

The Gospel According to Galatians

Scripture Text: Galatians Chapter 4-5
Christian Freedom as Sons in the Spirit, Part I
Rev. Charles R. Biggs

SCRIPTURE LESSON

^{ESV} **Matthew 5:14-20:** "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. ¹⁷ "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 22:34-40: But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

Matthew 19:16-26: A ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹ And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'" ²¹ And he said, "All these I have kept from my youth." ²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." ²³ But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. ²⁴ Jesus, looking at him with sadness, said, "How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." ²⁶ Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷ But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

Romans 13:8-10: Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,"

and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

2 Corinthians 3:7-4:6: Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? ⁹ For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory. ¹⁰ Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it. ¹¹ For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory. ¹² Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, ¹³ not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. ¹⁴ But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. ¹⁶ But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. **4:1** Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. ² But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. ³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. ⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 4

^{ESV} **Galatians 4:1** I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, ² but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father [**Redemptive-historical date of being fully set free in the fullness of the times**].

³ In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. [**What is the "enslavement to the elementary principles of the world" here in the Apostle Paul?** u`po. ta. stoicei/a tou/ ko,smou]

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might

receive adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" [Here again is the summary of Paul's gospel, the only gospel received from Jesus Christ by revelation. In the fullness of the times appointed by God, God sent forth His Son in our likeness, as one born under the law, to redeem those who were under law. Remember, for Paul what "under law" means: "in Adam" "under condemnation" and sentenced to God's wrath; the opposite of "under law" is "in Christ" and "justified". In Christ, the only Son of God, we are Sons, and the Spirit of his Son live in our hearts making us sons of God who also by his grace, live the Law. God is no longer our judge, but our Heavenly Father.]

⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. ⁸ Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. ⁹ But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? ¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years! ¹¹ I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain. [Although they had been set free from slavery of different kinds, they were very quickly desiring slavery again, rather than the glorious position of being sons!]

¹² Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You did me no wrong. ¹³ You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, ¹⁴ and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ What then has become of the blessing you felt? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶ Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth? ¹⁷ They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them. ¹⁸ It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you, ¹⁹ my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! ²⁰ I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed about you. ²¹ Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? [Paul reminds them of how personal and painful this is for him. Paul longs for his children that Christ be formed in them through the truths of the gospel, and their faith in Christ alone]

²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. ²³ But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. ²⁴ Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. ²⁵ Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶ But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷ For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those

of the one who has a husband." ²⁸ Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. ²⁹ But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. ³⁰ But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." ³¹ So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman. [Paul tells the people an allegorical tale from redemptive-history. Paul shows that an eschatological shift has occurred in Christ, in the fullness of the times. Those who were sons of promise have mostly become slaves by not understanding fully the demands of the law; those who were by birth sons of slaves have become sons of promise through faith, having run from the condemnation and demands of the law to the sweet arms of our Savior Jesus Christ. Our mother is the Heavenly Jerusalem, not the earthly Jerusalem that is by and large made up of unbelievers (although there will always be a remnant saved by faith in Christ alone, such as the Apostles, Anna, Simeon, Elisabeth, and Zecharias)]

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INTRODUCTION: OVERVIEW AND REVIEW OF GALATIANS

- The Churches of Galatians are being deceived the Judaizers.
- The Judaizers came after the Apostle Paul had established the congregations and taught them that Paul had not been sent with authority from the Apostles, they had...
- And they are to cooperate with God's grace in keeping God's Law in order to be justified.
- Paul is astonished that they have so quickly turned (not from him) but from God who called them.
- Paul says that they have been bewitched, or that someone has cast a spell on them.
- Paul teaches and reminds them that the only way one can be saved is through Christ alone- -being declared righteous based on a righteousness from Christ received by faith alone.
- Paul reminds the Galatians that they were slaves and did not know God, now that they have been known by God, heard and believed the Gospel of grace, why would they return from being sons of God to living like slaves under Law!?
- Paul teaches them that from the Old Covenant and the Prophets, all believers were saved by believing the promise made to Abraham.

- The Judaizers are boasting in being truly the sons of Abraham and not some “half-Christians”. Paul says that the only legitimate offspring or seed of Abraham is Christ, and those who believe in Christ and united to him by faith.
- “Why then the Law?” To make sin utterly sinful and recognizable by all so that they may depend upon grace and promise alone!
- Paul teaches them that the purpose of the Law in the Old Covenant was a guardian or tutor until the fullness of the times would come and God would send forth his son, born of a woman, born under law, in order to redeem those under Law, so that we might receive the Spirit of God and adoption as children- -not slaves.
- Paul is teaching one more time through an allegory the important truth of how one cannot go from being sons by the Spirit back to being slaves to the Law through the flesh.

I. AN ALLEGORY OF THE REALITY OF BEING REDEEMED AS SLAVES IN ORDER TO BE SONS BY FAITH: ISAAC AND ISHMAEL

THE JUDAIZERS ARE BOASTING IN BEING TRUE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM!

QUOTATION FROM BURTON’S COMMENTARY (PG. 251)

Paul is saying in this allegory:

“Would you Galatians be, as the Judaizers have been exhorting you to be, sons of Abraham?

Be so, but observe that of the Abrahamic family there are two branches, the slave and the free. We, brethren, whose relation to Abraham is spiritual, not physical, we are the sons not of the slave, but of the free.”

NOTE: NOT AN ALLEGORY AS WE MIGHT THINK OF IN THE INTERPRETIVE SENSE: This is more of a typological-redemptive-historical story that Paul gives in light of an allegory that the Judaizers were probably teaching the Churches of Galatia.

a. **Remember the importance of “Father Abraham” to the Jews.**

Paul has made clear that it is not the ethnicity that matters, but the faith *like Abraham’s faith*.

^{ESV} **Galatians 3:24-29:** So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ **And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.**

^{ESV} **Romans 2:25-29:** For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. ²⁶ So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? ²⁷ Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. ²⁸ **For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical.** ²⁹ **But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.**

^{ESV} **Romans 4:13-17:** **For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.** ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. ¹⁶ **That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring- not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,** ¹⁷ **as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”-** in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

^{ESV} **Philippians 3:1-3:** Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. ² Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. ³ **For we are the real circumcision, who worship**

by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh...

^{ESV} **Galatians 6:11-16** " See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. ¹² It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³ For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. ¹⁴ But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ **For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.** ¹⁶ **And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.**

PAUL MAKES ALLEGORICAL CONTRASTS BETWEEN TWO RELIGIONS ESSENTIALLY

b. A religion of bondage and legalism: Judaism

^{ESV} **John 8:31** So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³ **They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"** ³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. ³⁸ I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father." ³⁹ **They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing what Abraham did,** ⁴⁰ but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. ⁴¹ You are doing what your father did." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father- even God." ⁴² Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. ⁴⁴ **You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him.** When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

c. A religion of freedom, sonship and grace: **Christianity**

d. "Eschatological Reversal" in the fullness of the times?

Paul tells the people an allegorical tale from redemptive-history. Paul shows that an eschatological shift has occurred in Christ, in the fullness of the times.

Those who were sons of promise have mostly become slaves by not understanding fully the demands of the law; those who were by birth sons of slaves have become sons of promise through faith, having run from the condemnation and demands of the law to the sweet arms of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Our mother is the Heavenly Jerusalem, not the earthly Jerusalem that is by and large made up of unbelievers (although there will always be a remnant saved by faith in Christ alone, such as the Apostles, Anna, Simeon, Elisabeth, and Zecharias).

i. **TWO SONS = TWO MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE WAYS TO GOD:**

^{ESV} **Genesis 16:1-2:** Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. ² And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.

^{ESV} **Genesis 21:1 The LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did to Sarah as he had promised.** ² And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. ³ Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, Isaac.

1. Ishmael- Son of Flesh (son of Hagar).

2. Isaac- Son of Promise (son of Sarah).

a. *Under Law* Sons of Isaac have become slaves.

b. *In Christ* Sons of Ishmael have become sons by faith.

ii. **TWO COVENANTS: OLD (MOAIC) AND NEW (CHRIST)**

^{ESV} **Jeremiah 31:31-34:** “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. ³³ ***But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*** ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

iii. TWO JERUSALEMS: EARTHLY (JUDAISM) AND HEAVENLY (CHRISTIAN CHURCH OR “THE ISRAEL OF GOD)” (GAL. 6:16)

^{ESV} **Isaiah 66:8** Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment? For as soon as Zion was in labor she brought forth her children.

iv. ARE YOU AN ISAAC OR AN ISHMAEL?

Remember the words of Barclay in his commentary: “Anyone who makes law central is in the position of a slave; all his life he is seeking to satisfy his master the law. But when grace is central, the person has made love his dominant principle...it will be the power of that love and not the constraint of law that keeps us right; and love is always more powerful than law.”- quoted in Morris, pg. 150.

Contrast between Righteousness by the Law (Slavery) and Righteousness by Faith (Freedom as Sons) –from Fung’s Commentary on Galatians, pg. 213.

Slavery (Righteousness by Law):

Hagar-a slave woman

Ishmael-born according to the flesh

The Sinaitic Covenant of Law

The Present Jerusalem (=Judaism)

The Children of the Present Jerusalem (=Legalists)

Freedom (Righteousness by Faith in Christ)

Sarah-a free woman

Isaac-born through God's promise

The Covenant of Promise (based on faith)

The Jerusalem Above (=the Church)

The Children of the Jerusalem Above (=Christians)

Summary: *In Christ we are children of God. We have been redeemed from the curse and condemnation of the Law to be freed to serve Christ and our neighbor wholeheartedly, and thus uphold, fulfill, and keep the law by the empowerment and enablement of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.*

IN Christ, we are called to live as those who are free to serve by faith, through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us and writes the Law of God upon our hearts. In Christ, there is faith expressing itself through love and service which is the fulfillment of the Law.

Paul makes clear that we have freedom as sons, because those who are in Christ are “children of promise”:

²⁸ **Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.** ²⁹ But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. ³⁰ But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." ³¹ So, brothers, **we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.**

^{ESV} **Galatians 5:1** For freedom Christ has set us free [Christ has set us free (indicative reality)]; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery [Imperative: stand firm in Christ, and do not submit to a yoke of slavery- - don't go back to trying hard, or law, in order to achieve salvation apart from Christ. The “yoke of the Law” was something Jews were proud of placing upon their necks (see Paul’s boasting in Phil. 3:3-14) and Jesus calling all to come to him because “His Yoke is easy”].

Jesus says in Matthew 11:28-29:

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ²⁹

² Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you [Nullify God’s grace in Christ; Christ will not be a Savior to you].

³ I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law [If you are trying to keep part of the Law, then you must keep all of it perfectly, Matthew 5:48].

⁴ You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. [Paul stresses the two mutually exclusive ways of salvation again; justification by the law and justification in Christ; if our way of salvation is justification by law, then we have fallen away from the grace of God held out in Christ alone]

⁵ For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. [Paul goes back to what he said clearly in chapter 3:1-3, that there is the way of the Spirit by faith, and the way of the flesh that opposes this. Notice the “already not yet” here. We already have righteousness in Christ alone, but we still by faith and the Spirit anticipate the actual fruits of righteousness in our lives, and the full righteous, glorified standing we will have in the New Heavens and New Earth when all things are renewed by God’s Spirit]

⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love. [The fruits of our justification and salvation is through faith ‘working through love’; This is the love of God to us that motivates us to live gratefully and lovingly, increasingly each day by His grace and His Spirit. We must not forget that the Law has been written on our hearts by the Spirit of God, and thus by his grace, he enables us to uphold and keep the Law through loving obedience to our Heavenly Father, not perfectly, but by faith. Our faith is expressed and made known through our love.]

⁷ You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸ This persuasion is not from him who calls you. ⁹ A little leaven leavens the whole lump. ¹⁰ I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view than mine, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. ¹¹ But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. ¹² I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves! [Paul is again furious with those trying to deceive the Galatian Christians. They are wanting to see the “fruits” of the Law performed, rather than the “fruits of the Spirit” performed by faith that flows out of gratitude to the right standing before God as sons. In other words, they want to see fruit as much as Paul, but the wrong kind of fruit: a fruit that is self-produced, and merely external behavior to the Law, whereas he is commanding them to believe and work through love because the Spirit dwells within them and the Law is written on their hearts and thus they have the ability to love and live the law, although not perfectly, and this is in no way meritorious before God.]

¹³ 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. [Christians are set free from the bondage of the Law, in order to truly live the Law as Spirit-filled believers by faith. Do not use the freedom as an opportunity to live for the flesh, but to love one another.]

¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. ¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. [Paul says that the whole law is fulfilled in the reality of loving our neighbors as ourselves, not walking according to the desires of the flesh, but walking according to the Spirit, who enables the Christian to live the

Law of God (remember that Jesus summarized the Law as loving God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves).]

II. TRUE CHRISTIAN FREEDOM AS SONS (CHILDREN)

Summary: *In Christ we are children of God. We have been redeemed from the curse and condemnation of the Law to be freed to serve Christ and our neighbor wholeheartedly, and thus uphold, fulfill, and keep the law by the empowerment and enablement of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.*

IN Christ, we are called to live as those who are free to serve by faith, through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us and writes the Law of God upon our hearts. In Christ, there is faith expressing itself through love and service which is the fulfillment of the Law.

- a. **“Position leading to Performance”**- Indicative and Imperative in the Apostle Paul must be emphasized here so that we do not lose in the imperative the emphasis and centrality of the indicative!

Remember the indicative and the imperative!

Indicative Reality in Christ

- i. You are justified by faith alone.
- ii. You are sons of God in Christ.
- iii. You are sons of promise (like Isaac).
- iv. You are set free to live God’s Law in Christ by His Spirit.
 1. Freed from the Law as a way of justification before God.
 2. Freed from the Law as condemning us so that we might live it as the revealed will of God.

b. **Work of the Holy Spirit:**

- i. Uniting us to Christ by faith in our regeneration or being made alive with Christ (union with Christ).
 - ii. Receiving the Spirit as the Spirit of Adoption-Sonship.
 - iii. Spirit writes the Law upon our hearts.
 - iv. Spirit leads and guides us according to God's will (Law).
 - v. The Spirit enables and empowers us to love (not perfectly, but by faith). We have a disposition to love God and neighbor that we did not have before regeneration.
 - vi. The Spirit of God or of Christ is the One who gives us the faith which justifies and lovingly works. This faith marks the beginning of a new life whose principle and power is the Holy Spirit and His work in us.
- c. **We are to live by the Spirit**: We have been set free from the condemnation of the Law in order to freely serve Christ with all of our hearts through his Spirit who lives in us.
- 1. **The will of God in the Law**
 - a. Jesus summarizes the Law in "loving God and neighbor".
 - b. Jesus came to fulfill the Law not to abolish it.
 - 2. **The love that we should have for God and others** -Not merely a subjective feeling of what we feel God wants us to do, but what the Law objectively tells us, and instructs us with regard to what God wants us to do in love.

3. Biblical example of the Good Samaritan: "Who is my neighbor?"

Luke 10:25-27: And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" ²⁷ And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸ And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

²⁹ But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

Ethical Imperatives as How to Live as Those Justified by Faith Alone

- i. Living the Law, not as a merit before God, but by faith (imperfectly).
- ii. Living the Law, not as a merit before God, but because of gratitude for what God has done for us in Christ...

Example of Heidelberg Catechism: ***Guilt, Grace, and Gratitude!***

- iii. ...and is doing in us by his grace by His Spirit!

Remember Monergism in Justification and Synergism in Sanctification

^{ESV} **Ephesians 2:8-10:** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.¹⁰ **For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

^{ESV} **Philippians 2:12-13:** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

iv. **Living lovingly** before God and neighbor which is the summary of the Law of God.

- No idols!
- Uphold the holiness of God's character and name.
- Keep the Sabbath.
- Honor your father and mother.
- Do not kill.
- Do not commit adultery.
- Do not lie.
- Do not covet.

As we grow in the Christian life will we ever fully keep these laws perfectly? No, in fact, as we grow in the Christian life in our sanctification and look deeper into the Law, we will perhaps think that we are keeping them less and less, and thank God in Christ for his grace and forgiveness and mercy to us!

Professor Fung comments: "The ethical imperatives are therefore the natural outcome of the theological indicatives of the gospel of Christ; the gift of justification and life in the Spirit entails at the same time the task of a sanctified life." – pg. 232.

- d. **Dangers of Legalism and Antinomianism** (both are sinful, fleshly ways of living apart from Christ) (indicative and imperatives are understood in our union with Jesus Christ).
- i. **Legalism**: Measuring one's standing before God based on how well one is keeping the Law (and ultimately, yet unintentionally nullifying the grace of God in Christ).
 - ii. **Antinomianism**: A disregard for the Law. Saying that one does not need to worry about the Law anymore.
 - iii. **In Christ**: We find out hope for salvation in Christ, and we find our hope for sanctification in Christ, who is our righteousness, sanctification and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30).

CRB