

Liberty in the Spirit
Galatians 5:16–26 (Galatians at a Gallup)

Grace Chapel

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November 19, 2006

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW (Galatians 1:1–5:15)

Amazingly, amateur legalists pulled Galatians from the grace gospel revealed to Paul (a former legalist). Thus, Paul did not learn the gospel from men, not even from the apostles (ch. 1). Instead, the great heroes to the legalists (Peter, James, & John) see Paul as an equal, with Peter even accepting Paul's rebuke for shunning Gentiles (ch. 2). Tho divine signs persuaded these believers about Christ & they received the Spirit [as a seal], legalists tricked them that the Law was also needed; but all law-keepers are under a death-curse, which death curse Christ removed from all believers & gave life (3:1–14). God unilaterally confirmed the Covenant to Abraham & his [linear] Seed, so it cannot be altered, but God temporarily added the Law to display sin as sin until Christ made believers alive, (specifically) faith in Christ rendered the Galatian believers God's children (blessed through the Abrahamic Covenant), rendering all racial, gender, or life-station distinctions secondary (3:15–29) Israel lacked authority as a minor heir under the Law as a babysitter (despite promises that it will be the world's key nation), until Christ redeemed both Jews & Gentiles, making all believers sons & heirs (4:1–7), but (unlike Israel) the Galatians were once pagan polytheists, but now as believers who have known God, enslavement to human rules risks loss of reward (4:8–11), so they should resume mutual fellowship with Paul, (4:12–15), who labors again for these whose wandering and animosity distresses him (4:16–20). Would-be legalists should observe that not all sons of Abraham are free, as two covenants; Law (pictured by Hagar) and the Abrahamic (pictured by Sarah) show that enslaved legalists will persecute those with liberty until the legalists are expelled (4:21–31). Gbels should live as ones Christ liberated, not as Law-slaves who submit to [religious] circumcision that have become alienated from Christ [because] they fell from grace [to legalism] because they no longer eagerly await righteousness [in Christ's presence], so circumcision has no relation to accomplishes [rewardable righteousness], but faith working through love [accomplishes it] (5:1–6) The Galatians ceased being truth-persuaded and leaven temporarily distorted their view of grace, but persecution by legalists proves that Paul no longer preaches circumcising [Gentiles], so the troublemakers should (figuratively speaking) have themselves neutered spiritually (impotent to produce converts); thus, Paul reminds them that God called them to liberty: not to indulge the sin nature, but liberty to serve (thru love) as slaves each other—loving neighbors to the degree as each loves himself fulfills what the Law required, but destroying neighbors leads to self-destruction (5:7–15).

EXPOSITION

5:16 Walking by the Spirit nullifies both fleshly [license and fleshly legalism]

5:17 [Walking by the Spirit nullifies both fleshly license & fleshly legalism] because the flesh & the Spirit war against each other, so willpower fails to achieve the goal

Flesh and Spirit war against each other

You do not do the things that you wish

5:18 Those who are led by the Spirit are not under Law [where the flesh flourishes]

5:19–21a The flesh produces sensual sins, religious deviations, inter-personal conflict, drunken excess, and similar [“Me first”] sins

¹⁹ Sensual sins	1. adultery [NU omits]	<i>moicheia</i>
	2. fornication	<i>porneia</i>
	3. uncleanness	<i>akatharsia</i>
	4. licentiousness	<i>aselgeia</i>
²⁰ Religious deviations	5. idolatry	<i>eidōlatreia</i>
	6. sorcery	<i>pha_____</i>
Inter-personal conflict	7. hatred	<i>echthrai</i>
	8. contentions	<i>ereis</i>
	9. jealousies	<i>zēloi</i>
	10. outbursts of wrath	<i>thumoi</i>
	11. selfish ambitions	<i>eritheiai</i>
	12. dissentions	<i>dichostasiai</i>
	13. heresies	<i>haireseis</i>
²¹	14. envy	<i>phthonoi</i>
	15. murders [NU omits]	<i>phonoī</i>
Drunken excess	16. drunkenness	<i>methai</i>
	17. revelries	<i>kōmoi</i>
Et cetera	18. and the like	

5:21b Those not led by the Spirit will inherit no rulership role in the kingdom (reward)

5:22–23a [In contrast with sins produced by the flesh] the Spirit produces [grace to others] love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith[fulness], gentleness, self-control

Fruit is singular, but is a *mass* noun, not a *count* noun (like *seed* and like *fish*).

We caught fish(es). We planted seed(s). We picked fruit(s).

In this passage, *fruit* means

Love *agapē*

Joy *chara*

Peace *eirēnē*

Longsuffering *makrothumia*

Kindness *chrēstotēs*

Goodness *agathōsunē*

Faith[fulness] *pistis*

Gentleness *praotēs*

Self-control *enkrateia*

5:23b No law prohibits [grace toward others] love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith[fulness], gentleness, self-control

5:24 [In addition to no law prohibiting grace toward others a result of believing His promise of everlasting life] is that the flesh has been crucified [losing its absolute power]

Cf. Galatians 2:20

This does not mean that believers do not experience temptation

5:25 Believers ought to walk by the Spirit, because they possess everlasting life by the Spirit

5:26 Believers ought to avoid conceit, which results in envious provocation

CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION