

McCoy Memorial Baptist Church

Date: May 3, 2020

Spring Quarter: "Faith and Freedom" (Galatians)

#### INTRODUCTION:

"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."

**Dr. Donald Campbell – Bible Knowledge Commentary**

#### A LIFE APART FROM LAW (5:1-12)

Why is life apart from Law important? **Turning to the Law . . .**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ grace (5:1, 2)
2. Makes man a \_\_\_\_\_ (5:3)  
Turning to the Law creates an obligation: a person "is obligated to obey the whole Law" (cp. 3:10b ... a quotation from Deut. 27:26).
3. Is to \_\_\_\_\_ from grace (5:4-6)  
This issue here is not the possible loss of salvation. Rather, if Galatians accepted circumcision as necessary for salvation, they would be leaving the grace system for the Mosaic Law system.
4. Hinders the \_\_\_\_\_ of believers (5:7-10)
5. Removes the \_\_\_\_\_ of the cross (5:11, 12)

A focus on the phrase: "**the offense of the cross**"

"offense" = Greek: **σκάνδαλον skándalon** - "stumbling block"

NASB: "the **stumbling block** of the cross" (cp. 1 Cor. 1:23)

#### **Thought from Dr. John R. W. Stott:**

His commentary on Galatians in **The Bible Speaks Today** Series (1968)

"Persecution or opposition is a mark of every true Christian preacher. As we saw in Galatians 4:29, the Isaacs of this world are always persecuted by the Ishmaels. The Old Testament prophets found it so, men like Amos, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. So did the New Testament apostles. And down the centuries of the Christian church, until and in-

cluding today, Christian preachers who refuse to distort or dilute the gospel of grace have had to suffer for their faithfulness. The good news of Christ crucified is still a 'scandal' (Gk: skandalon, stumbling-block), grievously offensive to the pride of men. It tells them that they are sinners, rebels, under the wrath & condemnation of God, that they can do nothing to save themselves or secure their salvation, and that only through Christ crucified can they be saved. If we preach this gospel, we shall arouse ridicule and opposition. Only if we 'preach circumcision', the merits and the sufficiency of man, shall we escape persecution and become popular."

## A LIFE APART FROM [LICENSE](#) (5:13-15)

### **A Summary Thought from Dr. John R. W. Stott:**

"Ours is an age of tolerance. Men love to have the best of both worlds & hate to be forced to choose. It is commonly said that it does not matter what people believe so long as they are sincere, and that it is unwise to clarify issues too plainly or to focus them too sharply.

But the religion of the New Testament is vastly different from this mental outlook. Christianity will not allow us to sit on the fence or live in a haze; it urges us to be definite and decisive, and in particular to choose between Christ & circumcision. 'Circumcision' stands for a religion of human achievement, of what man can do by his own good works; 'Christ' stands for a religion of divine achievement, of what God has done through the finished work of Christ. 'Circumcision' means law, works and bondage; 'Christ' means grace, faith and freedom. Every man must choose. The one impossibility is what the Galatians were attempting, namely, to add circumcision to Christ and have both. No! 'Circumcision' and 'Christ' are mutually exclusive.

Further, this choice has to be made by both the people & the ministers of the church, by those who practise and those who propagate religion. It is either Christ or circumcision that the people 'receive' (vs. 2), and either Christ or circumcision that ministers 'preach' (vs. 11). In principle, there is no third alternative.

And behind our choice lurks our motive. It is when we are bent on flattering ourselves and others that we choose circumcision. Before the cross we have to humble ourselves."