

## ***“The Normal Christian Life – HOW Then Should We Live, Part 5?”***

### ***Our Outline Today: “HOW Then Should We Live?”***

- ***Only the Fruit of the Spirit Can Satisfy the Law’s Demand***
- ***The Dynamic of the Normal Christian Life Is Far Above the Law***
- ***Carnality Is A Red Flag On Our Lives As Believers***
- ***The Fruit of the Spirit Reveals God’s Work Within Us***
- ***The Walk of the Believer Under Grace Is Moment By Moment***

### ***Introduction:***

Our goals in this study today:

To establish once and for all in our minds (and hearts) the Pauline teaching on our walk under grace, not law. Paul boldly states that we share in Christ’s victory over sin and death so completely that it may be manifested moment by moment in our abundant living.

Next time, we will address, Lord willing, a remaining and important topic: What about good works? How and where do they fit into the believers’ lives?

Now, and I should not need to say it, our study today is not about Paul telling us what we have to do to please God, for that would be to place us under another law. The teaching in Galatians chapter five, his central teaching on the dynamics of our living under grace, begins with a gracious exhortation. Yes, verse 16 in chapter 5 of the Galatians is a present imperative linguistically. But the context here and the language at the beginning of the verse, “*This I say then*” changes the meaning of into an exhortation, and one of a most gracious kind.

For this is all about what we are privileged to enjoy, as we walk in newness of life and under the shadow, guidance, and protection, of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. May the Lord God bless our study in his word today. Amen.

### ***I. Only the Fruit of the Spirit Can Satisfy the Law’s Demand:***

- There is a looming question over our study today: What is it that the law demands? What can “fulfill it” or “complete it”, or satisfy its demands? Many are quick to answer, “simple or obedience, or at least willingness to obey”. Although this sounds right on its surface, it may be lacking fundamental truth, at least as generally understood.

For law itself usually has many dimensions (surely true in the case of the Law of Moses, but also in most every other law), and all must be fulfilled

for the many demands of the law to be satisfied.

But what have we learned from Paul regarding this?

[READ ] Galatians 5:14-15

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. [Quoted from Leviticus 19:18]

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

- This is Paul's way of saying that we should not be concerned about all of the dictates and requirements of the Law. Why not? Because, as he writes in verse 14, "all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" quoting from Moses.
- He carefully explains himself so well in Romans, chapter 13:

Romans 13:8-10

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

- Now James does not agree, as we learn in his letter, but he writes concerning a different dispensational plan, not that of the grace of God, it would seem:

James 2:8-13

8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

- The teachings of James are not compatible with Pauline doctrine, therefore. He was not promoting the grace dispensation but a works plus

faith dispensation, even the Pentecostal Dispensation of the Coming Kingdom.

## **II. The Dynamic of the Normal Christian Life Is Far Above the Law:**

[READ ] Galatians 5:16-18

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. [*namely, the works of the flesh!*]

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

- These are the key verses in the Pauline revelation regarding the dynamic behind the liberty we have in Christ Jesus, a liberty enabling us in our living to rise above even the most compelling demands of the flesh.
- But, the reality is that we may be carnal or fleshly when we are not aware of it as the next verses should make that clear. So the apostle needs to remind us of that. There is only one way to be free, and that is through the Holy Spirit's working within each of us. And that is a work that is dependent upon, as he writes here, our "walking in the Spirit". For only then will we be delivered as Paul has outlined here.
- The reason why is given in verse 17, where he details so well the workings that result in that deliverance, for only when it is the Spirit that is waging warfare with the flesh within that the battle can be a success. And, it is a victorious battle then, but if instead we are bringing forth works of the flesh, even religious ones (like some of those listed), then the Spirit has a different function, that of convincing us regarding our rebellion and sin. So the Spirit may be occupied in a different battle, not in the only one that can lead to victory.
- Are you grasping the meaning here correctly? This is not a repeat of the teaching in Romans 7, nor not at all. That one shows the apostle battling against the flesh with his own strength, attempting to keep the Law, and only failing. That was not a lesson on the victorious Christian life, but only a story of a vicious battle of failure. Here though is a statement of victory, not of the flesh winning the battle, but of the Spirit of God winning the battle. The consequence, he writes, is we "cannot do the things that we would [*or, otherwise desire to do*]." This is liberty indeed!
- Finally, here, again our apostle reminds us that we are not under law. Why? Because we may be thinking that we are still in some sense still "under" it and obligated to it. My grace Bible class revealed that on multiple occasions over the years .... Do we have the boldness to say no

to those compelling and often known demands?

May it be that we do, praise God.

### **III. Carnality Is A Red Flag On Our Lives As Believers:**

- Now Paul makes this list, one of several in his letters, as we have already seen:

Galatians 5:19-21

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.

- The red flag - Beware. Don't go here!! That is what is signified by these signpost words found here in verses 19-21. Last time, we showed how there are four sub-listings here ...
- His point is that if we are aware of the threat, we shall surely be overcome. One needs to prepare for this race, or we shall be disgraced surely.
- Verse 13 determines the context here: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." So we have two kinds of "opportunities" or, to use the KJV word here, "occasions". And they are so different. One comes from the new nature and the other from the old nature or flesh.

The flesh is considered first since the dynamic of walking by the Spirit can never produce such works as these. Their presence is a sure indicator, therefore, a big red flag of failure to live out the normal Christian life as we should.

- Verse 19: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest ..." This means they are so easily seen (and, as well, he implies that they are so common in all of us sinners, though we are saved by grace eternally). So they are visible to all and not hidden, though the sinner might think that they are or hope that they are.
- There are four groupings of works here, and if we find any of them in ourselves, we know we are not walking in the spirit. For they are the red flag of sin announcing itself with great arrogance and power:

Sexual sin: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness

Religious Error: Idolatry (which may masquerade as covetousness), witchcraft (religious, superstitious awe is included here) EXPLAIN pharmakia

Broken Relationships: Hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders

Substance abuse: Drunkenness, revellings

- So it is, he writes, just that simple. If we are living in the realm of the Spirit's working, we shall not find these works being produced in and through us. But if we do ...
- But we do need to dwell on the list to recognize our condition properly, and that is why our apostle is so direct and concrete, and inclusive here in his wording. And even at that, his list is not complete, nor can it be. For we may have thought we were spiritual when in fact we were, and perhaps even now, are carnal.
- Now, after listing these evil works, he adds these words: "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Several things stand out here:
  - The tense of the word translated "do". The meaning of this is "to practice habitually."
  - The other is the statement given so authoritatively that those so living "shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Paul writes of this elsewhere, in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, in Ephesians 5:5-6, and in Colossians 3:6, so it is a common theme. For us, "grace believers" it seems to be a difficult warning. But it should not be. The 1 Corinthians chapter 6 passage is revealing of Paul's full intent in using this language, for he explains himself so well there:

1 Corinthians 6:9-12

9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

- So, some of these works are subtle, and some of them may even be very religious. But we can, I hope, discern them in us as needed. What should our response be when a red flag appears? “Mortify”, Col. 3:5, “put off”, verse 9, and as 1 Cor. 10:14 indicates, we should “flee” from it.

Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

- The Romans letter puts it this way, you will recall:

Romans 6:11-15

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

- Reckoning is the way back, as written here, because as verses 14 & 15 show, we are under grace and not law as reflected in that grand teaching of verses 11 & 15. What a difference this liberty in Christ Jesus has made for us who were otherwise, sinners of the Gentiles, living with only the coming judgment awaiting us, just as all of them are.

#### **IV. The Fruit of the Spirit Reveals God's Work Within Us:**

[READ ] Galatians 5:22-24

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

- These listed are not “flags” to alert us as the others are. No, the language suggests that these are (to be expected), the segments of the many segmented fruit of the Spirit. Note that they are internal as opposed to external, as so many of the works of the flesh are (maybe all

of them are, in fact, external). If we should be so bold, we could even say that the fruit of the Spirit is foundational for the good works our apostle often writes about:

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

...

Ephesians 4:17-32

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

[READ ] Ephesians 5:3-10

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are* ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

- So the fruit of the Spirit is always our experience, IF we are walking in league with and cooperation with the Holy Spirit, as he exalts our Lord Jesus Christ, having conquered sin and death and presently seated at the right hand of our Father in heavenly glory.

#### **V. The Walk of the Believer Under Grace Is Moment By Moment:**

- Wrapping up his teaching, he writes only a few more words, but they are important words indeed: Since we have crucified (how can this be ???) the flesh (but it still operates ...), we are alive in Christ, so let us now truly live as God intends, authentically demonstrating step by step the normal Christian Life to its fullness (my paraphrase):

[READ ] Galatians 5:25-26

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.

- Stoicheo vs peripateo:
  - περιπατέω (peripatéō | per-ee-pat-eh'-o)  
Derivation: from G4012 and G3961;  
Strong's: to tread all around, i.e. walk at large (especially as proof of ability); figuratively, to live, deport oneself, follow (as a companion or votary)  
KJV: —go, be occupied with, walk (about).
  - στοιχέω (stoichéō | stoy-kheh'-o)  
Derivation: from a derivative of στείχω (to range in regular line);  
Strong's: to march in (military) rank (keep step), i.e. (figuratively) to conform to virtue and piety  
KJV: —walk (orderly).

- So the first is high level, over all, walking about, the way of one's life, while the other is step-by-step, detailed, specific.
- The instruction of verses 14 & 15 is now complete.

**Conclusions and Application:**

- THIS WAS NOT about Paul telling us what we have to do to please God, for that would be to place us under another law. This, rather, is a gracious exhortation.

RATHER, this is all about what we are privileged to enjoy, as we walk by his grace empowering in newness of life and under the always-present shadow of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit ....  
Amen.

- Praise God for his infinite grace through our wonderful, risen savior. He is risen indeed, and has broken the bonds of sin and death, and delivered us into a liberty of such power to lift us moment by moment out of this world and into the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. That is how our Lord God sees us, and that is how we must see ourselves as well, if we are to enjoy to the fullest the unsearchable riches of his grace. Amen and amen.
- I will read now the closing section of this letter. It is most wonderful in its teaching, and is an introduction to our next study on the place of good works in the life of the believer:

**NEXT TIME:**

Galatians 6:9-18

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

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.

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

- Praise God for our liberty in Christ Jesus.