. Eating dinner after church with other believers is not fellowship. Sharing stories about your life over coffee is not fellowship. Engaging in sports or listening to music with other believers is not fellowship. Fellowship is centered on the Word. The spiritual enterprise designed by God is reciprocal and centered on the Word – teaching and listening. The faithful listener keeps on listening to Bible doctrine and does not peel-off to do other things that seem more important at the time. The faithful listener does not attend Bible study only when his favorite book is being taught. The faithful pastor or teacher does not preach mini-sermons that merely skim the surface of his favorite portions of Scripture. The faithful pastor or teacher covers “all” good things. He teaches the whole realm of doctrine, the entire Bible verse-by-verse.

True fellowship, then, has several requirements. There must be a faithful teacher. There must be a faithful listener. The Word of God must be communicated by some means, either face-to-face or by book, radio, tape or television. Both parties (preferably) should be filled with the Spirit. Fellowship in the Word does not require the teacher and the listener to be in each other's physical presence. If that were the case, why did Paul and others write epistles? If physical proximity were a communication requirement, reading the Bible would be a waste of time. Quit being legalistic over the means of communication and concentrate on the frequency (every day)

and quality and quantity (the whole realm of doctrine) of what you are hearing or reading! You need Bible doctrine every day – that’s what the iterative present tense tells us. You need to learn Bible doctrine over an extended period of time without bailing out – that’s what the durative present tense tells us. And the pastor needs to cover the whole realm of doctrine, the entire Bible verse-by-verse – that’s what the word “all” tells us. These are the requirements for true fellowship.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Teaching the Word – this is as simple and as clear a job description of the gospel ministry as there is. These days ministers are tempted to perform many other jobs. They have become salesmen, businessmen, musicians, entertainers, comedians, janitors ... anything and everything except preachers. But a true minister is nothing more and nothing less than a minister of the Word. The center of any gospel ministry must be the exposition of Holy Scripture. (P. Ryken) The “logon,” an accusative of content, denotes the substance of the instruction communicated by the teacher. It is undoubtedly to be taken here as an inclusive term for the Christian message. It is in the nature of the case that the instruction given by the local teachers must have been in large part that which Paul had communicated to them. (E. Burton) “Good things” is good doctrines, excellent truths, the wholesome words of Christ, which he is entrusted with and has a knowledge and experience of; and who faithfully imparts them, and conceals and keeps back nothing, but declares the whole counsel of God, all that he knows, and that is good and profitable. (J. Gill)

The verb “katechein” signifies to din a thing in another person’s mind with inculcation or constant repetition. It does not denote instruction by question and answer in particular, but simply the inculcating of knowledge ... The expression “the Word” is used without any further qualification to designate the Christian doctrine ... It is implied that the ministers were teachers, not mere celebrants of ritualistic devotion or spectacle. They taught orally, as the word signifies. It was thus that the early disciples were nourished up in the words of good doctrine. It is implied that the Word of God was their textbook. The early Christians were “taught in the Word.” They had the Scriptures in their own tongue, and were in a position to test the teaching of their guides as well as to try the spirits generally. (E. Huxtable) Although each man is thus individualized as regards his burdens, Christian fellowship in all morally good things is to be maintained between the teacher and the taught. The passage is often explained as an injunction to provide for the temporal wants of Christian teachers. But this is entirely foreign to the course of thought, and isolates the verse from the context on both sides of it. (M. Vincent)

The context which speaks both of the evil (6:1-5) and the morally good (6:9-10) is against the interpretation that financial support is in the apostle’s mind here. The context defines the good things as being of a spiritual, not a material nature. It would be the height of folly for Paul to inject such a delicate subject as the pocket book of the saint (delicate in some circles) into the already discordant atmosphere of the Galatian churches, especially when the whole trouble revolved around heretical teaching and not around the finances of the churches. (K. Wuest) The reference may be a delicate hint that the Galatians might have maintained closer spiritual relations with Paul, their teacher,

instead of flying off after false teachers and neglecting to share this wonderful new teaching with him. (J. Dow)

As there are some to be taught, so there are others who are appointed to teach them. The office of the ministry is a divine institution, which does not lie open in common to all, but is confined to those only whom God has qualified for it and called to it: even reason itself directs us to put a difference between the teachers and the taught (for, if all were teachers, there would be none to be taught), and the Scriptures sufficiently declare that it is the will of God we should do so. It is the word of God wherein ministers are to teach and instruct others; that which they are to preach is the Word. That which they are to declare is the counsel of God. They are not lords of our faith, but helpers of our joy. It is the Word of God which is the only rule of faith and life; this they are concerned to study, and to open, and improve, for the edification of others, but they are no further to be regarded than as they speak according to this rule. Ministers are to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine. (M. Henry)

Gal. 6:6 Therefore (inferential), let the one (Subj. Nom.) who is repeatedly being taught (κατηχέω, PPtc.NMS, Substantival, Iterative) the Word (Acc. Content; Bible doctrine) keep on sharing in the spiritual enterprise by concentrating on (κοινωνέω, PAImp.3S, Durative, Entreaty; fellowship in the Word) the one (Dat. Ind. Obj.; the pastor or teacher) who is continually teaching (κατηχέω, PAPtc.DMS, Iterative, Substantival) in the sphere of all (Dat. Measure; the whole realm, the entire Bible verse-by-verse) good things (Loc. Sph.; Bible doctrine).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:6** Κοινωνείτω δὲ ὁ κατηχούμενος τὸν λόγον τῷ κατηχοῦντι ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:6** communicet autem is qui catecizatur verbum ei qui se catecizat in omnibus bonis

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:7** Stop being deceived. God is not being outwitted [fooled by your contempt and evasion]. For whatever [good or bad decisions] a man sows, that [result] he will also harvest;

^{KW} **Gal. 6:7** Stop leading yourselves astray. God is not being outwitted and evaded. For whatever a man is in the habit of sowing, this also will he reap;

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:7** Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Do you think your experiential life as a Christian is unimportant? Do you think you can skip Bible class as often as you want, perhaps discard it entirely as a non-essential, and God won't notice? Stop being deceived! Wherever you got that silly notion, you are sadly mistaken. Some of the Galatian believers were led astray by such faulty reasoning, but Paul commands them to

stop it (Imperative of Prohibition). They were not fooling God by their neglect of the spiritual life. God is omniscient and therefore knew all of their thoughts. He was not then and never is outwitted or fooled (Gnomic Present tense) by the negative volition of believers. God is not affected by your thoughts of ridicule or contempt. His justice merely kicks-in and you will receive exactly what you deserve.

When you are called forward to the Judgment Seat of Christ to have your works (spiritual production) evaluated by the Lord, you will not be able to hide one occasion of neglect from His gaze. Remember all those times you said, "I'm too tired to study the Word - I think I'll stay home or do something else."? He will remember every one of them. The law of the harvest states that "whatever a man sows, that shall he reap." If you bring a lifetime of negative volition towards doctrine to the Judgment Seat of Christ, you will watch the impact of your life burn up and you will be ashamed at the loss of rewards you could have received had you decided for, instead of against, Bible study. The seeds you sow in life (Ingressive Aorist tense) have a direct and correlating effect when you are evaluated in that day.

If you faithfully learn the Bible from qualified pastors and teachers, the seeds of positive volition you have sowed will reap (Predictive Future tense) rewards at the Judgment Seat. If you continually reject the option of learning the Bible from the qualified pastors and teachers made available to you, the seeds of negative volition you have sowed will reap (Latin: meted out) shame and embarrassment at the Judgment Seat. If you think you can "pull the wool over the eyes" of God, you are in a sorry state of self-deception. If you think God will overlook those weeks, months and years of saying "No" to His Word, you will find your self-justification of no value in that day. Why not save yourself the trouble and get with His program?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The kind of God a person trusts is indicated in his method of handling problems. Anxiety and worry may indicate that his God is an absentee Lord, Who is remote from man's personal concerns and cares. (R. Stamm) People who think that they can fool with God are only fooling themselves. No one can flout His authority forever. One day we will reap what we sow, and if we sow to please the sinful nature, we will reap destruction. (P. Ryken) The warning implies a liability to deception or error: in this case the deception appears to be, that a man may be sowing to the flesh, and yet be hoping to reap of the Spirit, or that for him might be changed the unchangeable order which God has ordained. (J. Eadie) It is, in effect, a derision of God when we meet His requirements of real piety and of practical obedience by the presentation of lip professions and outward shows of religiousness. But the derision will not last long; it cannot hold good. (E. Huxtable)

The implication of the law of volitional responsibility is that every human being must take the responsibility for his own decisions and actions. If properly reared, a person understands that he never blames others for his unhappiness. He acknowledges any mistakes or wrong decisions he has made regarding relationships, activities, motives, and functions in life and fulfills the obligations he has incurred. If he suffers from causes beyond his control, he does not allow the pain to tyrannize his

soul. Rather than poison himself with bitterness and self-pity, he makes the most of his present options and opportunities through good decisions compatible with the protocol plan of God. Sowing and reaping can be beneficial or detrimental. In Galatians 6:7 they illustrate the law of volitional responsibility, warning the believer not to ignore or violate the protocol plan of God. The seeds a farmer plants will invariably produce their own species of plant and fruit. Likewise, the sins a person commits sprout and follow a natural pattern of growth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

We are reminded here that there is a time of reckoning coming and we shall receive our rewards on the basis of our faithfulness. The Lord will consider our handicaps, our obstacles, our peculiar burdens, as well as our motives and talents and opportunities, and so the assurance. (M. DeHaan) That of which the apostle speaks is not a ridicule of God which He will not leave unpunished, but an outwitting of God, an evasion of His laws which men think to accomplish, but, in fact, can not. The present is gnostic, and the implication is that what does not happen can not happen. The application of the statement is in what follows: It is vain to expect to outwit God by reaping a harvest different from that which one has sown. (E. Burton) The exclusion from the banquet is a temporary act of divine discipline and cannot be an eternal exclusion from fellowship with the King. Yet it is true that we will reap what we sow. There will be for some time a time of profound sorrow. (J. Dillow)

Although Christians are restored from backsliding after confession, God does chastise them for their sins. Divine principles do not change, and the failure of Christians to conform to these principles brings God's chastening hand upon His children ... Although they confess their sins, they must experience governmental forgiveness. (W. Best) The greatest mistake Christians are inclined to make is to minimize the injunctions and warnings about not inheriting the kingdom of God. In other words, if you, the reader, are now saying to yourself, "I'm just glad to know I'm eternally saved – I can't be too bothered by a reward or inheriting the kingdom of God," you could not be more mistaken. Read to the end of this book. Not inheriting the kingdom of God, heaven below, has serious ramifications at the judgment seat of Christ. (R. Kendall) Our own bad decisions account for most of our misfortunes. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

When a believer possesses supergrace or ultrasupergrace capacity, God pours out fantastic blessings which glorify Him in time and eternity. Spiritual maturity is the goal for every believer. Here, you reap what God sows, not what you sow. But the believer in reversionism reaps what he sows – self-induced misery and divine punishment from the integrity of God. Moreover, the reversionist forfeits the special blessing paragraphs (Hebrews 3:10-12) both now and in eternity ... Every believer is responsible for decisions that are contrary to doctrine. Cursing upon cursing is multiplied to the reversionist ... We create our own punishment through the law of volitional responsibility; we suffer the repercussions of our own sins – self-induced misery. The choices we make dictate the life we lead ... On the other hand, God supports all decisions made in accordance with doctrine. Blessing upon blessing is multiplied to the supergrace and ultra-supergrace believers. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 6:7 Stop (neg. particle) being deceived (πλανῶ, PPImp.2P, Descriptive, Prohibition; led astray, mistaken). God (Subj. Nom.) is not (neg. adv.) being outwitted (μυκτηρίζω, PPI3S, Gnostic; an inward expression of mocking or ridicule, affected by

contempt). For (explanatory) whatever (Acc. Gen. Ref.; relative pronoun combined with conditional particle) a man (Subj. Nom.) sows (σπείρω, AASubj.3S, Ingressive, Potential; seeds), that (Acc. Result) he will also (adjunctive) harvest (θερίζω, FAI3S, Predictive; reap);

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:7** Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, θεὸς οὐ μυκτηρίζεται. ὃ γὰρ ἐὰν σπείρῃ ἄνθρωπος, τοῦτο καὶ θερίσει.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:7** nolite errare Deus non inridetur quae enim seminaverit homo haec et metet quoniam

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:8** Because the one [carnal, reversionistic believer] who makes it a habit to sow according to his own flesh [sin nature], shall harvest corruption [depravity] from the flesh. But the one [believer with positive momentum] who makes it a habit to sow according to the Spirit [filling], shall harvest eternal life [blessings and rewards in both time and eternity] from the Spirit.

^{KW} **Gal. 6:8** Because the one who sows with a view to his own evil nature, from his evil nature as a source shall reap corruption. But the one who sows with a view to the Spirit, from the Spirit as a source shall reap life eternal.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:8** For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts the sowing of seeds between two different types of believers. This is not a verse contrasting a believer and an unbeliever. The carnal, reversionistic believer who makes it a habit to sow the seeds (Iterative Present tense) according to his sin nature will harvest (Predictive Future tense) depravity and corruption. He will be ashamed at the Judgment Seat of Christ. By contrast, the believer who is making forward progress in the spiritual life is making it a habit to sow according to the Spirit (Iterative Present tense). This believer will harvest (Predictive Future tense) eternal life – the temporal phase - because of the continual filling of the Spirit. The two types of believers depend on two types of volition towards Bible doctrine: positive or negative. The two types of outcomes depend on whether they functioned in the filling of the Spirit or according to the dictates of the old sin nature.

This is an experiential sanctification verse, explaining in greater detail what we can look forward to at the Evaluation (Judgment) Seat of Christ. It is an expansion or explanation of the “law of the harvest” principle. Eternal life is qualitative, now, as well as futuristic. It is a reference to rewards given at the Judgment Seat for divine good, for a job well done. It is a reference to “a rich and meaningful life which begins now and extends into eternity.” Eternal life is often represented as positional truth only – admittance into heaven and residence there forever. But there is an experiential side to eternal life that is earned by the believer by living the Christian

way of life. This experiential side brings blessings and rewards in both time and eternity. What a positive believer accomplishes in life blesses him now and is parlayed into rewards that will be enjoyed in eternity. This is the type of eternal life Paul is referring to here.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The positive side of our great salvation is eternal life. By this, of course, our Lord did not mean merely eternal existence but a rich and meaningful life which begins now and extends into eternity ... Eternal life is often presented to the believer as something to be earned or worked for! Just as there are two kinds of inheritance, two dimensions to salvation, there seem to be two sides to eternal life. We must remember that eternal life in the Bible is not a static entity, a mere gift of regeneration that does not continue to grow and blossom. No, it is a dynamic relationship with Christ Himself. And growth is not automatic; it is conditioned upon our responses. (J. Dillow) The law of the harvest illustrates the everlasting fact that freedom is not the right to do what we want to do, but the power to do what we ought. Freedom operates only in a moral universe. The free man is the moral man ... The question is, Who is in command? When the flesh or material body is under the direction of the mind, and that mind is saturated with the mind of Christ, we are sowing to the Spirit, and shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. When such a relationship does not exist, we are sowing to the flesh, and the harvest is corruption: life is out of order, proportion, and balance. (R. Stamm)

The contrast in verses 7-8 is between sowing to the flesh and sowing to the Spirit. Paul first introduced the contrast between flesh and Spirit back in chapter 5. The flesh is the sinful nature we inherit from Adam; the Spirit is our regenerate nature in Christ. These two natures are constantly at war. The works of the flesh are opposed to the fruit of the Spirit, so that impurity, hatred, and discord battle against peace, love, and self-control. (P. Ryken) There are two sorts of seeds which men sow in this life: good and evil. Two kinds of sowers: spiritual men, and carnal men. Two sorts of ground in which this seed is sown: the flesh and the spirit. Two sorts of harvests, which men are to reap according to the seed: corruption, and life. (W. Perkins) In some ways, eternal life has already begun. Those who sow to please the Spirit begin to reap His rewards already in this life. We begin to taste eternal life as soon as we come to Christ. All the benefits of eternal life are not deferred. The Holy Spirit gives us the assurance of our faith, the joy of our salvation, and the hope of our resurrection right here and now. (P. Ryken) Flesh is not the body but our own sin-corrupted nature. (R. Lenski)

To sow to the flesh is to pander to it, to cosset, cuddle and stroke it, instead of crucifying it. The seeds we sow are largely thoughts and deeds. Every time we allow our mind to harbour a grudge, nurse a grievance, entertain an impure fantasy, or wallow in self-pity, we are sowing to the flesh. Every time we linger in bad company whose insidious influence we know we cannot resist, every time we take a risk which strains our self-control, we are sowing, sowing, sowing to the flesh. (J. Stott) In Gal. 6:8 eternal life is something earned by the sower. If this passage is speaking of final salvation from hell, then salvation is based on works. A man reaps what he sows. If we sow to please the Spirit, we will reap (future tense) eternal life. Paul calls it a harvest "if we do not give up." Eternal life is earned by sowing to the Spirit and persevering to the end. It is what we get if we do

good works. There is nothing here about the inevitability of this reaping. It depends on us. Eternal life is no static entity, but a relationship with God. It is dynamic and growing and has degrees. Some Christians have a more intimate relationship with their Lord than others. They have a richer experience of eternal life. (J. Dillow)

My friend, you may be saved, but it may still be very embarrassing for you in that day when you give an account of your life to Him. John mentions the fact that it is possible to be ashamed at His appearing (1 John 2:28). If you are going to live in the flesh, you will produce the things of the flesh. That does not, however, mean that you will lose your salvation, but it does mean that you will lose your reward, which will make it a day of shame and regret when you stand before Him. (J. McGee) Sanctification is accomplished in three phases: positional, experiential, and ultimate. At the moment of faith in Christ, the Church Age believer is placed into union with Christ – positional sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23; Romans 6:3, 8). As the believer functions in Christ’s power sphere and acquires the Mind of Christ, Bible doctrine, he reaches spiritual maturity – experiential sanctification (John 17:17). And in heaven the believer receives a body like Christ’s resurrection body – ultimate sanctification (Gal. 6:8; 1 Peter 5:10; 1 Cor. 15:53, 54). (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) It is wrong to think of everlasting life as though it is a static, all-or-nothing reality. A person who has God’s life may experience it in varying degrees of fullness. (R. Wilkin)

Gal. 6:8 Because (causal) the one (Subj. Nom.; carnal, reversionistic believer) who makes it a habit to sow (σπείρω, PAPtc.NMS, Iterative, Substantival; plant) according to his own (Poss. Gen.) flesh (Acc. Gen. Ref.; sin nature), shall harvest (θερίζω, FAI3S, Predictive) corruption (Acc. Dir. Obj., Disadv.; depravity) from the flesh (Abl. Source). But (contrast) the one (Subj. Nom.; spiritually mature believer) who makes it a habit to sow (σπείρω, PAPtc.NMS, Iterative, Substantival; plant) according to the Spirit (Acc. Gen. Ref.; filling), shall harvest (θερίζω, FAI3S, Predictive) eternal (Qual. Acc.) life (Acc. Dir. Obj., Adv.; blessings and rewards in both time and eternity) from the Spirit (Abl. Source).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:8** ὅτι ὁ σπείρων εἰς τὴν σάρκα ἑαυτοῦ ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς θερίσει φθοράν, ὁ δὲ σπείρων εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος θερίσει ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:8** quae enim seminaverit homo haec et metet quoniam qui seminat in carne sua de carne et metet corruptionem qui autem seminat in spiritu de spiritu metet vitam aeternam

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:9** Moreover, let us not become discouraged [tired of criticism from others] from doing good things, for at the appointed time [Judgment Seat of Christ] we shall reap our own personal harvest [blessings and rewards] if we do not lose heart and become weary [apathetic about the Christian life].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:9** Let us not slacken our exertions by reason of the weariness that comes with prolonged effort in habitually doing that which is good. For in a season which in its character is

appropriate, we shall reap if we do not become enfeebled through exhaustion and faint.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:9** And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul encourages the Galatian believers not to become discouraged (Volitive Subjunctive mood) from doing honorable and praiseworthy things (Iterative Present tense). Living the Christian way of life is not always easy. Friends you used to have before becoming a believer, never seem to stop criticizing you, for abandoning the things you used to do and embracing the new things you are now interested in. Take Bible study, for instance. If I had a nickel for every time somebody has made a comment on how much time I spend studying the Word instead of trying to make more money, I'd be wealthy in the things of this world.

Because Galatia was an area that was rampant with partying behavior, including sexual excess, you can bet many new believers were discouraged by the comments and criticism of their former friends. But if the Galatian believers did not lose heart as a result of such criticism, and maintained the nature of their walk with the Lord, they were sure to reap (Predictive Future tense) their own harvest of blessings and rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. In like fashion, if we do not become weary and apathetic towards the Christian way of life, we too will receive abundant blessings and rewards in time and eternity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Distinct encouragement is given us – the encouragement of the husbandman in sowing his fields, the bow in the cloud assuring him that seed-time and harvest shall not fail. The Christian doctrine of reward is in perfect harmony with the doctrine of grace. (J. Eadie)

Gal. 6:9 Moreover (coordinating), let us not (neg. particle) become discouraged from (ἐγκακέω, PASubj.1P, Descriptive, Volitive; weary from criticism) doing (ποιέω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Modal) good things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; noble, praiseworthy), for (explanatory) at the appointed time (Loc. Time; Judgment Seat of Christ) we shall reap our own personal (Dat. Poss; private) harvest (θερίζω, FAI1P, Predictive) if we do not (neg., interrogative particle) lose heart and become weary (ἐκλύω, PPPtc.NMP, Descriptive, Result; apathetic about the Christian life).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:9** τὸ δὲ καλὸν ποιοῦντες μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν, καιρῷ γὰρ ἰδίῳ θερίσομεν μὴ ἐκλύομενοι.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:9** bonum autem facientes non deficiamus tempore enim suo metemus non deficientes

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:10** Since, therefore, we possess the same opportunity [to live the Christian life as

the Galatian believers did], let us keep on producing good things [functioning in the filling of the Spirit] towards everyone, but especially face-to-face with those belonging to the household of the faith [members of the royal family].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:10** So then, in like manner, let us be having opportunity, let us be working that which is good to all, but especially to those of the household of the Faith.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:10** As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Galatian believers lived in the same dispensation as we do, the dispensation of the Church Age. Therefore we possess (Static Present tense) the same opportunity to function in the filling of the Spirit and to produce good things (Iterative Present tense) as they did. In fact, Paul encourages us (Volitive Subjunctive mood) to do that very thing. He encourages us to live the Christian life according to divine standards – first towards unbelievers, but especially towards fellow believers. Family members have a higher priority in life than strangers. Fellow believers are members of the royal family just like we are, so we should treat them especially well. They belong to the same household we do, centered on “the faith,” the Word of God. This is a command to exercise impersonal love towards everyone, with genuine humility from the filling of the Spirit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This household consists of our fellow believers, who share with us “like precious faith” (2 Peter 1:1) and so are our brothers and sisters in the family of God. (J. Stott) “He pistis” appears as the common name for the Christian movement. (R. Hays) We shall not always have the opportunity we have now. Satan is sharpened to the greater zeal in evil-doing by the shortness of his time. Let us be sharpened to the greater in well-doing by the shortness of ours. (R. Jamieson) Now I recognize that the entire religion of liberalism is one of “doing good.” I believe in doing good, but you have to have the right foundation under the good deeds. The right foundation is the gospel of the grace of God and walking in the Spirit of God. When you walk in the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit is produced. Then, my friend, you are going to do good. You will do good for all men, especially for other believers. (J. McGee)

We need to be realistic about the matter of priority in fellowship. Fellowship means sharing in common, and all areas of fellowship are not equal simply because they do not involve the same sharing. Fellowship on the horizontal plane (that is, with other human beings) is like a series of concentric circles. The largest circle includes all men with whom we have a certain kind of fellowship. We are to do good to all men and to show respect in our speech to all men simply because all were created in the image of God. The next largest circle includes all Christians. We have a certain kind of fellowship with them regardless of their affiliations or beliefs. God has done something very wonderful and basic for every person in that circle of fellowship, and we share that

in common. Some of the smaller circles may be our particular church fellowship or a doctrinal fellowship such as the writer personally shares in the seminary in which he teaches. Cutting across all these circles is the physical factor. We obviously do not share in the same measure in all circles the fellowship which we have within a given circle. Our Lord shared certain things with Peter, James, and John that He did not share with the others who were in that circle of the Twelve. As well as the physical factor, there may be legitimate sociological factors which cut across circles. The point is simply this: circles of fellowship are not in themselves wrong; it is our failure or refusal to recognize some of them that is wrong. When someone fails to recognize the larger circles and builds a wall of doctrine or practice around the smaller one, refusing to move out of these circles, he is in error. Equally wrong is the attempt to make believers have the same kind of fellowship with all other believers and not allow them to have the smaller circles of fellowship. It is obvious, too, that one's circles of responsibility follow closely the circles of fellowship. (C. Ryrie)

Gal. 6:10 Since (inferential), therefore (inferential), we possess (ἔχω, PAI1P, Static) the same (comparative) opportunity (Acc. Gen. Ref.; as the Galatian believers), let us keep on producing (ἐργάζομαι, PMSbj.1P, Iterative, Volitive, Deponent; function in the filling of the Spirit) good things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; according to divine standards) towards everyone (Acc. Gen. Ref.), but (adversative) especially (adv.) face-to-face with those (Acc. Gen. Ref.) belonging to the household (Acc. Spec.) of the faith (Adv. Gen. Ref.; members of the royal family).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:10** Ὡς οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:10** ergo dum tempus habemus operemur bonum ad omnes maxime autem ad domesticos fidei

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:11** Look at what large letters I have written to you with my own hand [in spite of my handicap].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:11** You see with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:11** Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In spite of his handicap, whether it was poor eyesight or a hand injury, Paul nevertheless wrote this letter (Epistolary Aorist tense) to the Galatians. He commands them to look at his writing (Imperative mood) because he wants to make a point of persevering even when times are tough. His use of the interrogative pronoun “what” is also exclamatory, which means he is drawing attention to how large the letters are. He was laughing at the elementary school level of writing he was forced to engage in, as well as how ironic it was that he was dealing with the Galatian believers as if they were elementary school children.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Up to this point Paul has been dictating; now he takes the pen and writes, probably with stiff, square letters, which contrasted with the graceful hand of a skilled penman. (R. Stamm) As he looks at the sprawling letters which he has written, he muses whimsically that they certainly make no fine outward show, and this becomes to him a parable of the whole of his life and ministry, and indeed of the Christian faith. (R. Cole) That Paul wrote the letter himself because unable to obtain a scribe, and in a large hand because of some physical necessity, an accident to his hand or defect of his eyesight, is in itself improbably in view of 1:2. (E. Burton) When Paul wrote to the Galatians, he was angry. He had heard that they were mixing the gospel with law – and when that is done, the gospel of the grace of God is absolutely destroyed. He couldn't wait for a secretary to arrive – he just sat down and wrote to them himself. Because he didn't see clearly, he wrote with large letters. (J. McGee)

Gal. 6:11 Look at (ὁράω, AAImp.2P, Constative, Command) what large (Exclamatory Dat.) letters (Dat. Ind. Obj.) I have written (γράφω, AAI1S, Epistolary) to you (Dat. Adv.) with my own (Dat. Poss.) hand (Instr. Means; in spite of my handicap).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:11** ἴδετε πηλίκους ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρί.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:11** videte qualibus litteris scripsi vobis mea manu

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:12** As many [Judaizers] as desire to make a good impression in the flesh, these same ones will keep on pressuring you to be circumcised, only [for the sole purpose] so that they will not be persecuted for being associated with the cross of Christ,

^{KW} **Gal. 6:12** As many as desire to make a good outward appearance in the sphere of the flesh, these are trying to compel you to receive circumcision, their only motive being that they might not be persecuted by reason of the cross of Christ,

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:12** As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul tells the naïve Galatian believers that the Judaizers who demand that they become circumcised (Pictorial Present tense) only desire (Static Present tense) to make a good impression (Ingressive Aorist tense) in the flesh. They are not the least bit interested in grace, nor are they interested in the uncircumcised believers. They have only one purpose in pressuring the Galatians to be circumcised, and that is to escape persecution from the Jews. They wanted to remain on their good side. They figured if they urged the Galatians to be circumcised, the Jews would befriend them in spite of the cross of Christ. The Jews hated the message of the cross. So the Judaizers hoped to downplay the crucifixion and play-up circumcision in order to be

conciliatory. If they cared about Christ, they would abandon ceremonial rituals. If they cared about the Galatians, they would quit bugging them to be circumcised. But they were really cowards, afraid of what the Jews would do to them if they embraced nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There is a continual temptation for the church to turn the gospel into the cross plus something else. Whether that “something else” is a deed or a duty, a sacrament or a social cause, the problem is always the “plus.” For the gospel to be the gospel, the cross has to stand alone. (P. Ryken) They want to make a fine showing with you Galatians by inducing all of you to get circumcised so that the Jews, who are otherwise so hostile to Christianity, may not persecute them. The aim of the Judaizers is to win so much merit with the Jews that these will not attack them as they constantly attacked Paul, having nearly killed him at Lystra. (R. Lenski) This passage could be titled “misery loves company.” (K. Lamb)

You never get in trouble preaching legalism. Legalism is popular. The grace of God is unpopular. The human heart finds it repulsive. It is the offense of the Cross. (J. McGee) Proud, vain, and carnal hearts desire nothing more than to make a fair show in the flesh, and they can easily be content with so much religion as will help them to keep up such a fair show; but frequently those have least of the substance of religion who are most solicitous to make a show of it. (M. Henry) By ellipsis or specialization we have “the cross of Christ,” then by metonymy “Christ’s death.” (M. Silva) The Circumcisionists played for popularity. They dreaded persecution. They appealed to the flesh. How many of us are following the spirit of this course today? (A. Knoch)

This syncretistic mixture of law and gospel veiled the cross and its salvation, so free and fitting to mankind without distinction of race or blood; so that their profession was deceptive, perilous in its consequences, and prompted and shaped by an ignoble and cowardly selfishness; it was a “fair show,” but only in the sphere of fleshly things, and assumed on purpose to avoid persecution. (J. Eadie) Christianity is fundamentally not a religion of external ceremonies, but something inward and spiritual, in the heart ... Circumcision and baptism are things of the flesh, outward and visible ceremonies performed by men; the new creation is a birth of the Spirit, an inward and invisible miracle performed by God. (J. Stott)

Gal. 6:12 As many as (Subj. Nom.; Judaizers) desire (θέλω, PAI3P, Static) to make a good impression (εὐπροσώπεω, AAInf., Ingressive, Purpose; outward show) in the flesh (Loc. Sph.), these same ones (Subj. Nom.) will keep on pressuring (ἀναγκάζω, PAI3P, Predictive, Iterative; compelling, urging) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to be circumcised (περιτέμνω, PPInf., Pictorial, Result), only (adv.; their sole purpose) so that (purpose) they will not (neg. particle) be persecuted (διώκω, PPSubj.3P, Futuristic, Potential) for being associated with the cross (Dat. Assoc.) of Christ (Gen. Spec.),

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:12** Ὅσοι θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί, οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, μόνον ἵνα τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ διώκωνται.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:12** quicumque volunt placere in carne hii cogunt vos circumcidi tantum ut crucis Christi persecutionem non patiantur

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:13** For not even they [the Judaizers] who are circumcised continually keep the law themselves, but they desire you to be circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh [point to their lack of foreskins as a sign of their power to influence other believers].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:13** For not even those who are circumcised are themselves keeping the law, but they desire you to be circumcised in order that in your flesh they may glory.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:13** For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Judaizers may be circumcised (Descriptive Present tense), but that does not mean they are interested in keeping (Latin: as custodians) the law. They keep the law when they feel like it, but it is not the center of their lives (Durative Present tense) even though they pretend that it is. They are operating under false motivation. They are really only interested in extending their power base over others so they can brag about their exploits (Purpose Subjunctive mood). If they are able to get some key Galatian believers to become circumcised (Pictorial Present tense), they can then point to these believers as being somehow superior to those who have not become circumcised. It's a power play and a con game. If they are successful, they can point to the lack of foreskins on those who are circumcised and create a guilt complex in those believers who have not yet submitted to this ritual. They not only increase their influence over other believers by every circumcision, but they also placate the Jews who are offended by the cross but embrace meaningless ritual.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is certainly not observing law in any true sense of the word to advocate circumcision only in order to escape Jewish persecution. To comply with the outward form of law with such a motive is anything but true compliance ... They want you circumcised so as to be able to point to your flesh, the amputation of your foreskin as their great accomplishment in order to win vast credit among the Jews. These are the selfish, despicable Judaizers ... What the Judaizers did with circumcision they did with law in general. Do the Galatians want to listen to and follow such men? (R. Lenski) Had they been actuated by honest zeal, they would strive to obey the whole law. They were actuated by another and a sinister motive ... that they might glory over the circumcision of their converts. They were mean and mercenary in their opposition to the apostle, and utterly craven in soul in their relation to their Jewish brethren. (J. Eadie) These men were so zealous for the lighter matters of the

law, the rites and ceremonies of it, as circumcision, etc., they disregarded the weightier and more material parts of it, as judgment, mercy, and faith; these they kept not, not attended to. (J. Gill)

Gal. 6:13 For (explanatory) not even (neg. adv.) they (Subj. Nom.; Judaizers) who are circumcised (περιτέμνω, PPtC.NMP, Descriptive, Substantival) continually keep (φυλάσσω, PAI3P, Durative; watch, guard) the law (Acc. Dir. Obj.) themselves (Nom. Appos.), but (adversative) they desire (θέλω, PAI3P, Dramatic) you (Acc. Disadv.) to be circumcised (περιτέμνω, PPInf., Pictorial, Result) so that (purpose) they may boast (καυχάομαι, AMSubj.3P, Culminative, Purpose, Deponent) in your (Dat. Poss.) flesh (Loc. Sph.; foreskins).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:13** οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοὶ νόμον φυλάσσουσιν ἀλλὰ θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, ἵνα ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκὶ καυχήσωνται.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:13** neque enim qui circumciduntur legem custodiunt sed volunt vos circumcidi ut in carne vestra glorientur

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:14** But as for me, may it never happen that I should boast [glory] except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom the world system stands crucified unto me, and me unto the world system.

^{KW} **Gal. 6:14** For, as for me, far be it from me to be glorying except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom to me the world stands crucified and I to the world.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:14** But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Judaizers may boast in their ability to keep the law and their success in getting the Galatian believers to undergo circumcision, but Paul swears that he will never do such a thing (Gnomic Aorist tense). As for Paul, he makes a solemn promise that he will never glory in anything (Gnomic Present tense) but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (Result Infinitive). He knows that he has nothing to brag about in the flesh, because it is all of grace. He doesn't even boast in his own free will to choose Christ, because that would be a form of will worship, i.e., self-idolatry. Even his own belief in Christ was arranged in time and made effective by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.

Through the work of Christ on the cross, the world system is now at odds with Paul. Paul has been transferred into a new sphere of operation, a sphere that Satan's cosmic system is totally opposed to. This world system now nails Paul to the cross (Intensive Perfect tense), just as it nailed Christ Jesus to the cross. And Paul, in turn, has nailed the world system to the cross as far as his experiential walk with the Lord is concerned. They are mutually exclusive spheres of

operation. The world system includes the flesh and the devil, as well as the intricate labyrinth of sin and evil made available to everyone as a trap or distraction. The Judaizers hide the cross from the Jews, but Paul makes it the center of his ministry.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The world as used here is an epitome of everything outside of Christ in which man seeks his glory and puts his trust ... Because Paul has learned to put all his hope and confidence in Christ, the world has nothing with which to charm him and bind him to itself. (H. Ridderbos) The world involves the world system with its allurements, the flesh with its carnal desires, and even the world religious systems with their teaching of salvation by human effort. By means of the death of Christ, all of these things stand positionally rendered inoperative. (H. Vos)

As far as he is now concerned, there is nothing “fine” in life but the cross of Christ; and he brushes aside the last vestiges of the Galatian quarrel from him in the knowledge of his own close relation to the crucified Messiah. On that note of peace the battle-scarred veteran ends the tortured letter. (R. Cole) The apostle is vividly contrasting his own feeling and behavior in relation to the cross of Christ with those of the leaders of the circumcision party whom he has been denouncing. They would fain put the cross as far as possible out of sight, not to offend the Jews they were so anxious to conciliate. (E. Huxtable)

Gal. 6:14 But (adversative) as for me (Dat. Ref.), may it never (neg. particle) happen that (γίνομαι, AMOpt.3S, Gnostic, Deponent, Hortatory; idiomatic: God forbid) I should boast (καυχάομαι, PMInf., Gnostic, Result, Deponent; glory) except (conditional particle) in the cross (Loc. Sph.) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. Spec.), through whom (Abl. Means) the world system (Subj. Nom.) stands crucified (σταυρώω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; nailed to the cross) unto me (Dat. Adv.), and (reciprocal) me (Subj. Nom.) unto the world system (Dat. Ind. Obj.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:14** Ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι’ οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὰρ κόσμῳ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:14** mihi autem absit gloriari nisi in cruce Domini nostri Iesu Christi per quem mihi mundus crucifixus est et ego mundo

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:15** For neither circumcision [Jews] nor uncircumcision [Gentiles] means anything [completely irrelevant in the Church Age dispensation], but rather a new creation.

^{KW} **Gal. 6:15** For neither circumcision is anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:15** For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Judaizers may boast in their flesh and in the flesh of their converts, but circumcision is completely irrelevant in the Church Age dispensation. The Judaizers are living by legalistic and ceremonial rules in a dispensation that has already passed. They are on the wrong side of history. They are completely “out to lunch.” The only thing that matters during the Church Age is whether you are a new creation or not, and the new creation is brought about by the cross of Christ. The wall between Jew and Gentile, circumcision and uncircumcision, has been broken. The only thing that matters now is believing in Jesus Christ and being born again. Ceremonies and rituals are meaningless and illegitimate attachments, either positionally or experientially.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Judaism was wrapped up in a system of rules, rituals, and regulations. Christianity is something entirely new. It is a wholly new departure from “religion.” It is new life in Christ. It is supernatural from start to finish. It begins with a supernatural experience called the new birth, and it is developed in a supernatural community called “the body of Christ,” into which the believer is introduced by a supernatural “baptism of the Spirit.” It is matured by the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit by means of His filling and anointing. All of this is radically new and different from Judaism. Circumcision has nothing to do with it. (J. Phillips) “New” includes everything that has been given in and through Christ – the new reality of the kingdom of God. Through Christ this new thing is not merely future-eschatological, but is already present, is already in man. This new creation is first of all a gift, but it brings its tasks with it. (H. Ridderbos)

This spiritual renewal springs out of living union to Christ, and it is everything. For it re-enchants the image of God on the soul, and restores it to its pristine felicity and fellowship. It is not external – neither a change of opinion, party, or outer life. Nor is it a change in the essence or organization of the soul, but in its inner being – in its springs of thought and feelings, in its powers and motives – by the Spirit of God and the influence of the truth. This creation is new – new in its themes of thought, in its susceptibilities of enjoyment, and in its spheres of energy; it finds itself in a new world, into which it is ushered by a new birth. (J. Eadie) Any study of the Bible must deal with the distinction between Israel and the Church. This contrast, which is a recurring theme in the NT, is the starting point in the doctrine of dispensations. What makes the separation of Israel and the Church so significant? The phenomenon that divides these two dispensations is the first advent of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ makes all the difference. He is the key to the divine interpretation of history. The doctrine of dispensations spotlights Him. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Gal. 6:15 For (explanatory) neither (coordinating) circumcision (Subj. Nom.; Jews) nor (coordinating) uncircumcision (Subj. Nom.;

Gentiles) means (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive; is, are) anything (Pred. Nom.; irrelevant in the Church Age dispensation), but rather (contrast) a new (Complementary or Qualitative Nom.) creation (Pred. Nom.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:15** οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστὶν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:15** in Christo enim Iesu neque circumcisio aliquid valet neque praeputium sed nova creatura

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:16** Moreover, as many as [all believers] follow this protocol plan [principles for living during the Church Age] in a precisely correct fashion [according to grace mechanics with no unwarranted intrusion of the law]: spiritual prosperity and mercy upon them [Gentile believers] and upon the Israel of God [Jewish believers].

^{KW} **Gal. 6:16** And as many as by this rule are ordering their conduct, peace be upon them, and mercy, even upon the Israel of God.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:16** And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Both Jewish and Gentile believers are part of the new creation. The wall of separation between the two has been broken. Both categories of believers enter the plan of God in the same manner and continue in the plan of God in the same manner. The law, rituals, ceremonies and any other traditions of men have absolutely no place in the protocol plan of God for the Church Age. Paul sends abundant blessings to all believers who follow the principles for living during the Church Age. However, grace mechanics must be followed in a precisely correct fashion, like soldiers marching in rank. There are no rituals or ceremonies in this perfect plan. The spiritual life for this dispensation must be lived day after day after day (Iterative Present tense) according to the dictates given by God.

If a believer follows God's program faithfully (Potential Indicative mood), he will receive two specific categories of temporal blessing: spiritual prosperity and mercy. And by contrast, those who insist on adding any ritual, law, rule, ceremony or tradition to God's precisely correct and complete protocol plan will not receive these blessings. Paul then takes "all believers" as first mentioned in his phrase "as many as" and shows how this includes both Gentile and Jewish believers. Gentile believers (them) are contrasted with Jewish believers (the Israel of God) to show that the plan of God for the Church Age is now all inclusive. The distinctions between the two have been abrogated. There is just one set of rules for the protocol plan for the Church Age and it encompasses them both. Either type of believer who tries to add law to grace is disqualified from these blessings.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The question is, Who is the Israel of God? The amillennialist insists that these verses teach that the Israel of God is the entire Church. The premillennialist says that Paul is simply singling out Christian Jews for special recognition in the benediction but not equating them with the whole Church. Grammar in this instance does not decide the matter for us. But while the grammar cannot of itself decide the question, the argument of the book of Galatians does favor the connective or emphatic meaning of “and.” Paul had strongly attached the Jewish legalists; therefore, it would be natural for him to remember with a special blessing those Jews who had forsaken this legalism and followed Christ and the rule of the new creation. (C. Ryrie) The explicative “kai” is at best doubtful here, and is rather forced. It seems better to regard it as simply connective. (M. Vincent)

Paul never called the church “the Israel of God,” but used the word “Israel” to designate the Jewish nation. (R. Stamm) This is a far cry from the amillennialist view that the church is “spiritual Israel,” that God has finished with the Jewish people, that all of the great and glowing OT prophecies regarding the world’s golden age and Israel’s national future in the Millennium are canceled, that they are now being fulfilled spiritually in the church. To maintain this position, the amillennialists have to abandon the literal interpretation of prophecies concerning the coming kingdom of Christ. They have to allegorize them, spiritualize them, explain them away, and ignore the rebirth of the state of Israel. This kind of “exegesis” wreaks havoc with the Scriptures. It is certainly not what Paul has in mind here. (J. Phillips)

The word “canon” refers to a measuring rod by which we take measure of something to verify whether it is of proper size or length. So we measure our doctrine and our life by the Scriptures, for these alone are the exactest measuring rod we possess. (R. Lenski) It is a full recognition of the fact that the Jew and Gentile alike are fellow-heirs of the grace of life ... The believing Jew and believing Gentile alike form the true “Israel of God,” the instrument of His purpose. (R. Cole) No one has understood the gospel who has not grasped that Christianity is first inward and spiritual, and secondly a divine work of grace. (J. Stott) Galatians 6:16 is not a comparison but a contrast. You don’t sow mixed seed in a field. Never confuse the church and Israel. The Galatians were taking what belonged to Israel (the law) and they didn’t need it. (K. Lamb)

The simple copulative meaning is not to be departed from, save on very strong grounds; and there is no ground for such a departure here, so that the Israel of God are a party included in, and yet distinct from, the “osoi.” The apostle is not in the habit of calling the church made up of Jews and Gentiles – Israel. Israel is used eleven times in Romans, but in all the instances it refers to Israel proper; and so do it and “Israelites” in every other portion of the NT. (J. Eadie) The words, “and upon the Israel of God,” seem to be an echo of the “peace upon Israel,” which, in the Septuagint, closes the 125th and 128th Psalms. (E. Huxtable) In order to accept the proposition that the terms “them” and “the Israel of God” both describe the same group, one must ignore the primary meaning of “kai” (and) in the expression. (A. Fruchtenbaum)

In spite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, there remains persistent support for the contention that the term Israel may refer properly to Gentile believers in the present age. I cannot

help but think that dogmatic considerations loom large in the interpretation of Galatians 6:16. The tenacity with which this application of “the Israel of God” to the church is held in spite of a mass of evidence to the contrary leads one to think that the supporters of the view believe their eschatological system, usually an amillennial scheme, hangs on the reference of the term to the people of God, composed of both believing Jews and Gentiles ... An impressive list of names support the view, but the linguistic bases of the interpretation are few and feeble. If Paul’s intention was to identify the “them” as being the Israel of God, then the best way of showing this was to eliminate the “kai” altogether. The very presence of the “kai” argues against the “them” being the Israel of God. Paul, however, did not eliminate the “kai.” (S. Johnson)

From the standpoint of biblical usage this (amillennial) view stands condemned. There is no instance in biblical literature of the term Israel being used in the sense of the church, or the people of God as composed of both believing ethnic Jews and Gentiles ... The common dispensational view is that the Israel of God is the believing Jewish remnant within the church ... The doctrine that the church of Gentile and Jews is the Israel of God rests on an illusion. It is a classic case of tendentious exegesis. The church is never called a “spiritual Israel” or a “new Israel.” The term Israel is either used of the nation or the people as a whole, or of the believing remnant within. It is never used of the church in general or of Gentile believers in particular. In fact, even after the cross there remains a threefold distinction. (S. Johnson)

The rule which he here speaks of may signify more generally the whole word of God, which is the complete and perfect rule of faith and life, or that doctrine of the gospel, or way of justification and salvation, which he had laid down in this epistle. (M. Henry) While some believe that “Israel of God” is the church, the evidence does not support such a conclusion. First, the repetition of the preposition (“upon” or “to”) indicates two groups are in view. Second, all the 65 other occurrences of the term “Israel” in the NT refer to Jews. It would be strange for Paul to use “Israel” here to mean Gentile Christians. Third, Paul elsewhere referred to two kinds of Israelites – believing Jews and unbelieving Jews (Rom. 9:6). Lest it be thought that Paul is anti-Semitic, he demonstrated by means of this benediction his deep love and concern for true Israel, that is, Jews who had come to Christ. (D. Campbell)

Instead of identification there is distinction in this passage. The apostle is singling out believing Jews in this benediction pronounced upon the entire body of Christ which, of course, includes these Jews. (C. Ryrie) Paul is specifically mentioning believing Jews in the benediction pronounced on the whole body of Christ. The point seems to be well established, then, that the church today is not Israel in whom the covenants are fulfilled. (J. Pentecost) Peace be on all those who adopt this “norma vivendi.” (J. Eadie) Canon is a fixed body of Christian doctrines serving as a standard of correct teaching. (E. Burton) The Scriptures never use the term Israel to refer to any but the natural descendants of Jacob. (C. Feinberg) They are believing Jews, or those whom Paul calls Jews “inwardly” in Romans 2:28. (R. Reid) Failure to walk in the Spirit is setting up rules to live by. (K. Lamb)

It has been alleged on the basis of this passage that the church as such is specifically called the

“Israel of God.” To this is opposed the fact that everywhere else in Scriptures the term Israel is applied only to those who are the natural seed of Abraham and Isaac, never to Gentiles ... Instead of proving any such identification is rather a specific instance where Jewish believers are distinguished from Gentile believers, and this by the very term “Israel of God.” In Galatians 6:15 the contrast is brought out between “circumcision” and “uncircumcision,” i.e., between Jew and Gentile. This contrast is declared to avail not in Christ Jesus, but that rather the issue is a new creation when either Jew or Gentile becomes a believer. God’s blessing is declared on those who walk according to this rule (among the Galatians who were Gentiles), and also “upon the Israel of God.” The use of “and” (Greek kai) is difficult to explain apart from the intention of the writer to set off the “Israel of God” from those considered in the first half of the verse. It is rather another indication that Gentile and Jewish believers are on the same level, as “and” is used principally to link co-ordinate parts of a sentence. In any case, the argument of those who would destroy Israel’s national hope based upon this verse is not founded on sound exegesis. (J. Walvoord)

Gal. 6:16 Moreover (continuative), as many as (Subj. Nom.; Gentile believers) follow this (Dat. Spec.) protocol plan (Dat. Ind. Obj.; principles for living during the Church Age) in a precisely correct fashion (στοιχέω, FAI3P, Iterative, Potential Ind.; marching in rank, orderly, in step, according to grace mechanics): spiritual prosperity (Subj. Nom.; peace) and (connective) mercy (Subj. Nom.) upon them (Acc. Adv.; Gentile believers) and (connective: contrast) upon the Israel (Acc. Adv.; Jewish believers) of God (Poss. Gen.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:16** καὶ ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν, εἰρήνη ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔλεος καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:16** et quicumque hanc regulam secuti fuerint pax super illos et misericordia et super Israhel Dei

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:17** From now on, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear in my body the marks [scars] of Jesus.

^{KW} **Gal. 6:17** Henceforth, let no man furnish me trouble, for I bear branded the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:17** From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As Paul closes his letter, he asks the Galatian believers (Imperative of Entreaty) not to give him any further trouble (Dramatic Present tense). He has had enough trouble already, as his scars bear witness to all (Pictorial Present tense). Paul brought some of them to Christ. He taught many others how to live the Christian way of life. He has received enough pain, torture and

suffering from unbelievers when preaching the gospel – the last thing he needs is trouble from fellow believers who should know better.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some have tried to relate the phenomenon of stigmata with Galatians 6:17. But this has been done without basis, as Roman Catholic exegetes and dogmatic scholars (Oepke) also acknowledge. (H. Ridderbos) Stoning and flogging, whether by the scourge of the synagogue beadle, or the dreaded Roman lash, or the rods of Roman lictors, would leave unmistakable scars, reminders of suffering gladly endured for Christ's sake, that marked out their bearer as Christ's servant. (R. Cole) And what were those marks? Imprisonment, chains, scourging, blows, stoning, and every kind of injurious treatment which he had incurred in bearing testimony to the gospel. (J. Calvin)

Gal. 6:17 From now on (Gen. Extent of Time), let no one (Subj. Nom.) cause (παρέχω, PAImp.3S, Dramatic, Entreaty) me (Dat. Disadv.) trouble (Acc. Dir. Obj.; difficulty), for (explanatory) I bear (βαστάζω, PAIIS, Pictorial) in my (Poss. Gen.) body (Loc. Sph.) the marks (Acc. Gen. Ref.; brand) of Jesus (Gen. Assoc.).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:17** Τοῦ λοιποῦ κόπους μοι μηδεὶς παρεχέτω· ἐγὼ γὰρ τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματί μου βαστάζω.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:17** de cetero nemo mihi molestus sit ego enim stigmata Iesu in corpore meo porto

^{LWB} **Gal. 6:18** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your [human] spirit. Acknowledge it.

^{KW} **Gal. 6:18** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

^{KJV} **Galatians 6:18** Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. <Unto the Galatians written from Rome.>

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul closes with one of his traditional salutations, saving the word “brethren” for last. In spite of the grief they are causing him by pursuing legalism, he still holds them dear in his heart and sends them grace blessings.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The last word “adelphoi” is unusually placed – placed last on purpose. After all his sorrow, amazement, censure, and despondency, he parts with them in kindness; after all the pain they had cost him, yet they were dear to him; and ere he lifts his hand from the parchment, it writes, as a parting love-token – adelphoi. (J. Eadie) His prayer is not only that God may bestow upon them His grace in large measure, but that they may have a proper feeling of it in their hearts. Then

only is it truly enjoyed by us, when it comes to our spirit. We ought therefore to entreat that God would prepare in our souls a habitation for His grace. (J. Calvin)

Gal. 6:18 The grace (Subj. Nom.) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Poss. Gen., Abl. Source) be (ellipsis) with your (Poss. Gen.) spirit (Gen. Accompaniment; human). Acknowledge it (indeclinable; truly).

^{BGT} **Galatians 6:18** Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί· ἀμήν.

^{VUL} **Galatians 6:18** gratia Domini nostri Iesu Christi cum spiritu vestro fratres amen

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