

# Galatians: week 5

Galatians 5:1-26

Week 1: Galatians 1:1-2:14

Week 2: Galatians 2:15-21

Week 3: Galatians 3:1-29

Week 4: Galatians 4:1-31

**Week 5: Galatians 5:1-26**

Week 6: Galatians 6:1-18

What is the gospel?

What about the law?

What does the Christian life  
look like?

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Galatians 5:1

Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

Galatians 5:2-6

Can we lose our  
salvation?

“Paul warns the readers that if they accept circumcision, they will no longer derive any benefit from Christ....they will be lost forever. Arminians understandably interpret these warnings to teach that believers can lose their salvation. Too often Reformed believers ignore such warnings altogether. I would argue that the warnings are the means God uses to preserve the faith of those whom he has chosen. Those who fall away demonstrate that they did not truly belong to God (1 John 2:19), but it does not follow from this that the warnings are addressed only to false believers.

“They are directed to the entire church, and God uses the severity of the warnings to remind believers of the need to keep trusting God until the end....What Paul calls for here can be summarized in two words: faith alone. In other words, apostasy in this context manifests itself as a reliance on circumcision and works of law. Hence, in calling on the readers to persevere, Paul summons them to keep trusting God.”

Schreiner, 318-319



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Galatians 5:2-6

You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion is not from him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

Galatians 5:7-12

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

Galatians 5:13-15

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16-18

“The Christian life is not an ethereal existence in which the conflicts of this world are left behind. Believers do not ‘float’ into a new sphere that cuts them off from the pressures and desires of the present evil age. Desires for evil still afflict us and bedevil us. It is far too simplistic, then, to say that believers must ‘let go and let God,’ or to promise that the fight against sin will vanish in this life if a certain formula for spiritual victory is applied. The war against the world, the flesh, and the devil continues until the day of death.

“The word about conflict is immensely practical. If the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit is strong in our life, we should not become discouraged and think that we aren’t Christians if we are engaged in a struggle against sin. The opposition between the flesh and the Spirit is the normal Christian life, which is not marked by perfection but by war. [Martin] Luther reminds us about the nature of the conflict, emphasizing that it should never be confused with perfection:

“Anyone who would know this art well [living by the Spirit] would deserve to be called a theologian. The fanatics of our day, who are always boasting about the Spirit, as well as their disciples, seem to themselves to know it superbly. But I and others like me hardly know the elements of this art, and yet we are studious pupils in the school where this art is being taught. It is indeed being taught, but so long as the flesh and sin remain, it cannot be learned thoroughly.”

Schreiner, 351-352

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16-18



Freedom from law  $\neq$  Freedom to sin

Freedom from law = Freedom from sin

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19-21

# Works of the flesh

- sexual immorality
- impurity (defilement)
- sensuality (lack of restraint)
- idolatry (#1 sin acc. to Paul)
- sorcery (magic, manipulation)
- enmity (hatred)
- strife (contention that divides)
- jealousy
- fits of anger
- rivalries (selfishness)
- dissensions
- divisions
- envy (dissatisfaction)
- drunkenness
- orgies (wild parties)
- things like these

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:22-24

# Fruit of the Spirit

- love (*the* mark of new life in Christ)
- joy
- peace
- patience
- kindness
- goodness
- faithfulness
- gentleness
- self-control

If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.  
Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying  
one another.

Galatians 5:25-26