

Galatians 5:1-6 – Don't Be Estranged from Christ

Family, TSK, GreekLexicon, Henry, Gill, PNT, Trapp, Robertson, Handfuls, Rienecker, Gaebelein, Abbot, JFB, Gray, Clarke, Calvin?

Beloved in the Lord Jesus:

How awful it is when a spouse is estranged from the other! How lonely! How dangerous!

This happened to God's bride and she ended up in Assyrian captivity in 722BC.

This happened to the remnant of God's bride and she ended up in Babylonian captivity in 586BC.

This was happening again to God's bride in Apostle Paul's day. She found herself being lured by her ego and she started to stray. She became estranged from her husband.

So in an effort to stop her from straying, **Apostle Paul gave her 3 reminders.**

This is the message for today.

Our headings are:

Salvation gives you liberty

Salvation gives you hope

Circumcision gives you debts

Our goals are: **That you will stay close to God and receive his benefits in Jesus Christ so you can live your life to bring glory to the God of heaven and earth.**

Salvation gives you liberty

1 **Stand fast therefore in the liberty** by which **Christ has made us free**, and **do not be entangled again** with a yoke of bondage.

1. Apostle Paul urged Galatian Christians not to stray, trying to earn their salvation, but to live like those who have already been saved - set free from slavery.

They were to stand in the knowledge of their freedom from sin! Sin did not have power over them. Sin could not damn them. Sin could not rule them. **Because of liberty there was no longer a need to fear death...**the **first or the second** death.

He reminded the Galatian Christian to remain in the freedom from all the ceremonies – a freedom Christ secured – by paying the full price of their freedom.

They were free to enjoy pork chops and duck...as long as it was done in moderation, it was done out of thankfulness, and it was done out of faith.

They were free to go directly to God in prayer.

They did not have to go to Jerusalem to make sacrifices.

2. Apostle Paul admonished the Galatians not to become entangled – trapped- again in their bondage to sin and slavery.

What does “entangle” mean? It meant to be tied up to something from which it was not easy to separate.

This metaphor was taken from oxen **when the yoke was put on** their neck. They couldn't get out of it.

Acts 15:10 "Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"

He was calling on the Galatian Christians to fight to maintain that freedom as there is always a tendency to go back.

This is what anyone who is entangled would do!

Specifically, they were not to go back to the observation of days, months, times, and years and offer many, many sacrifices.

These things gave no strength to perform the job God required and **none of the things the Judaizers were requiring was able take away sin.**

3. And note the word: “again,” which meant they sold themselves this way in the past through their fathers and through their own actions and they were not to sell themselves again.

4. Lessons:

a. Sin no longer has dominion over you, but you must not think that sin can't tempt you. It can. It does.

b. Salvation removes the fear of death because God has given you eternal life through his once for all times sacrifice. Death's sting has been removed. Those who fear death are slaves.

c. Being baptized, having church membership, attending church, feeding orphans, digging wells in Africa, lighting candles, and celebrating Christmas can't remove a single sin.

Knowing, loving, trusting in, and serving Christ can.

Don't take on yokes you gave up when you became a Christian. **These might pacify your mind but not your soul.** Salvation is of the Lord – 100%.

d. Any man-made doctrine is also a yoke. Watch out for churches that put-on requirement on people that God doesn't.

Women must wear **head-covering.**

You must **sing Psalms only.**

You must **homeschool your kids.**

You must not use **birth control.**

You must only **use the King James Version** of the Bible.

You must be **baptized by immersion.**

These things do nothing for your salvation. You are not to be bound by them.

Salvation gives you hope

5 For **we through the Spirit** eagerly wait for the **hope of righteousness** by **faith.**

1. Apostle Paul then said not only did God give freedom from slavery through the work of Jesus, he also gives hope for the future – a certain hope of righteousness. What is that hope of righteousness? Heaven! Heaven is the full realization of salvation. There Christians will receive and experience full and perfect righteousness Jesus, and Jesus alone, earned for them...

Yes, there are benefits now, but there are more and greater and perfect benefits in the future – already paid for.

And in order to receive that perfect righteousness, the Galatians had to simply wait! They didn't have to work!

Notice the change of person **from “you” to “we.”** He knew better for Christians was coming-all Christians.

2. How do you receive that hope?

There is no other way to receive Christ's benefits other than through the work of his Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit drew them to the Father! **The Holy Spirit regenerated** their hearts.

The Holy Spirit worked to create faith in them so they would receive what Jesus did. Notice the passive nature of man in this text.

Romans 1:17 For in it the **righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;** as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

3. Man needed that hope because his circumcision did not do anything for his salvation.

Circumcision only distinguished Jew from Gentile and pointed men to Christ. It didn't give him hope.

4. And if man wanted to see salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone, he would not look at the man to see if he were circumcised, but he would look at a man and see if he had love for God and man!

5. Lessons:

a. Pity and help those who say Reformed Christians don't believe in the Holy Spirit.

b. Your faith is never a theoretical faith. Your faith is seen. Your faith is guided by love...love for God and love for your neighbor. You love because you have been renewed by faith.

And **you won't try to earn your salvation but you will try to show your salvation.**

c. Faith, hope, and love (mentioned in Verses 5-6) are the foundations of Christian life. (These 3 things are mentioned many times in the Bible.)

All **other things are ordinary.**

d. You are not superior if you are baptized, if you are a church leader, or if you are an important member of the church; what matters is do you have love, faith, and hope.

Circumcision keeps you in debts

2 Indeed **I, Paul**, say to you that **if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.**

1. Apostle Paul pointed out that while salvation gave liberty and hope for the future, those who tried to earn their salvation by works, like circumcision, could receive no-absolutely no- benefit from Christ.

He meant that in the grand scheme of salvation, circumcision would not save! Christ is all or nothing. God could not accept men if they tried to use circumcision as the basis of their cleanness.

And note the emphasis for Apostle Paul – using double identity. This left no doubt about the authority with which he was speaking.

(Also, when Apostle Paul had Timothy circumcised, it was not to keep the law for salvation, but to make him able to enter into Jewish places to share the Gospel.

Philippians 3:9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

Verse 2 pictures the disposition of a case in court; the one hoping to get a payment got nothing.

(The tense of the verb showed that *the Galatians were not yet circumcised but were contemplating it.*)

The council in Jerusalem had not required Gentile Christians be circumcised, but these Judaizers were!

3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a **debtor to keep the whole law.** 4 You have become **estranged from Christ,** you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

2. Apostle Paul then showed worsening circumstances of the one who allowed himself to be circumcised.

a. The man who was circumcised became a debtor to the law and was obligated to keep the whole law. Keeping the law meant grace was off of the table and man had to keep the whole law perfectly.

To choose circumcision was to choose legalism. But Christians looked to Christ's work, not their own.

Hebrews 12:2 **looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,** who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

b. The man who was circumcised became estranged from Christ. Think of a woman whose husband loved her and provided everything she needed, but she then said she wanted to work for everything but she had no skill.

c. The man who was circumcised appeared to have fallen from grace - divorced. No one can fall from grace, of course, but Apostle Paul was using strong language to show the seriousness of the sin. They were cutting themselves off from all the

blessings of grace. But they were his dear children in the Lord.

4. Lessons:

a. Sometimes God and Bible writers spoke in a hyperbolic way. (You have fallen from grace.) If you don't recognize that you will not get the full meaning of many Bible passages. You might say: "You're a dead man if you announce my age." She won't kill him...but you won't accuse her of lying. That's hyperbole.

b. There are many Christians who don't get all of Christ's benefits because they are trying to work for those benefits. They are working for that which is free!

This only leads to disappointments since salvation can't be purchased. You must do good works, but they cannot add a single saving benefit to you. (Liberalism has caused women to fight against depending on a man... It is this same craving for independence that causes man to not want to depend on Christ.

Can Jesus be close to you if you ignore all he has done for you?

c. Your Christian parents, your baptism, or your church membership will bring no salvation to you; you only have salvation by resting on the Savior.

Conclusion:

Because you are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone, **you have liberty.** You don't have to worry about your salvation again! Because you are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone, **you have hope** for the future – a future that is bright and eternal in heaven. If you reject you are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone, and you try to add something to your salvation, **you will still owe God.** You'll be in major debts which you can't pay.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Stay close to God and enjoy his benefits. His Son paid the full price of those benefits. Enjoy the Waters of Life. Enjoy Bread of Life! Drink of the foundation of life. It's all free.

2. Remember the price of those benefits. They came by the broken body and shed blood of the Lord Jesus.

3. Share with strangers the benefits you have. Don't watch people starve when your cupboards are full.

Finally, one commentator wrote: You have to give up your pride to believe the Bible. You have to give up your pride to receive salvation. There is nothing you can do for it. If you will give up your pride and say, "I can do nothing for my salvation, only Jesus can," the Lord will save you. Jesus paid it all.