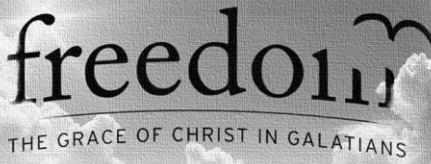


# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, May 9, 2018 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



freedom  
THE GRACE OF CHRIST IN GALATIANS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF GALATIANS  
Learning How to Walk  
*Galatians 5:16-26*

**REVIEW: Just for review and to get back once again and lay the background for the book of Galatians. These are important background facts to keep in mind as we navigate this important and strategic book in the Bible.**

## **Review of 4 Important Background Facts on the Book of Galatians:**

(1) **Written by the Apostle Paul** – Paul wrote a large portion of the New Testament. This particular book/letter may have been his first letter. Also interesting to note is that some scholars believe that Paul have penned this letter himself, with his own hand (all of his other letters/writings were done through/with a personal amanuensis [scribe, secretary, recorder]).

(2) **Written as a circular letter** – Most of Paul's letter that we have in the New Testament were written to individual churches (i.e. Ephesians, Philippians) or to individuals (i.e. Timothy, Titus). This letter is different because it was written to a number of churches, and was meant to be passed/shared or "circulated" to each of these churches.

(3) **Written to churches in the region of Galatia** -Galatians is written to a number of different churches that Paul established during his first missionary journey in the region of Galatia in Asia Minor, which would be located in present day Turkey. This area was particularly important in the advance of the gospel and the New Testament church because it represented the movement of the good news/gospel further toward the west and to the rest of world, something Jesus had commanded from the very beginning of the New Testament church in Acts 1:8, "8 *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*"

(4) **Written to oppose and expose false teaching of the Judaizers** – After Paul had left the region of Galatia, following his first missionary journey and the establishment of these new churches, false teachers came in and began to expose these churches and new believers/Christians to false teaching. These false teachers were known as "Judaizers" and they

taught a “work-righteousness” system of salvation. Their teaching essentially said that in order to become a Christians you must first be circumcised and become a Jew, by obeying and following Jewish laws and customs. This was in direct contradiction to the good news/gospel Paul preached, which was salvation by grace, not by works.

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## CASE STUDIES

**Legalism Case Study 1:** I grew up in the church, and have been religious my whole life. I know what the Bible says and I do it. I strictly follow my religions and Christian upbringing, and I won’t compromise that... and never have. I believe with all heart that it is important how I live. As the Bible says, “...*Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.*” (Jas. 2:18) and even more direct are Paul’s words in **Philippians 2:12**, “... *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*” We have to work it out. I don’t doubt my salvation. I know I’m saved. I know because my life confirms it. It live it. I believe that what I do confirms, sustains and preserves my salvation. If you don’t go to church, if you don’t read your Bible, if you don’t pray, if you have never been baptized; furthermore, if you are one who regularly uses bad words, drinks alcohol or uses drugs, smokes, looks at pornography or sleeps around, and that list can go on and on... if you do those things you are not a Christian and you won’t go to heaven.

READ:  
James  
2:14-26

*\*NOTE: In Christianity, legalism is the excessive and improper use of the law. This legalism can take different forms. The first is where a person attempts to keep the Law in order to attain salvation. The second is where a person keeps the law in order to maintain his salvation. The third is when a Christian judges other Christians for not keeping certain codes of conduct that he thinks need to be observed.*

**License Case Study 2:** I grew up in a pretty strict church. As a kid you couldn’t go dancing, no drinking, no card playing, no movies. You weren’t supposed to go swimming with the opposite sex. It was hard being a teenager with those kind of rules and strict boundaries put on your life. When I got a little older and into college, I began to rebel some against all those rules and “do’s and don’ts.” I started thinking more for myself and studying the Bible for myself. I got involved in a college Christian group (Campus Crusade for Christ) and discovered somethings in the Bible that really set me free like **Ephesians 2:8-9**, “*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not of works, lest anyone should boast.*” I came to understand that we are saved by grace and not by what we do or don’t do, that God wasn’t going to zap me if I took a drink or looked at a girl. That I could go dancing and partying and I didn’t have to feel guilty about it. That was freeing to me! I also discovered that we have a freedom in Christ in **John 8:36**, “*So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*” And **Romans, chapter 14** really gave me a new perspective in this freedom I had in Christ, and that none of those strict “do’s and don’ts” are what saves me or makes me right with Christ, or what really matters. **Romans 14:14** says, “*I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself...*” I was free to go out and do pretty much anything I wanted because of “grace” I was covered. I know now that I am saved by grace and can’t lose my salvation, so I pretty much live like I want to and I don’t let the religious hypocrites dictate to me right and wrong. Oh, and by the way, I have found a church that is much more accepting of people like

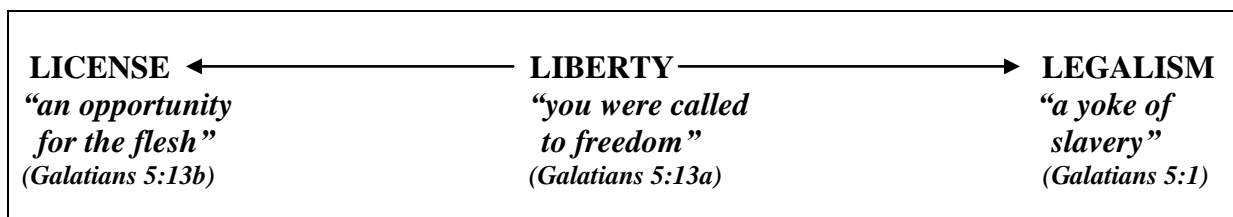
READ:  
Romans  
14:1-23

me as well... we welcome all kinds of people in our church. We even have open wine tasting parties, and hold dances occasionally. I was so excited recently to learn that our minister had celebrated the love between a same-sex couple by performing their wedding.

Anyone who teaches the Bible must guard against being unclear. Misunderstanding always lurks in the shadows, ready to pounce at the first sign of confusion... especially since most of us are given to extremes. We think in extremes. We react in extremes. We walk through our lives leaning in this or that direction. Take liberty (freedom) for example. We are “called to freedom”... we are to “keep standing firm” in freedom. Legalists come and steal our liberty (freedom), getting us back into bondage. On the other hand, many allow their liberty (freedom) to drift into license... “an opportunity for the indulgence of the flesh.” Not wanting to be misunderstood, Paul sets forth some of the clearest teaching in all the Bible on the Spirit-filled walk in Christ.

### AN EXPLANATION OF THE ISSUE

Perhaps the following chart will help to explain the issue Paul is stressing dealing with...



There is an answer to legalism: the death of Christ as set us free.

There is an answer to license: the Holy Spirit is able to control us

### A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM (Galatians 5:16-25)

In this text we have the most articulate explanation in the New Testament of the Spirit-filled walk/life.

#### 3 Parts to the Explanation of the Spirit Filled Life:

1. **The continuous conflict within us (vv.16-18)** – Notice Paul’s words in verses 16-18, *“<sup>16</sup>I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. <sup>17</sup>For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. <sup>18</sup>But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”* Notice in verse 17 that Paul says, *“... the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.”* That sums up the whole battle. John Stott terms this “an irreconcilable antagonism” (“The Message of Galatians,” pg. 146). With the flesh and the Spirit housed in the same body, the conflict is fierce, relentless and predictable, hitting us with discouraging regularity. A savage civil war goes on in our souls. Any child of God is a human battle ground
2. **Forces on opposite side (vv.19-23)** – In verses 19-23 Paul describes the sorts of conducts on the two sides of the conflict. Notice what He says in verses 19-23, *“<sup>19</sup>Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness,*

*lewdness, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup> envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*” Did you notice it... Paul’s words for the kinds of behaviors the opposing characters act out?

## **2 Opposing Sides and their Behaviors:**

1. **The flesh (vv.19-21)** – The characterizations here represents the dark side of our lives. Look at verse 19-21 again, *“<sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup> envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

### **4 Realms Represented:**

#### **(1) The realm of sexuality –**

- **Adultery -**
- **Fornication**
- **Uncleanness**
- **Lewdness**

#### **(2) The realm of religion –**

- **Idolatry** (where something apart from God receives our worship)
- **Sorcery** (secret tampering with the power of evil)

#### **(3) The realm of relationship –**

- **Hatred**
- **Contentions**
- **Jealousies**
- **Outbursts of wrath**
- **Selfish ambitions**
- **Dissensions**
- **Heresies**
- **Envy**
- **Murders**

run from the extremes of secret jealousy to open rage.

#### **(4) The realm of social sins –**

- **Drunkenness**
- **Revelries,**
- **And the like...**

Paul speaks of the whole scene of alcohol and drinking that takes charge of a person’s life, holding one in its tight grip with the word “drunkenness.” It is not just the idea of having too much to drink, but could also include having to drink, can go to motivation and effect. The idea of “revelries,” sometimes translated as

“carousing,” speaks of degenerate and unrestrained partying, and merriment typified by a loss of control.

**Note:** *The apostle of liberty concludes with a warning to those who habitually practice (by life style) these things at the end of verse 21, “... those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

2. **The Spirit (vv.22-23)** – Notice Paul’s words in verses 22-23... perhaps some of the most known and cherished words in the book/letter... Paul write, *“<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”* The text by itself is clear. Godly attributes that characterize the lives of only those who belong to God by faith in Christ and possess the Spirit of God. The Spirit produces fruit which consist of 9 characteristics or attitudes that are inextricably linked with each and are commanded of believers throughout the New Testament
  - **Love**
  - **Joy**
  - **Peace**
  - **Longsuffering**
  - **Kindness**
  - **Goodness**
  - **Faithfulness**
  - **Gentleness**
  - **Self-control**
  
3. **The victory that is attainable (vv.24-25)** – Here is Paul in verses 24-25... notice it, *“<sup>24</sup> And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”* When the child of God chooses to walk by the Spirit, two results will naturally... let’s say, supernaturally... even divinely occur.

## **2 Results of Walking by/in the Spirit:**

- (1) **The one who walks in the Spirit will not abuse his liberty** - In other words we act upon the fact that our flesh has been placed on the cross, crucified. Paul reminds us in verse 24, *“<sup>24</sup> And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”* In other words we will not use our freedom in Christ as an excuse to sin, but rather we will crucify... literally put to death our “... flesh with its passions and desires.” There is no opportunity for license if what you are wanting a “license” to do doesn’t exist anymore because it’s dead. This cuts the heart of the argument that grace and once saved always saved is a “license” to sin because it’s “cheap grace” and one can go out and live anyway they want to, because they can’t lost it anyway.
- (2) **The one who walks in the Spirit will experience the fruit of the Holy Spirit** – Paul says in verse 25, *“<sup>25</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”* We walk under the control of the Holy Spirit instead of the dominating power of the flesh. Look back at the fruit that produces on one’s life... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. There is not opportunity of legalism or license there.

## **A CLARIFICATION OF THE WALK**

Sixteen uncomplicated words make our responsibility clear

### **2 Statements of Clarification for Our Walk:**

- 1. Our walk must be started anew each dawn –**
- 2. Our walk must be maintained during each day -**