

1
Christ Has Made Us Free
Gal 5:1
Pastor C.E. Bowden

Text: Gal. 5:1 “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”

Intro: Before moving into this third section of his letter, Paul interjects this verse that both summarizes all that has gone before and serves as a transition to what follows.

In **chapter 4:10** one element of the Law that the Judaizers sought to bring the Galatian Churches under was the observation of days, particularly the Sabbath. Now we learn the major issue was circumcision—**Gal. 5:2** “Indeed I, Paul, say to you that ***if you become circumcised***, Christ will profit you nothing.” Circumcision was ***the*** sign of the Old Testament covenant—**Gen. 17:11**. In **Gen. 17:13** God explains why He choose circumcision as the sign—“***My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.***” **Why? It cannot be undone**, it is always there to remind the man of the “***everlasting covenant***” God made with Abraham and his descendants. It is ***prophetic*** speaking of the coming of the Spirit and ***the cutting away of the flesh from our lives***—**Rom. 2:29** “but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and ***circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter***; whose praise is not from men but from God.” **Col. 2:11** “In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, ***by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ.***”

—**Gal. 5:4** “You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; ***you have fallen from grace.***”

—The Greek verb used in **Gal. 5:2** “***become circumcised***” makes it clear ***it has not happened yet!***

—The consequence of returning to the law is that it removes a person from the sphere of grace; all of the Law must be kept.

—The legalist is insecure because they cannot know if he has done enough to merit salvation, the believer is secure ***because he has placed his faith in Christ and will eagerly await righteousness***

—The person of faith lives in security—**Gal. 5:5–6** “For we through the Spirit ***eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith***. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, ***but faith working through love.***”

—The word “***hope***” from the Greek ἐλπίς elpis means ***the object of hope***, literally we are waiting for Christ to return.

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—Our “**hope**” is the day of our ultimate salvation—***Rom. 8:23–24*** “Not only that, but **we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit**, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body**. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?”

—Paul defines that hope in ***Titus 2:13*** “looking for the blessed hope and **glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**.”

—Paul writes “**through the Spirit**” (v. 5); the Holy Spirit is the Person of the Trinity working in our lives; salvation is purposed by the Father, accomplished by the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit.

—**If there is no Holy Spirit then there was no resurrection**—***Rom. 8:11*** “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”

—**If there is no Holy Spirit there is no new birth**—***John 3:6*** “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

—**If the Holy Spirit is not present in our lives, there is no confession of the lordship of Jesus**—***1Cor. 12:3*** “Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.”

—**If the Holy Spirit is not working in us, there is no victory over sin**—***Rom 8:13*** “For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

—If the Holy Spirit is not present in us, **we will not progress in sanctification**—***2Th. 2:13*** “... God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.”

—**Without the Holy Spirit we have no spiritual wisdom**—***Eph. 1:17*** “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.”

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—*Without the Holy Spirit there are no spiritual gifts and the Church will not grow properly—1Cor. 12:7* “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one *for the profit of all.*”

—More to Paul’s point, *the Holy Spirit invigorates our faith and keeps us hoping for the day of Jesus’ return!* (Vv. 5-6).

—*Called to Liberty* (v. 13)

—*Galatians 5:13* “For you, brethren, have been *called to liberty*; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, *but through love serve one another.*”

—Christians do not live under the external law or list of rules, BUT...*there is one absolute law we must obey, it is the Law of Love.*

—Jesus established this Law—*John 13:34* “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”

—*Gal. 5:14* “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: *“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

—This is a reference to *Lev. 19:18* “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, *but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.* I am the LORD.”

—Jesus was asked what the greatest Law is and He answered—*Matt. 22:37–40* ...“ *“You shall love the LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.”* *This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* *On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*

—James calls this the “*royal law*”—*James 2:8* “If you really fulfill the *royal law according to the Scripture,* “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well.”

—*Walk in the Spirit—Gal. 5:16* “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

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—**To walk in the Spirit is to be led by the Spirit**—**Gal. 5:18** “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.”

—The word “**led**” (αγω agō) carries the idea of moving away from something to another goal.

—**We are being led away from**—**Gal. 5:19-21** “The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

—**Our new goal is**—**Gal. 5:22-23** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

—To walk in the Spirit is to “**keep in step with the Spirit**” (**Gal 5:25**) to steadily be led away from the “**acts of the flesh**” into the “**fruit of the Spirit**”.

—**Gal. 5:24** “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.”

—When temptation comes, we remember the flesh was crucified, its dead, and we do not respond.

—Through the power of the Holy Spirit we have power to overcome all temptation—**1Cor 10:13** “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and **he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability**, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”

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