

Series: Galatians

Title: Wait for the Hope

Text: Gal 5: 5-6

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Galatians 5: 5: For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6: For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

God's saints at Galatia were being entangled in bondage in two ways.

Some were beguiled into thinking they must be circumcised, come under law, in addition to faith in Christ or they were not true children of God. They were puffed-up in that they were putting confidence in their flesh. They exalted themselves in outward circumcision. They were still God's children but they had been beguiled so that their confidence was being turned to what they did and did not do according to the law. These were puffed up against the believers who were not falling into this error with them.

Other believers refused circumcision. They knew their brethren were sinning by adding circumcision to faith in Christ. These knew Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes. The others knew it but were mixing law with grace. But these believed on Christ and refused circumcision. Yet, they were puffed-up toward their brethren who were being circumcised. They, too, were becoming entangled in the same legal bondage because they were putting confidence in their uncircumcision. Their confidence was in that they had not committed the sin their brethren were committing.

Brethren, it is bondage to put confidence in the flesh be it circumcision or uncircumcision. To put confidence in circumcision—outward works—is sin. It is sin even if one is outwardly keeping the whole law. It is the same as putting confidence in adultery. It is spiritual adultery against Christ, though outwardly no adultery or any other sin has been committed. It is the heart trusting the works of the flesh rather than Christ.

Likewise, to put confidence in uncircumcision is still putting confidence in the flesh. If we do not come under law because we believe Christ has made us free from the law through Christ's righteousness, good. But to put confidence in not being under the law is law! A person who never practices outward ceremonies can put his confidence in his anti-ceremony religion.

What we do or do not do outwardly is nothing to put confidence in for both are putting confidence in the flesh. Both are the leaven of the Pharisee's which puffs up. It is that leaven of prideful self-righteousness that puffs up the whole lump. It will make one sinner rise up against another. He will expose the sins of brethren to others and the leaven of pride makes them rise up with him. Before long, the whole church has risen in pride biting one another until the whole is devoured. It is bondage.

But by the Spirit of God, Paul was not beguiled into the same entanglement of leaven which accuses one and excuses the other. Instead, he declared the gospel to them. Only the Spirit of God can mortify that flesh in his people, grant us repentance and give us faith to trust Christ alone. So the Spirit of God moved Paul to do exactly what he declares to them. Paul is believing Christ and loving his brethren and hoping for Christ to come and turn them to their only Righteousness. That is what he declares the believer does our whole life by the grace of God. Paul is doing what he declares to them.

Galatians 5: 5: For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6: For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Proposition: We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Divisions: 1) The hope of righteousness 2) No confidence in our flesh 3) An example of faith working by love

WAIT FOR THE HOPE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Galatians 5: 5: For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith

God's true saints do everything godly only through the Spirit. True worship is spiritual—*"we through the Spirit."*

Our spiritual life began by being born again of Spirit of God. Spiritual life continues by the Spirit of God living and abiding within us. All spiritual fruit—true godliness—is not produced by us, by our fleshly strength. It is only produced by the Spirit of God and godliness is only produced in the new spirit. Faith, love, hope, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, temperance is of the Spirit produced in the new spirit. It is only by the Spirit that the lusts of our flesh are mortified, crucified, subdued in us so that we trust Christ alone and walk in love.

The life of God's saints is one of "waiting"—*"For we through the Spirit wait."* It is obvious waiting must be of the Spirit because waiting on the Lord goes against everything in our sinful flesh. The lust of the flesh is pride—"I will!" It is to have our way independent of God. That is what sin is. Lucifer's fall was prideful self-righteous—"I will!" Adam's fall was prideful self-righteousness—"I will!" Putting confidence in works of our flesh to make us righteous by good deeds or less righteous by sinful deeds is self-righteous pride—"I will!" The only way a sinner can be made to believe Christ is our only Righteousness so that we "wait for the hope of righteousness by faith" is by the power of the Spirit of God.

Anything godly in God's saints is by the Spirit of God! God alone gets the glory!

For what do we wait?—*"We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness."* We are righteous now in Christ Jesus. It means we are justified through faith in his blood. The Spirit regenerated us and gave us faith to believe on Christ. He brought us to trust that we are,

Rom 3: 24...justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:
25: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood,

By the Spirit of God we wait with a good hope knowing Christ shall raise us to glory and make us perfectly conformed to Christ in his holiness and his righteousness in body, soul and spirit with no sin. That is the hope of righteousness for which we wait. Our hope is confident expectation. We have sure hope. Our hope is knowing that in the crowing-end of this life Christ shall raise us to be as he is in perfect righteousness and holiness. So *"through the Spirit we wait for the hope of righteousness."*

We wait for this hope “*by faith*”. Faith is trusting Christ. Faith is trusting Christ ALONE. Faith is believing Christ is all our acceptance with God and our only acceptance with God! Faith is casting all our care on Christ trusting that he careth for you.

Right now, through faith, in the court of our conscience, the Spirit has convinced us that we are “righteous”, “justified” by Christ. He shall perfectly conform us to himself in glory but not until he raises us in body, soul and spirit. So through the Spirit of God we wait for the hope of that full consummation of righteousness in glory with Christ by faith. The Spirit of God keeps us by his power so that we look only to Christ.

1 Peter 1: 3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again [through the Spirit] unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4: To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5: Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH

Galatians 5: 6: For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcisin...

Paul says, “*For in Christ Jesus.*” Brethren, if the Spirit is in you then you are “*in Christ Jesus.*”

Romans 8: 9: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Believer, how God see you is how it is. The way God says he sees us is the preeminent matter. God says you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit. Has the Spirit of Christ convinced you it is so?

The Spirit convinces us that before God our flesh, our body of sin, was destroyed when Christ was crucified. Paul was convinced by the Spirit. He said, “*I am crucified with Christ.*” If the Spirit is in you then you are not in the flesh. You have already undergone the judgment of God. Justice has been satisfied toward you when Christ laid down his life under the wrath of God. We see ourselves in the flesh—we see our sin-nature is very much alive and will be until the day we drop this flesh. But God sees those born of his Spirit as in Christ.

Now, our life *is in Christ* at God’s right hand. Our Righteousness lives at God’s right hand. The Spirit of God has convinced us of Righteousness because Christ is risen and we in him. The Spirit has convinced us judgment is settled on the cross in Christ and our life is in him in glory. We wait for the consummation when he shall make us righteous in body, soul and spirit.

Therefore, we have no confidence in our flesh nor do we have confidence in our brethren’s flesh. Our confidence is in Christ and in his Spirit. The Spirit of Christ that quickened us in the first hour shall continue to do so. He shall continue to quicken our brethren. This guarantees us that us and all our brethren shall continue walking by faith which works by love trusting only in Christ.

When we hear a brother or sister has sinned we are so easily entangled with the yoke of bondage. We do not realize that we are putting confidence in the flesh by that. We often

become puffed up one toward another. We doubt each other. We speak evil of one another. When we do that we are as entangled in sin and bondage as the one we are so disappointed in. We can recognize obvious outward sin in our brethren. But we fail to notice when those feathery chains of bondage slip around our arms and legs and torso and heart and mind and bind us in their unbreakable grip.

Only the Spirit of our God can mortify that fleshly self-righteous pride of flesh in you and in me. But the Spirit shall do so in all his people. He shall keep us trusting Christ alone. If we turn to fleshly means of circumcision the Spirit shall subdue that fleshly sin in his child. If we turn to murder and adultery the Spirit shall subdue that fleshly sin in his child. If we are puffed up at our brethren who do then we, too, are bound but do not know it, the Spirit shall mortify that fleshly sin in his child. But if we try to mortify our flesh or our brother's flesh with our flesh then we are living in the lust of our flesh. We shall die. God gets the glory! Mortification of our flesh must be through the Spirit alone. That is what Paul declares the Spirit shall do in his child.

Romans 8: 10: And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. 11: But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12: Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13: For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

We think of living after the flesh as stealing, fornication, drunkenness. It is. The Spirit will mortify that flesh in the Lord's time. But it is also living after the flesh when we become puffed up about another's sins so as to judge and condemn them. It is living after the flesh when we consider ourselves righteous or more righteous by our outward works. It is living after the flesh to consider ourselves or others less righteous due to any sin or self-righteousness of the flesh. Our righteousness is Christ. The Spirit of God shall mortify the flesh in us and in our brethren. But the Lord works in his time. So we must wait for that hope of righteousness by faith. That is we must wait for Christ to come in Spirit and turn us and our brethren to Christ our Righteousness so that we walk by faith which worketh by love and cease living after our prideful flesh.

So having fallen over and over into this lust of our flesh and having experienced that only the Spirit can mortify our flesh, we have no confidence in our flesh. Having experienced that Christ is our Righteousness and Christ alone, we know that no outward law-keeping done by us avails.

The Jews put confidence in Abraham being their father but our parentage does not avail. Godly parents do not make their sinful child be under a so-called Abrahamic covenant. No outward ceremony avails to make a sinner righteous: not infant baptism, not adult immersion, not the Lord's table, not church attendance.

Nor do moral virtues and spiritual fruit make us righteous. We put no confidence for righteousness in the gifts of God produces in the new man. Nothing created in us is our justifying righteousness. Christ alone is our Righteousness. If the Spirit enables us to mortify our flesh so that we set aside our sins then we give the glory to God. But it is not being uncircumcised that makes us righteous. It is not setting aside sins that makes us holy. The Spirit keeps mortifying that lust of our flesh so we put no confidence in any moral purity. If we trust in the outward then it is bondage. We may appear morally pure in the eyes of others. But it is sin as bad as murdering a whole village. If the Spirit worked so mightily in us that

we could say “As touching the law blameless” or “All these things have I kept from my youth up” it does not contribute to our righteousness at all!

We do not even trust anything created in us of the Spirit of God: not our faith nor our repentance nor our prayers, not our mortification of our flesh, not our walk, be it ever so near likeness to Christ. Circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth, not in ourselves nor in our brethren. Christ alone avails!

The Spirit keeps us believing we are accepted in the Beloved alone. Before the judgment seat of God, Christ crucified is our judgment, our death, the destruction of our old man of sin. Christ risen is our life, our justification, our righteousness, our completion. It is only by the Spirit of God turning us from our flesh—be it immoral sins or good deeds—to behold Christ that the lusts of our flesh is mortified. The lust of the flesh that must continually be mortified is the lust to trust in our flesh.

FAITH WHICH WORKS BY LOVE

Galatians 5: 5: For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6: For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

The Spirit makes us wait by faith which works by love. We see Paul as an example. He is doing what he is declaring in this text. Paul knows it will only be by the Holy Spirit turning the brethren to Christ our Bread, putting the robe of Christ’s righteousness upon them, that their faith and love will be renewed and their flesh mortified. So he declares the gospel to them and waits by faith. This is faith which works by love.

Through the Spirit, we wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. Even now, through the Spirit we declare the gospel and wait for the hope of Christ our Righteousness coming in Spirit to feed our poor brethren and to clothe him in his righteousness. In Spirit Christ renews faith in our hearts through the gospel. By feeding us the Bread of heaven and clothing us in Christ’s Righteousness the Spirit of God mortifies our flesh. Only by faith in Christ do we treat our flesh as crucified in Christ so that we do not think it adds too nor lessens the righteousness and holiness we are in Christ. So Paul stood fast in the law of liberty. He rejoiced in mercy when he beheld these brethren entangled in bondage. He feed them with Christ. He clothed them with Christ’s righteousness. He put no confidence in his flesh by waiting on the Spirit to feed and clothe his brethren and so mortify this fleshly bondage. Only Christ can free us into the liberty of grace. He does it only by the gospel of grace.

Listen to James. This outward rich and poor man is an illustration of a brother who is rich in outward good works and a brother who is poor in outward sins. We are overtaken in the yoke of bondage when we show respect to the brother rich in outward good works while treating the brother poor in outward sins as not worthy of our affection.

James 2: 1: My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons. 2: For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; 3: And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: 4: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? 5: Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? 6: But ye have despised the

poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? 7: Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? 8: If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor 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.

Galatian believers were learning how easily believers are entangled in that yoke of bondage. They were judging by the outward appearance. They were showing respect of persons and judging one another based on the outward. When we give more love to the brother whose outward works are good while we treat a brother poor in sins as less we show a respect of persons based on outward works. It is no different than giving a man who appears rich outwardly special treatment over a man who appears poor outwardly. If a man have faith in Christ within then he is a poor sinner rich in faith no matter what he appears to be outwardly. Never despise such. We know no man after the flesh: it is not Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, bond or free that matters. Nor do works of righteousness or sins in the flesh change our righteousness in Christ and our love for one another. That is what James says next.

James 2: 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.

Faith which works by love rejoices to show mercy rather than judgment. Faith which works by love remembers that my brother was judged in Christ on the cross. Faith which works by love remembers God says of my brother that God will not charge my brother nor allow anyone to charge him so as to condemn him. And faith remembers God has shown me, the sinner, the same mercy. Therefore believing on Christ we love our brethren by being merciful to them. This mercy and love gives the offending brother the Bread from heaven and the garment of Christ's Righteousness by declaring the gospel to them. Faith without this love is not the faith God has given.

James 2: 14: What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works [faith which works by love]? can faith save him? 15: If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16: And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit? 17: Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

In Paul we see the law of liberty. Paul exhibits faith which works by love. He showed mercy to the Galatians. He saw in those putting confidence in their circumcision a poor beggar destitute of the living bread and the garment of Christ's righteousness. He saw in those putting confidence in their uncircumcision the same. By accusing others and excusing themselves they were all naked and destitute of bread because they were trying to weave their own robe of righteousness and make their own bread. So Paul believed on Christ and loved them by feeding and clothing his brethren with the gospel of Christ.

Some who were circumcised judged those who were not. Those who refused circumcision judged those that did. They were showing respect of persons based on outward appearance. They were all guilty of the law as transgressors. Neither were believing Christ. Neither were

loving their brethren. Neither were showing mercy. All were judging one another. All were poor and naked and starving.

The law of liberty is faith which works by love showing mercy. Paul fed them with heavenly Bread and clothed with Christ's righteousness. Through the Spirit alone did Paul do this. But through the Spirit he waited for the hope of righteousness by faith. As he preached Christ the Bread and Christ our Righteousness to them he waited for the hope of Christ coming in Spirit and turning them to Christ our Righteousness and feeding them the living Bread from heaven. Even now, we wait for Christ our Righteousness to come and feed our poor brethren and clothe them in his righteousness. This is how he subdues our flesh by renewing faith within.

Let's see this all put together by Paul in Romans 4-5. By the Holy Spirit we are convinced that we are sinners, that Christ is our Righteousness, and that Christ settled judgment for us—we are crucified in him and risen.

Romans 4:24:...we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25: Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification [our righteousness].

Romans 5: 1: Therefore, being justified [having already been justified], by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand [into this liberty wherein we stand fast—this grace wherewith Christ hath made us free] and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. [we wait for the hope of righteousness by faith; the hope of the consummation when Christ shall perfectly conform us to him in righteousness. So in every trial we do the same]

Romans 5: 3: And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience [God shuts us up so that the only thing we can do is wait for Christ to come to work righteousness in every heart of his children]; 4: And patience, experience [we experience Christ coming and working]; and experience, hope [experiencing his effectual working in each trial grows us in hope that he will come in the end and conform us to him perfectly—we know it because Christ turned us from us to him in the present trial] 5: And hope maketh not ashamed; [how do we have all this constraint working in our heart?] because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

After every trial, Christ reminds us of his love so that we see how foolish we are to put our hand to the work. He reminds us of his love in what he did for us when we were totally without strength. It is remembering he came in due time and redeemed us the ungodly. It makes us wait in the trial knowing Christ comes in due time—our times are in his hand. This love is remembering that it is by him that we are saved and we have no strength.

Roman 5: 6: For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7: For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9: Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

It is only by his Life—our living Redeemer saves us in this present trial, he saves us in every trial and he shall save us in final glory. Therefore, he brings us again to “*Stand fast therefore*

in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled with the yoke of bondage...For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.”

Amen!