

**GALATIANS**  
**Freedom in Christ**  
**Session 7: Galatians 5:13-6:18**

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**THE POSTSCRIPT**

*A scribe wrote the actual letter for Paul. Paul adds a summary of his letter in the closing verses at the end*

**GALATIANS 6**

<sup>11</sup>See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand!

**The Problem that Occasioned the Letter**

<sup>12</sup>It is those who want to make “a good showing **in the flesh**” =to impress people  
that try to compel you to be circumcised

*(become Jews in order to be 1<sup>st</sup> class Christians; See story of Peter in Gal.2:4, 14)*

— (for one reason) only:

that they may not be persecuted  
for the cross of Christ.

*(Persecution by their fellow Jews? Why? For being “unbiblical law breakers”?)*

<sup>13</sup>Even the circumcised do not themselves obey **the law**,

*Law-as-God’s Rules? Law-as-Scripture? Or Law-as-Covenant?*

but they want you to be circumcised so that they may **boast** about your flesh.

*(evangelism? numbers? Now one of us)*

<sup>14</sup>May I never **boast** of anything

except **the cross** of our Lord Jesus Christ,

- by which the world has been crucified to me,
- and I to the world.

The Cross:

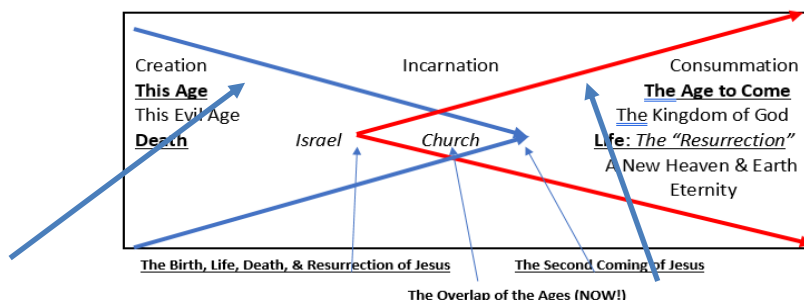
1. An event **in History** that “splits” time

2. An Event **in my life** which

Makes less important “what I do for God,”

Compared to “what God does for me!”

**THE TWO AGES OF ANCIENT JUDAISM**



<sup>15</sup>For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but **a new creation** (*is everything*)!

### The theme of “New Creation” . . .

2 Cor. 5:17 “*If anyone in Christ = new creation*”

Is.65:17

*I am about to create a new heaven and a new earth, the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind*

→ *A fresh start with healed relationships?*

→ *A new Word from God -- Back in Eden?*

→ *No more “death for sin” (Genesis 2:17)*

Ephesians 2:15-16

*“Christ has abolished the Law with its commandments  
that he might create in himself **one new humanity** in place of the two,  
thus making peace  
and might reconcile both groups to God in one body  
through the cross*

<sup>16</sup>As for those who will follow this “measuring stick”/rule—(“*canon*”= *the new covenant established by Christ*)

- peace and mercy
- be upon them --(and/even?) upon the Israel of God.

**(God’s ancient people? And/or the church?)**

<sup>17</sup>From now on,

- let no one make trouble for me;
- for I bear/carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body.

*(Not the mark of circumcision but the marks of death, and of belonging to Christ as his slave  
= Paul’s “boasts.” see 2 Cor 11:21-25)*

→ Hast Thou No Scar? by Amy Carmichael (1867-1951)

#### **Hast thou no scar?**

No hidden scar on foot, or side, or hand?  
I hear thee sung as mighty in the land;  
I hear them hail thy bright, ascendant star.  
Hast thou no scar?

#### **Hast thou no wound?**

Yet I was wounded by the archers; spent,  
Leaned Me against a tree to die; and rent  
By ravening beasts that compassed Me, I swooned.  
Hast thou no wound?

#### **No wound? Nor scar?**

Yet, as the Master shall the servant be,  
And piercèd are the feet that follow Me.  
But thine are whole; can he have followed far  
Who hast no wound or scar?

<sup>18</sup>**May the grace (= *gift*) of our Lord Jesus Christ**

- Is “grace” a gift from the hand of Jesus? ***OR is the gift the hand of the giver?***

- Is forgiveness just about me: my release from guilt? **OR** *is forgiveness inseparable from reconciliation with another?*

**be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. AMEN.**

*It's been a tough letter but the last word = family!*

OUR EMPHASIS TODAY

.. the Moral Teaching in Galatians 5:13-6:10

**SUMMARY: Do not mistake “freedom” for moral “license”**

**THE PROBLEM ...**

- *If Christ has borne our death & Genesis 2:17 (“the day you eat the fruit you will die) no longer applies*
- *If there are “no consequences for sin,” but only mercy*  
... *then, why bother morally?*

#### **Galatians 5:13-24**

<sup>13</sup>**For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters;**  
only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for “the flesh”

*FLESH: not just sex or self-indulgence,*

*but all activities that seem to humans to be right – like eating the fruit in Eden – but do no good*

**but through love become slaves to one another.**

*(Remember Christ! His willingness to become like a slave for us – Philippians 2 = the only liberating slavery)*

<sup>14</sup>For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment,

*(= the “law of Christ”?) -- “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

<sup>15</sup>If, however, you bite and devour one another,

*(Has Paul heard that relationships within the church have turned sour?)*

*(“Bite & Devour” – is this a hint of Adam and Eve biting the fruit in the Garden?)*

take care that you are not consumed by one another.

<sup>16</sup> **BUT I say, Live (= walk) by the Spirit,**

*= you are fully in God's presence, NOW!)*

and do not gratify the desires of the flesh

*(Keep your eyes on Christ -- not on the merely human perspective).*

**→ Even with The Spirit There is a Spiritual/Moral Battle**

**See Romans 7!**

- <sup>17</sup>For what the flesh desires *is opposed to the Spirit,*
- and what the Spirit desires *is opposed to the flesh;*
- *for these are opposed to each other,*  
*to hinder (not = ‘prevent’) you from doing what you want.*

<sup>18</sup>**But**

**Even if there is still a battle**

**if you are led by the Spirit,**

**you have a great advantage**

- *the possibility of real power to change*
- *unlimited life and freedom ..*

*because*

**You are not under the law –**

*You are back in the garden with an unlimited array of trees to eat from!*

*“You may freely eat of every tree in the Garden” as in Genesis 2:16*

Now . . . (says Paul: *let me put it like this*)

<sup>19</sup>**THE WORKS OF THE FLESH** are obvious:

*Yes -- “FLESH” includes issues of sexuality -- But -- is far more than that:  
The “FLESH” is the world limited by human horizons, appetites, power, and ability*

- Sexuality: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,
- Relationship with God: <sup>20</sup>idolatry, sorcery,
- Relationship with others: enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, <sup>21</sup>envy,
- Relationship with Self: drunkenness, carousing,

and things like these.

I am warning you, as I warned you before:

-- *those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

*(they will still die?)*

<sup>22</sup>**By contrast . . .**

**THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

*(“fruit” is a reference to the garden, and this fruit leads to healed relationships)*

**Is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, and self-control.**

**There is no law → no “DON’T EAT” rule**

**against such things.**

***= Unlimited Possibilities! = True Freedom! → We’re back in Garden of Eden***

***= all kinds of fruits – including the “tree of life” -- are open to us***

<sup>24</sup>And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh (see above v.19) with its passions and desires.

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### **Practical Admonitions**

*for living life in the “Christ-Temple” – in a family –  
with significant differences that includes both Jews and Gentiles*

**Galatians 5:25-6:10**

<sup>25</sup>If we live (= *have found eternal life*)

by the Spirit, let us also be in line with the elementary principles of the Spirit.

*(= the fruit, and the steps below)*

<sup>26</sup>**Let us not**

- become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another. (see -- Jesus: James & John, Luk

[CHAPTER 6]

For example . . . Brothers and sisters,

*(because Holy Spirit makes family; see 4:6; 6:10)*

### **1. Mutual Correction**

**if anyone is detected in a transgression**

*(transgression of what law?*

*Paul clearly affirms the 10 C’s in Romans 13; OR, the law of Christ?)*

**you who have received the Spirit should**

*(act as if you were in the same family)*

- **restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.**

*(5:23, fruit of Spirit)*

Moses: Lev.19:17,18

→ *“you shall reprove your neighbor or you shall incur guilt yourself. Love your neighbor as yourself”*

Jesus

- *Forgive: how many times? – Matt.18:15-22*
- *Restore relationships – Matt.5:23-26;*
- *Forgive trespassers/debtors – Matt. 6:12,15)*

Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. → **AS ADAM & PETER WERE!**

by copying the sin! OR By pride? Or doing nothing!

See “take care that the light in you is not darkness” Lk.11:35; or Gethsemane Matt.26:41)

- **<sup>2</sup>Bear one another’s burdens,**

= **What God does for us:** *God wants to lift burdens more than impose burdens*

Psalm 55:22

**Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you;**

1 Peter 5:7

**Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.**

Isaiah 53:4

**He has carried our iniquities;**

Rom.15:1-2

**the strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak, to build up the church**

... Cf. Parable Good Samaritan?)

and in **this** way (*contrasted with circumcision?*) you will fulfill **the law** of Christ.

(= Love one another? Love neighbor? Love enemy?

OR the Law as Scripture that points to Christ?)

## **2. Self-Reflection**

<sup>3</sup>For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves.

(Jesus → take lower seat at banquet; who is greatest? Lk.14:8)

<sup>4</sup>All must test their own work;

Paul – “Examine yourselves” – 2 Cor. 13:5; Jesus – “take log out of own eye” – Matt.7:5

-- then that work, rather than their neighbor’s work, will become a cause for boasting.

<sup>5</sup>For **all must carry their own loads.**

(House on Sand/Rock: Matt.7:24-27; Parables: Talents? Matt.25:14-30; Unfair Wages? Matt.20:1-16)

## **3. Church/Household Support**

<sup>6</sup>Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher.

(Jesus: “the laborer deserves his food,” Mtt.10:10 . . But who is “the teacher” Paul has in mind?)

**Accountability Remains** (*Judgment*)

*No Genesis 2:17? . . . BUT*

<sup>7</sup>Do not be deceived; God is not mocked,

for you **reap** whatever you **sow**.

<sup>8</sup>If you **sow** to your own *flesh*,

you will **reap** corruption from the *flesh*;

but if you **sow** to the *Spirit*,

you will **reap** eternal life from the *Spirit*

<sup>9</sup>So let us not grow weary in doing what is right

(2 Thessalonians 3:13)

for we will **reap** at “the time,”

if we do not give up.

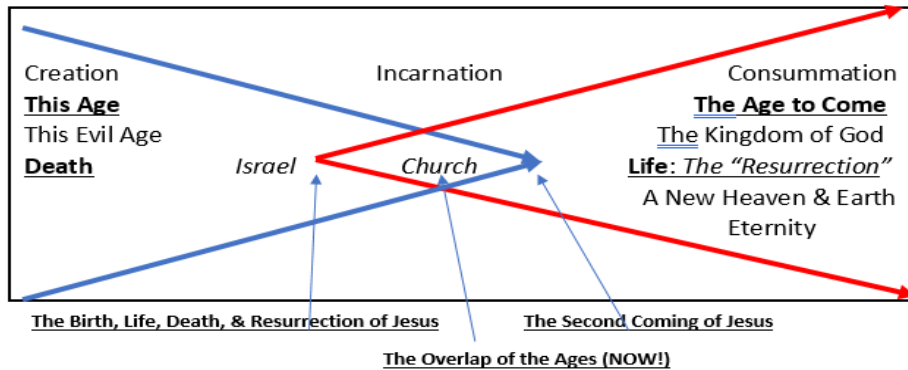
(see “flesh” Gal. 5:16-21; 3:3;

See “sow” Proverbs 22:8;

See sow, and flesh: Parable Sower, Matthew 13;

Parable of Judge – “pray and not lose heart” Lk.18:21)

<sup>10</sup>So then, Since we have (from God) “the time” (*NOT opportunity*)



- let us work for the good of all,  
(= *faith working through love, 5:6; love one another – John 13:34; The least of these --Matthew 25*)
- and especially for those of the **family (household)** of faith/Christ.  
(“when ‘faith’ came” = Christ? 3:23, as opposed to Household of Israel, )  
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## GALATIANS -- SUMMARY

### What does Freedom in Christ look like?

1. Power over the power of peer pressure (*Simon Peter’s bending to others*)
2. Power over the temptation to say to God, “*look what I’ve done for you*”
3. Trusting in the factuality of Paul’s message -- based on the historicity of his confrontation by Jesus
4. Embracing the centrality of Jesus’ life, death/cross, resurrection as the means to break the power of Genesis 2:17  
& Provide
  - Not only forgiveness . . But . .
  - a change in “the times”
  - a change in the covenant
  - a change in the family of God
  - a change in the Temple
5. Affirming the centrality of Scripture – and working hard to rightly understand
6. Galatians 3:28 – Working to ensure the church is a diverse community of
  - Men, Women
  - Jews, Gentiles (the rest of the world!)
  - Slave Free

### **Final Questions**

- Are you IN Christ?
- Is Christ IN You (by his Spirit)
  
- Do you know the “Temple/Shekinah glory?” → Are you living in the truth of God’s Spirit present with you?
- Are you Bearing Fruit?
  - In your self?
  - In your church?