

FREE – Galatians, Part 3

The dilemma that Paul faced in the book of Galatians is still with us in 21st century Christendom. On one side Paul had the LEGALISTS who were trying to add the LAW to the gospel. On the other side Paul had the LIBERTARIANS who were trying to add the WORLD to the gospel. On one side was FALSE RIGHTEOUSNESS; on the other side was FALSE FREEDOM. And Paul considered both extremes to be enemies of the cross of Christ. As a result, he had enemies and critics on both sides!

**BOTH SIDES WERE READING THE BIBLE THROUGH A FILTER.
BOTH SIDES WERE OUT OF BALANCE IN RELATIONSHIP TO GOD.**

Paul didn't preach legalism and he didn't preach libertarianism – Paul preached the CROSS of Jesus Christ!

To the LEGALISTS, Paul declared ...

Galatians 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

No amount of obedience can make up for one act of disobedience!

Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Jesus took our curse and freed us forever from having to “measure up.”

“STOP ADDING TO THE CROSS”

To the LIBERTARIANS, Paul declared ...

Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

If you are not separated from the world by the cross, you just don't get it!

Hebrews 10:28-29 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

God doesn't give us an easier set of laws; He gives us mercy (forgives us for breaking the law) and grace (provides power for us to live the law).

“STOP TRAMPLING THE CROSS”

IN LIGHT OF THE CROSS, HOW COULD YOU EVER GO BACK ?!

Galatians 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

Galatians 3:3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Galatians 4:9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

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.

REMEMBER – THERE IS A YOKE OF BONDAGE ON BOTH SIDES!

Galatians 5:11-13 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. I would they were even cut off which trouble you. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

THE OPPOSITE OF LEGALISM IS NOT LICENSE – THE OPPOSITE OF LEGALISM IS LOVE! We don't stop obeying the law of God, we just obey it for a different reason! (i.e. children obeying parents out of love)

It is at this point that Paul lists the “WORKS OF THE FLESH” and the “FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.” Works is plural – just ONE of these is enough to condemn you before God. Fruit is singular – just one of these is NOT enough to justify you before God. Christianity is not a religion of “NOT DOING” bad things, or even a religion of “DOING” good things – it is a relationship of “BEING” a real child of God, THROUGH THE CROSS.

Galatians 5:18-25 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 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. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

LEGALISTS – “I HAVE TO”

LIBERTARIANS – “I DON'T WANT TO”

CHRISTIANS – “I GET TO!”

THE CROSS ISN'T JUST MY LIBERATOR, IT IS MY MOTIVATOR!

Galatians 5:19-21 (MES) It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; an impotence to love or be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community. I could go on. This isn't the first time I have warned you, you know. If you use your freedom this way, you will not inherit God's kingdom.