



GALATIANS

VERSE-BY-VERSE



SESSION 26 | OVERVIEW, PART 8 | GALATIANS 5:13-6:18

A PROPOSED OUTLINE

1. *Galatians 1:1-12 | Paul Introduces His Gospel and the Dilemma of the Letter.* – see session 19
2. *Galatians 1:13-24 | Paul’s Theological Journey prior to the Mystery* – see session 20
3. *Galatians 2:1-21 | Paul’s Theological Journey after the Mystery* – see session 21
4. *Galatians 3:1- 5:12 | Paul Confronts the Judaizers and their Theology*
5. *Galatians 5:13-6:18 | A Grace Way of Life*
 - 5.1. Galatians 5:13-26 | The Spirit or The Flesh
 - 5.2. Galatians 6:1-10 | Practical Instruction
 - 5.3. Galatians 6:11-18 | Paul’s Closing Remarks

GALATIANS 5:13-6:18 | A GRACE WAY OF LIFE

GALATIANS 5:13-26 | THE SPIRIT OR THE FLESH

- The “Liberty Dilemma” has led many people to conclude that liberty is bad, or “dangerous,” and should be avoided in the Christian life.
 - Paul gives the bottom line: **we have been called into liberty** (v. 13). It is, therefore, an essential in the Christian life.
 - Many of the fundamental aspects of our faith are easily abused: grace, love, hope, faith, for example.
 - Essentials cannot be sacrificed because of the manner in which some *might* abuse them, or even *have* abused them.
 - It is always best to address *actual* abuse rather than to remove the *potential* of abuse.
 - Paul also warns that, like all things to which we have been called, it is not to be used **for an occasion for the flesh** (v. 13).
- Whether a person lives under law or grace, love is the key ingredient to holy behavior (vv. 14-15).
 - The law was not *completed* with love, but **fulfilled**, i.e.: *made full*.
 - A person could not claim to have *completed* the law with love alone. A law-keeper could not claim to have **fulfilled** the law if he did the acts of obedience with hatred in his heart.
- Another consequence to an abuse of liberty is that it gives the freedom to **bite and devour one another** (v. 15).
- The solution to the liberty problem is not to abolish liberty, but to **Walk in the Spirit**, for the one who does so will not **fulfil the lust of the flesh** (v. 16).
- Those living in the Spirit are in a spiritual battle, and thus **cannot do the things that ye would** (v. 17-18).
 - The things that the flesh produces are in vv. 19-21.
 - The things that the spirit produces are in vv. 22-23.

- A note on why Paul mixes Kingdom and grace in v. 21, concerning inheritance of the Kingdom.
 - Notice he shifted from **ye** (v. 18) to **they** (v. 19). That is, from Galatians (Gentiles) to Jews (especially Judaizers).
 - In Paul's day, the Kingdom offer was still very much "on the table." Today, it is very much "in abeyance."
 - All through Paul's writings he speaks "to the Jew first," and always speaks kingdom truth to the Jew. There is a need to *rightly divide* the words of Paul between Jewish instruction and body of Christ instruction.
- Paul concludes this section with a message to the Jewish believers (which is also valid for all church-age believers): *those who live in the Spirit should also walk in the Spirit* (v. 26) rather than seeking **vain glory** (such as that of circumcision) (v. 27).

GALATIANS 6:1-10 | PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION

Paul gives several points of practical application.

- Have a careful spirit of restoration (v. 1).
- Have a burden-bearing lifestyle (v. 2).
- Avoid self-deception in personal identity (v. 3).
 - The formula to avoid self-deception, **let every man prove his own work** (v. 4).
 - Self-deception is also addressed when **every man shall carry his own burden** (v. 5). -the word **burden** is *phrotion*, from which we get *portion*. It is a different work than v. 1.
- Teachers should help students to *fully get it* (catecho), and students should provide a material communion with **all good things** (v. 6).
- Grow your life in the Spirit rather than the flesh (vv. 7-8).
- Be a "do-gooder," in a positive rather than negative sense of the word. If it is a good thing to do, do it! Doing good things has its own "payment in kind." Our first priority in doing good things should be to the **household of faith** (vv. 9-10).

GALATIANS 6:11-18 | PAUL'S CLOSING REMARKS

- Paul gives the "bottom line" problem of the Judaizers: *they did it for show* (v. 12).
- The show was to avoid persecution from the Jews (v. 13).
 - There is in the human spirit a sense of "if you can't beat them, join them."
 - Edmund Burke's comment on the Protestants of New England, toward the anabaptists: "*In short, this people, who in England could not bear being chastised with rods, had no sooner got free from their fetters than they scourged their fellow refugees with scorpions*" (<https://almostchosenpeople.wordpress.com/2009/12/15/edmund-burkes-views-on-america/>)
- A true grace-based faith glories in Christ alone (vv. 14-15).
- The *rule of conduct* for a grace-based believer is this: *only new creature status matters*.