

Gal 5:1

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.

Stand fast, hold your ground! Be planted firmly.

In Daniel chapter 6 Daniel was appointed over the satraps and governors.

What happens when a person decides to buckle and turn back to a worldly system?

What happens when a person turns from grace to law:

2 Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.

When a Jew was circumcised,

- he was making a statement that
- he's buying into the system.
- I'm believing this is going to lead me to God.

Paul said, if you do this then Christ will profit you nothing.

Before any of us came to the Lord, we had a debt that we couldn't pay.

Jesus made that clear in the parable of the two debtors. See Luke 7:36-50.

We're all spiritually bankrupt before the Lord. When we repent He is able and willing to forgive us or our sin thus making us spiritually rich thru His grace and mercy!

3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.

For a Jew wanting to get right with God

- he had the mindset that he had to be circumcised.

Some churches today do something similar thru baptism

- stating that you're not saved unless you're baptized.

Baptism should be an outward sign of an inward change

3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.

- If you're going down that road you have to do it the rest of your life.
- (It's like saying, you made your bed now lie in it).

4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

Jesus is everything or nothing.

- You can't have your cake and eat it too.

You can't acknowledge Jesus as your savior

- then go out and be circumcised
- which claims you can save yourself.

Which system will you live in,

- self-righteousness or Christ's righteousness?

5 For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Peter said:

1 Peter 1:3

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

We have a living hope in Jesus Christ!

6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision (Jews) nor uncircumcision (Gentiles) avails anything, but faith working through love.

- It doesn't matter if you're a Jew or a Gentile in Christ,
- you have to have faith working through love.

Gal 5:7

7 You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

In other words, you were getting along so well, then something got in your way.

- Your race started when you received Christ,
- it ends when you're with Christ!

How many have started the race well only to drop out!

- Speed humps are meant to slow us down not to stop us.

The writer of Hebrews says to run with endurance.

Paul said to the Corinthians:

1 Cor 9:24

24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

Paul said to the Philippians, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul never uses the image of a race

- to tell people how to be saved.
- He is always talking to Christians
- about how to live the Christian life.

A contestant in the Greek games had to be a citizen if he were to compete.

- You and I have become citizens of heaven through faith in Christ;

Paul spoke of us pressing on because our citizenship is in heaven!

Phil 3:12-21

Listen, we do not run to be saved;

- we run because we are already saved

Acts 20:24

24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Then Paul asked in verse 7 of Galatians, who hindered you from obeying the truth?

- Who has impeded you in your progress with the Lord,
- or who has set a road-block for you?

Jesus gave a stern warning to those causing someone to stumble:

Mark 9:42

42 "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.

What can hinder a person from obeying the truth? SIN!

Gal 5:8

8 This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you.

9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

- Leaven is yeast and starts off small
- and spreads until it controls the entire batch.

1 Cor 5:6-7

6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore purge (to cleans from filth) out the old leaven (symbol of sin), that you may be a new lump (be a better church), since you truly are unleavened.

Jesus said to the disciples to “take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.” He was warning the disciples of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

In the OT leaven was excluded from sacrifices.

- Each Passover the Jews had to search for leaven in their home for 7 days
- If they’d find any, they had to remove it because it was a symbol of evil
- because it permeates and modifies and transforms.

So the leaven in verse 9 represents the false doctrine as opposed to that which they had received. Again, “stand firm!”

Warning:

- if you allow a little leaven into the church
- it will permeate the entire body.

10 I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

Note here that Paul’s confidence was not in the people themselves, but in the Lord.

1 Peter 4:17

17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

In other words, we the believer will suffer persecution from time to time,

- this is necessary at times to keeps us
- in communion with the Lord.

What greater judgement will those who oppose Christ be!

Gal 5:11

11 And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.

People were offended because of the cross.

They don’t want you telling them that they’re a sinner, why?

- because they think they are good.

Some people will listen,

- and they will believe,
- and the conviction will lead them to repentance.

It's His goodness that leads people to repentance.

12 I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!

This is a nice way of saying what many other versions of this verse say,

- and that is “to castrate yourself.”

Most scholars believe Paul was referring to the actual self-emasculatation

Other scholars believe Paul may have been speaking metaphorically and referring to Deut 23:1

1 "He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the Lord.

Regardless of what was meant, those are some pretty stern words from Paul.

- neither is a good option.

Paul encouraged them to stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free,

You are no longer in bondage since you have been bought with a price.

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.

This is the ninth time Paul calls the Galatians “brethren,” a term of endearment. He says, you’ve been called to liberty.

We are not to use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh.

Never think that we have the liberty to go out

- and sin since we are believers.

The liberty we have is the liberty to “not sin!”

When we’re delivered from the bondage of sin.

- He begins to change us so that we no longer desire
- the sinful lusts of the flesh.

Perhaps you’ve struggled with a life dominating sin

- and the Lord has set you free.

Keep in mind, the law didn’t give people the power to overcome sin,

- it only showed them where they fell short.

The Holy Spirit not only shows us our sin,

- but He also helps us to overcome our sin.

9 But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.

1 Cor 8:9

The only way to truly love others is to have the nature of Christ according to 2 Peter 1:4.

Jesus told the disciples (Mk 9:35), "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

Paul said (1 Cor 9:19), For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;

Jesus said (Mt 20:28), For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,

Gal 5:14

For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Paul is saying,

- what the law couldn't produce
- is the very thing that results from our Christian liberty.
- He says to love your neighbor as yourself.

15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

This is what happens when an individual turns from the Lord, he grows sharp teeth.