

## Paul's Letter to the Galatian Churches – Part 2 (late 48)

Galatians 4:8–6:18

### Paul's Own Life and Ministry Confirms Justification Apart from Circumcision

4:8 But at that time *when you* did not know God, you were enslaved to the things which by nature are not gods.  
 9 But now, *because you* have come to know God, or rather have come to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and miserable elemental spirits? Do you want to be enslaved to them all over again?  
 10 You carefully observe days and months and seasons and years.  
 11 I am afraid *for you*, lest perhaps I have labored for you in vain!  
 12 I ask you, brothers, become like me, because I also *have become* like you. You have done me no *wrong!*  
 13 But you know that because of an illness of the flesh I proclaimed the gospel to you the first time.  
 14 And you did not despise or disdain *what was* a trial for you in my flesh, but you welcomed me like an angel of God, like Christ Jesus.  
 15 So where *is* your blessing? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have torn out your eyes *and given them* to me!  
 16 So then, have I become your enemy *by being* truthful to you?  
 17 They zealously seek you, not commendably, but they want to exclude you, in order that you may seek them *zealously*.  
 18 But *it is* good to be sought zealously in good at all times, and not only when I am present with you.  
 19 My children, for whom I am having birth pains again, until Christ is formed in you!  
 20 But I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my tone because I am perplexed about you.

### An Allegory to Illustrate Justification Apart from Circumcision

21 Tell me, *you* who are wanting to be under the law, do you not understand the law?  
 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the female slave and one by the free woman.  
 23 But the one by the female slave was born according to human descent, and the one by the free woman through the promise,  
 24 which *things* are spoken allegorically, for these *women* are two covenants, one from Mount Sinai, bearing *children* for slavery, who is Hagar.  
 25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is a slave with her children.  
 26 But the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother.  
 27 For it is written,

“Rejoice, O barren woman, who does not give birth to *children*;  
 burst out and shout, *you* who do not have birth pains,  
 because many *are* the children of the desolate *woman*,  
 even more than *those of* the one who has a husband.” [\[Isa 54:1\]](#)

28 But you, brothers, are children of the promise, just as Isaac.  
 29 But just as at that time the *child* born according to human descent persecuted the *child born* according to the Spirit, so also now.  
 30 But what does the scripture say? “Drive out the female slave and her son, for the son of the female slave will never inherit with the son” of the free woman. [\[Gen 21:10\]](#)  
 31 Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the female slave but of the free woman.

### Stand Firm in Your Freedom

5:1 For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.  
 2 Look! I, Paul, tell you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing!  
 3 And again I testify to every man who becomes circumcised, that he is under obligation to keep the whole law.  
 4 You are estranged from Christ, *you* who are attempting to be justified by the law; you have fallen from grace.  
 5 For through the Spirit by faith we eagerly await the hope of righteousness.  
 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love.  
 7 You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?  
 8 This persuasion *is* not from the one who calls you!  
 9 A little leaven leavens the whole batch of dough.  
 10 I have confidence in you in the Lord that you will think nothing different, but the one who is confusing you will pay the penalty, whoever he may be.  
 11 Now, brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished.  
 12 I wish that the ones who are disturbing you would also castrate themselves!

### Don't Allow Your Freedom to Become a License for the Flesh

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not let your freedom *become* an opportunity for the flesh, but through love

serve one another.

14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” [[Lev 19:18](#)]

15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out *that* you are not consumed by one another.

16 But I say, live by the Spirit, and you will never carry out the desire of the flesh.

17 For the flesh desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, for these are in opposition to one another, so that whatever you want, you may not do these *things*.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are sexual immorality, impurity, licentiousness,

20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, factions,

21 envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, *things* which I am telling you *in advance*, just as I said before, that the ones who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self control. Against such things *there* is no law.

24 Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh together with its feelings and its desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, we must also follow the Spirit.

26 We must not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

### Spiritual Responsibilities

6:1 Brothers, even if a person is caught in some trespass, you *who are* spiritual restore such a person in a spirit of humility, looking out for yourself, lest you also be tempted.

2 Carry the burdens of one another, and so fulfill the law of Christ. [cf. [1 Cor 9:19–23](#)]

3 For if anyone thinks he is something *although he* is nothing, he is deceiving himself.

4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have a reason for boasting in himself alone, and not in someone else.

5 For each one will carry his own burden.

6 Now the one who is taught the word must share in all good *things* with the one who teaches.

7 Do not be deceived: God is not to be mocked, for whatever a person sows, this he will also reap,

8 because the one who sows to his own flesh will reap corruption from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

9 And let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap, *if we* do not give up.

10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all *people*, and especially to those who belong to the household of faith.

### Closing Remarks

11 See with what large letters I am writing to you with my *own* hand.

12 As many as are wanting to make a good showing in the flesh, these are attempting to compel you to be circumcised, only so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

13 For not even those who are circumcised observe the law themselves, but they want you to be circumcised in order that they may boast in your flesh.

14 But *as* for me, may it never be *that I* boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

15 For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. [cf. [1 Cor 7:19](#)]

16 And all those who follow this rule, peace and mercy *be* on them and on the Israel of God.

17 Finally, let no one cause me trouble, for I carry on my body the marks of Jesus.

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

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