GALATIANS CHAPTER 5

In your group read Galatians chapter 5 aloud. As a group discuss the general content of the chapter.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the "Additional Information."

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSE 1

::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: 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. (King James Version)

It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. (New American Standard Version)

Freedom is what we have—Christ has set us free! Stand, then, as free people, and do not allow yourselves to become slaves again. (Today's English Version)

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 2-4

::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: Galatians 5: [2] Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. [3] For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. [4] Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. (King James Version)

[2] Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. [3] And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is

under obligation to keep the whole Law. [4] You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. (New American Standard Bible)

[2] Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. [3] Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. [4] You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. (New International Version)

[2] It is I, Paul, who tell you this: if you allow yourselves to be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you at all. [3] With all solemnity I repeat my warning: Everyone who accepts circumcision is obliged to keep the whole Law. [4] But if you do look to the Law to make you justified, then you have separated yourselves from Christ, and have fallen from grace. (Jerusalem Bible)

[2] Listen to me! I, Paul, tell you that if you have the religious act of becoming a Jew done on you, Christ will be of no use to you at all. [3] I say it again. Everyman who has the religious act of becoming a Jew done on him must obey every Law. [4] If you expect to be made right with God by obeying the Law then you have turned away from Christ and His loving favor. (The New Life Testament)

2 Listen! I, Paul, tell you that if you allow yourselves to be circumcised, it means that Christ is of no use to you at all. 3 Once more I warn any man who allows himself to be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the whole Law. 4 Those of you who try to be put right with God by obeying the Law have cut yourselves off from Christ. You are outside God's grace. (Today's English Version)

²Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: If you are counting on circumcision to make you right with God, then Christ cannot help you. ³I'll say it again. If you are trying to find favor with God by being circumcised, you must obey all of the regulations in the whole law of Moses. ⁴For if you are trying to make yourselves right with God by keeping the law, you have been cut off from Christ! You have fallen away from God's grace. (New Living Translation)

Additional Information: (Verses 2-4) – The Galatians must make a clear choice between law and grace. Those who opt for justification by the works of the Law have fallen from grace, because it is impossible to have it both ways. In other words, the effective operating power of God's grace becomes ineffective in the life of anyone who trusts in his own efforts for salvation (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1779).

Trying to be saved by keeping the law and being saved by grace are two entirely different approaches. "Christ will be of no value to you at all" means that Christ's provision for our salvation will not help us if we are trying to save ourselves. Obeying the law does not make it any easier for God to save us. All we can do is accept his gracious gift through faith. Our deeds of service must never be used to try to earn God's love or favor (Life Application Bible, p. 2124).

(Verse 2) – "Circumcised." Paul had no objection to circumcision itself (cf. Acts 16:1-3; Phil. 3:5). But he objected to the notion that it had some spiritual benefit or merit with God and was a prerequisite or necessary component of salvation. Circumcision had meaning in Israel when it was a physical symbol of a cleansed heart (cf. Deut. 30:6; Jer. 4:4; 9:24-26) and served as a reminder of God's covenant of salvation promise (Gen. 17:9-10). "Christ ... profit you nothing." The atoning sacrifice of Christ cannot

benefit anyone who trusts in law and ceremony for salvation (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1797).

(Verse 3) – "A debtor to keep the whole law." God's standard is perfect righteousness, thus a failure to keep only one part of the law falls short of the standard (ibid, p. 1797).

(Verse 4) – "Estranged from Christ ... fallen from grace." The Greek word for "estranged" NKJV, means "to be separated," or "to be severed." The word for "fallen" means "to lose one's grasp on something." Paul's clear meaning is that any attempt to be justified by law is to reject salvation by grace. Those once exposed to the gracious truth of the gospel, who then turn their backs on Christ (Heb. 6:4-6) and seek to be justified by the law are separated from Christ and lose all prospects of God's gracious salvation. (Ibid. p. 1797). <:::::::::::::::: STOP AND DISCUSS.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 5-6

::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: Galatians 5: [5] For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. [6] For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. (King James Version)

⁵ But the Spirit makes us sure that God will accept us because of our faith in Christ. ⁶ If you are a follower of Christ Jesus, it makes no difference whether you are circumcised or not. All that matters is your faith that makes you love others. (Contemporary English Version)

5 For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. **6** For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love. **(New American Standard Version)**

[5] But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope. [6] For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. (New International Version)

Additional Information: (Verses 5-6) – True believers look forward through the Spirit to being accepted by God on the ground of faith not law. The reference is to the end of the age, when God pronounces the final verdict of acquittal upon Christians, and they fully experience the blessings of eternity (See Rom. 8:23; Heb. 9:28) (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1779).

(Verse 5) – "The hope of righteousness by faith." Christians already possess the imputed righteousness of Christ, but they still await the completed and perfected righteousness that is yet to come at glorification (Rom. 8:18, 21) (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1797).

(Verse 6) – "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything." (Gal. 6:15). Nothing done or not done in the flesh, even religious ceremony, makes any difference in one's relationship to God. What is external is immaterial and worth less, unless it reflects genuine internal righteousness (cf. Rom. 2:25-29). "Faith working

through love." Saving faith proves its genuine character by works of love. The one who lives by faith is internally motivated by love for God and Christ (cf. Matt. 22:37-40), which supernaturally issues forth in reverent worship, genuine obedience, and self-sacrificing love for others (Ibid. p. 1797). <::::::::::: STOP AND DISCUSS.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 7-10

:::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: Galatians 5: [7] Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? [8] This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. [9] A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. [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. (King James Version)

⁷You were getting along so well. Who has interfered with you to hold you back from following the truth? ⁸ It certainly isn't God, for he is the one who called you to freedom. ⁹ But it takes only one wrong person among you to infect all the others—a little yeast spreads quickly through the whole batch of dough! ¹⁰ I am trusting the Lord to bring you back to believing as I do about these things. God will judge that person, whoever it is, who has been troubling and confusing you. (**New Living Translation**)

⁷ You were doing so well until someone made you turn from the truth. ⁸ And that person was certainly not sent by the one who chose you. ⁹ A little yeast can change a whole batch of dough, ¹⁰ but you belong to the Lord. That makes me certain that you will do what I say, instead of what someone else tells you to do. Whoever is causing trouble for you will be punished. (Contemporary English Version)

[7] You began your race well: who made you less anxious to obey the truth? [8] You were not prompted by him who called you! [9] The yeast seems to be spreading through the whole batch of you. [10] I feel sure that, united in the Lord, you will agree with me, and anybody who troubles you in future will be condemned, no matter who he is. (Jerusalem Bible)

Additional Information: (Verses 7-12) – Paul severely condemns the false teachers who were hindering (v. 7), persuading (v. 8), and troubling (vv. 10, 12) the Galatians (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1779). <:::::::::: STOP AND DISCUSS.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 11-12

::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: 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. [12] I would they were even cut off which trouble you. (King James Version)

¹¹ My friends, if I still preach that people need to be circumcised, why am I in so much trouble? The message about the cross would no longer be a problem, if I told

people to be circumcised. ¹² I wish that everyone who is upsetting you would not only get circumcised, but would cut off much more! (Contemporary English Version)

[11] Christian brothers, if I would still preach that people must go through the religious act of becoming a Jew to be a Christian, I would not be suffering from those who are making it hard for me. If I preached like that, the Jews would have no reason to be against the cross of Christ. [12] I wish those who are so willing to cut your bodies would complete the job by cutting themselves off from you. (The New Life Testament)

Additional Information: (Verse 11) – "Still preach circumcision." Apparently the Judaizers had falsely claimed that Paul agreed with their teaching. But he makes the point that if he was preaching circumcision as necessary for salvation, why were the Judaizers persecuting him instead of supporting him? "Offense of the cross." The Greek word for "offense" can mean "trap," "snare," or "stumbling block." Any offer of salvation that strips man of the opportunity to earn it by his own merit breeds opposition (cf. Rom. 9:33) (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1797).

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 13-15

:::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: 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. [14] For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (Leviticus 19:18) [15] But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. (King James Version)

¹³ My friends, you were chosen to be free. So don't use your freedom as an excuse to do anything you want. Use it as an opportunity to serve each other with love.
 ¹⁴ All that the Law says can be summed up in the command to love others as much as you love yourself. ¹⁵ But if you keep attacking each other like wild animals, you had better watch out or you will destroy yourselves. (Contemporary English Version)

[13] My brothers, you were called, as you know, to liberty; but be careful, or this liberty will provide an opening for self-indulgence. Serve one another, rather, in works of love, [14] since the whole of the Law is summarized in a single command: *Love your neighbor as yourself.* [15] If you go snapping at each other and tearing each other to pieces, you had better watch or you will destroy the whole community. (Jerusalem Bible)

(**Verse 13**) – Paul distinguishes between freedom to sin and freedom to serve. Freedom or license to sin is no freedom at all, because it enslaves you to Satan, others, or your own sinful nature. Christians, by contrast, should not be slaves to sin, because

they are free to do right and to glorify God through loving service to others (Life Application Bible, p. 2124).

(Verse 14) – "All the law." The ethics of the former Old Testament law are the same as those of the New Testament gospel as indicated in the quote from Lev. 19:18 (see Rom. 7:12; 8:4). When a Christian genuinely loves others, he fulfills all the moral requirements of the former Mosaic law concerning them (Matt. 22:36-40; cf. Deut. 6:5; Rom. 13:8-10). This is the ruling principle of Christian freedom (Gal. 5:6, 13) (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1798).

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 16-18

::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: Galatians 5: [16] This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. [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. [18] But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. (King James Version)

won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. ¹⁷ The old sinful nature loves to do evil, which is just opposite from what the Holy Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are opposite from what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, and your choices are never free from this conflict. ¹⁸ But when you are directed by the Holy Spirit, you are no longer subject to the law. (New Living Translation)

¹⁶ If you are guided by the Spirit, you won't obey your selfish desires. ¹⁷ The Spirit and your desires are enemies of each other. They are always fighting each other and keeping you from doing what you feel you should. ¹⁸ But if you obey the Spirit, the Law of Moses has no control over you. **(Contemporary English Version)**

[16] Let me put it like this: if you are guided by the Spirit you will be in no danger of yielding to self-indulgence, [17] since self-indulgence is the opposite of the Spirit, the Spirit is totally against such a thing, and it is precisely because the two are so opposed that you do not always carry out your good intentions. [18] If you are led by the Spirit, no law can touch you. (Jerusalem Bible)

Additional Information: (Verse 16) – "Walk in the Spirit." All believers have the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit as the personal power for living to please God. The form of the Greek verb translated "walk" indicates continuous action, or a habitual lifestyle. Walking also implies progress; as a believer submits to the Spirit's control – that is, responds in obedience to the simple commands of Scripture – he grows in his spiritual life. "The Flesh." This is not simply the physical body, but includes the mind, will, and emotions which are all subject to sin. It refers in general to our unredeemed humanness (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1798).

(Verse 17) – "Contrary to one another." The flesh opposes the work of the Spirit and leads the believer toward sinful behavior he would not otherwise be compelled to do (Rom. 7:14-25) (Ibid., p. 1798).

The Spirit and **the flesh** are diametrically opposed to one another, as evidenced by their "works" and "fruit" (Gal. 5:19-22). The result is a fierce and unrelenting conflict within Christians in which they cannot be victorious by their own strength. See Rom. 7:15-23 (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1779).

(Verse 18) – The person who is led by the Spirit will do what is right freely, and not by the compulsion of the law. Thus, he is not under the Law's bondage and condemnation (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1780). <::::::::: STOP AND DISCUSS.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 19-21

:::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: Galatians 5: [19] Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, [20] Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, [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. (King James Version)

[19] The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; [20] idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions [21] 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. (New International Version)

¹⁹ When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, ²⁰ idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. (New Living Translation)

¹⁹ People's desires make them give in to immoral ways, filthy thoughts, and shameful deeds. ²⁰ They worship idols, practice witchcraft, hate others, and are hard to get along with. People become jealous, angry, and selfish. They not only argue and cause trouble, but they are ²¹ envious. They get drunk, carry on at wild parties, and do other evil things as well. I told you before, and I am telling you again: No one who does these things will share in the blessings of God's kingdom. (Contemporary English Version)

Additional Information: (Verse 21) – "They which do, that is, **practice** such things." (NKJV). Here is the key word in Paul's warning. The sense of this Greek verb describes continual, habitual action. Although believers undoubtedly can commit these sins, those people whose basic character is summed up in the uninterrupted and

unrepentant practice of them cannot belong to God (See 1 Jn. 3:10) (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1798). <:::::::::::: STOP AND DISCUSS.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 22-23

::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: Galatians 5: [22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, [23] Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (King James Version)

²² But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law. **(New Living Translation)**

[22] But the fruit that comes from having the Holy Spirit in our lives is: love, joy, peace, not giving up, being kind, being good, having faith, [23] being gentle, and being the boss over our own desires. The Jewish Law is not against these things. (The New Life Testament)

GALATIANS CHAPTER 5 VERSES 24-26

:::::::> READ THE FOLLOWING: Galatians 5: [24] And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. [25] If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. [26] Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. (King James Version)

²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. ²⁵ If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, or irritate one another, or be jealous of one another. (New Living Translation)

Translation)

24 And because we belong to Christ Jesus, we have killed our selfish feelings and desires. 25 God's Spirit has given us life, and so we should follow the Spirit. 26 But don't be conceited or make others jealous by claiming to be better than they are. (Contemporary English Version)

Additional Information: (Verse 24) – In order to accept Christ as Savior, we need to turn from our sins and willingly nail our sinful nature to the cross. This doesn't mean, however, that we will never see traces of its evil desires again. As Christians we still have the capacity to sin, but we have been set free from sin's power over us and no longer have to give in to it. We must daily commit our sinful tendencies to God's control, daily crucify them, and moment by moment draw on the Spirit's power to overcome them (See Gal. 2:20; 6:14) (Life Application Bible, p. 2126).

(Verse 25) - God is interested in every part of our lives, not just the spiritual part. As we live by the Holy Spirit's power, we need to submit every aspect of our lives to God – emotional, physical, social, intellectual, vocational. Paul says that because we're saved, we should live like it! The Holy Spirit is the source of your new life, so keep in step with his leading. Don't let anything or anyone else determine your values and standards in any area of your life (Ibid., 2126). <:::::::::::: STOP AND DISCUSS.

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Galatians Chapter 5)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Galatians Chapter 5.

- 1. **Read Galatians 5:1**. Christ made us free. Don't get tied up again to the chains of slavery to: a. drugs. b. alcohol. c. <u>Jewish laws and ceremonies</u>.
- 2. **Read Galatians 5:2**. If you let yourselves be circumcised as a means of justification, that is, to make yourselves right with God, then Christ will: a. be happy. b. be of no value to you at all. c. answer your prayers.
- 3. **Read Galatians 5:2.** If you are counting on circumcision or any other religious law to make you right with God, then Christ: a. will overlook your faults. b. help you in your effort. c. <u>cannot save you</u>.
- 4, **Read Galatians 5:4**. If you are trying to get right with God by obeying religious law, then you have fallen: a. down a hill. b. off a ladder. c. on your knees. d. <u>from God's grace</u>.
- 5. **Read Galatians 5:5**. We are eagerly waiting for the fulfillment of our hope of righteousness that comes through faith and by the Holy Spirit. <u>True</u> or False.
- 6. **Read Galatians 5:6**. Whether we are circumcised or not is of no importance or concern to those who are trusting Christ for salvation. <u>True</u> or False.
- 7. **Read Galatians 5:6**. What does matter is faith that expresses itself in love for God and others. True or False.
- 8. **Read Galatians 5:7**. The Galatians were running a good race. They were obeying the truth. Someone was trying to stop them. <u>True</u> or False.
- 9. **Read Galatians 5:9**. It takes only one person with wrong doctrine to infect all the others. True or False.
- 10. **Read Galatians 5:11**. The rumor that Paul continued to preach the ways of circumcision (as he did in his pre-conversion days) is absurd. <u>True</u> or False.
- 11. **Read Galatians 5:13**. As Christians we were given freedom, but not freedom to do wrong, but to love and serve each other. <u>True</u> or False.
- 12. **Read Galatians 5:14**. All the law is summed up in one command: "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." True or False.
- 13. **Read Galatians 5:16**. If we walk and are guided by the Holy Spirit then we will not be in danger of yielding to: a. the flesh. b. self-indulgence. c. <u>all the above</u>.
- 14. **Read Galatians 5:17**. The Spirit gives us desires that are opposite from the flesh. True or False.

- 15. **Read Galatians 5:18**. If you allow yourselves to be led and controlled by the Holy Spirit, you are free from any need to be put under the restraints of the law. <u>True</u> or False.
- 16. **Read Galatians 5:19-21**. A person that practices the works of the flesh (indulges in & lives that sort of life), will: a. inherit the kingdom of God. b. not inherit the kingdom of God. c. be a bad testimony.
- 17. **Read Galatians 5:22-23**. The fruit that comes from having the Holy Spirit in our lives is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. True or False.
- 18. **Read Galatians 5:21** (New King James Version). What word identifies and shows the fruit of those saved and those lost? <u>The word *practice* shows the difference</u> between true repentance and the lack of it.
- 19. **Read Galatians 5:24**. Those who belong to Christ Jesus: a. say it doesn't matter what you do. b. don't want what the sinful nature loves and longs for.
- 20. **Read Galatians 5:25**. We should follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. True or False.

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