

McCoy Memorial Baptist Church

Date: May 10, 2020

Spring Quarter: "Faith and Freedom" (Galatians)

"Having defended both his authority as an apostle (chs. 1-2) and the doctrine of justification by faith (chs. 3-4), Paul turned to defend the life of Christian freedom (chs. 5-6). Would the apostle's teaching lead the Galatians into lawlessness or into godliness? The Christian life is described as **a life** apart from Law, **a life** apart from license, **a life** according to the Spirit, and **a life** of service."

A LIFE ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT (5:16-26)

1. The PROMISE to victory over sin (vv. 16-18)
 - A. The answer to the abuses described in the previous verses is to "live (walk) by the Spirit" (περιπατέω peripatéō - a verb, a present imperative and lit. translated "keep on walking").
 - B. He next explained the need for a life that is controlled and energized by the Spirit; namely, each Christian has two natures:
 - A **sinful nature** ("the flesh") received at birth
 - A **new nature** received at regenerationBoth natures have desires, the one for evil & the other for holiness. They are in conflict with each other, and the result of this conflict is: "you do not do what you want." The parallel between this phrase & the 2nd part of Rom. 7 is, in my judgment, too close to be accidental.
 - C. Paul emphasized that a godly life is not lived '**under**' the rules of the '**Law**' but is a life '**led by the Spirit**'.
2. The PERIL of victory over sin (vv. 19-21)

Since a Christian has the same '**sinful nature**' he possessed before salvation, he may fall prey to the sins that nature produces if he does not live by means of the Spirit. They fall into four categories . . .

 - A. Three sexual sins
 - B. Two religious sins
 - C. Eight societal sins

The sinful nature is seen to be responsible for the breakdown of interpersonal relationships in homes, churches, and in public society.
 - D. Two sins associated with alcohol .
 - E. Finally, Paul added the words "and the like."

3. The **POWER** for victory over sin (vv. 22, 23)

The "fruit" is not produced by a believer, but by the Holy Spirit working through a Christian who is in vital union with Christ (cp. Jn. 15:1-8). Also, the word "fruit" is singular, indicating that these qualities constitute a unity, all of which should be found in a believer who lives under the control of the Spirit. In an ultimate sense this "fruit" is simply the life of Christ lived out in a Christian (cp. Gal. 2:20).

A. The triad of general Christian virtues.

They concern our attitude towards God, for a Christian's first love is his **love** for God, his chief **joy** is his joy in God, & his deepest **peace** is his peace with God.

B. The triad of social virtues; manward in their direction.

Patience is longsuffering towards those who aggravate or persecute. **Kindness** is a question of disposition, and **goodness** of words & deeds.

C. The third triad is faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Faithfulness describes the reliability of the Christian. **Gentleness** is that humble meekness which Christ exhibited. **Self-control** (or, self-mastery) relates to curbing the fleshly impulses just described.

4. The **PROVISION** for victory over sin (vv. 24-26)

A. Remember who you are!

A divine judgment of the sinful nature ("the flesh"; vs. 24)

B. Walk in ("keep in step with" ... 6:16 "follow") the Spirit!

A divine enablement in the person of the H. Spirit (vv. 25-26)

C. Put to death (**'mortify'**) the misdeeds of the body (Rom. 8:13).

Mark 8:34 "let him deny himself & take up his cross ('daily' in Luke 9:23) and follow me."

How to "put to death the misdeeds of the body" (crucify, mortify the flesh) and follow ("keep in step with") the Spirit's leading:

- Take precautions to avoid temptation
- End harmful relationships
- Confess sin to God and those affected by it
- Spend time meditating on God's Word
- Pray daily about areas of temptation
- Meditate on consequences of following the flesh (5:19-21)
- Make a plan to put the fruit of the Spirit into practice (5:22-23)