

The Epistle to the Galatians¹

Not Brought to Naught From Christ (Gal.5:1-6)

I Not Entangled With a Yoke of Slavery

- A. For freedom we have been set free. That is, we were liberated by the Lord so that we might be in a permanent state of liberty to enjoy and realize the Triune God. **(Gal.5:1)**
 - 1. It is not meant to be a temporary stop on the way to something more or something different. There is nothing more than God and anything different from God is short.
 - 2. Freedom is primarily liberty to go wherever one likes, it is freedom from restraint and obligation and deliverance from the Law. Christ did not free us to bring us into another form of bondage, but into the ultimate liberty
- B. Since Christ has set us free, Paul has a charge to the Galatians phrased in both a positive and negative context.
 - 1. First, stand fast **(Eph.6:13-14)** in this freedom from legal bondage **(Gal.5:1, John 15:4-5, 10)**
 - 2. Do not be entangled in a yoke of slavery. Any yoke other than that of the Lord's is not easy and is very heavy. **(Gal.5:1, Mtt.11:28-30)**. To be entangled is to be ensnared.
 - 3. Paul is pleading with the Galatians not to be caught unawares by the snare (trap) again; the first snare was their fallen condition before they met the Lord, which comprised their sins, Satan, the world and their culture with its traditions. By turning to the Law they are being ensnared **again**, this time by the religious world of Judaism. Whether it is sin, Satan, the flesh, the world of pleasure or the world of religion, even the Law of Moses, snares are meant to rob us of Christ.

II Not Brought to Naught From Christ

- A. The Galatians were being enticed by circumcision, the Judaizers making it a **condition for salvation. (Gal. 2:2-3, Acts 15:1)**
 - 1. If they accepted this practice as a condition for salvation, then Christ would profit them nothing **(Gal.5:2)** To take the Law as a condition for your salvation is to relinquish Christ.

¹ Outline and materials based on the *Life-Study of Galatians* by Witness Lee, Living Stream Ministry, Anaheim, California, May, 1984. Any inaccuracies or errors, in the outline above, are the sole responsibility of the adopter of these materials. - D.M.

2. The real believer is the beneficiary of the promise God made to Abraham of both a seed, that would bring blessing to all the nations, and a land that would become the resting place of God and His people. **(Gen.12:3, 7, 15:4-5)**
 3. As the seed, Christ fulfilled the promise, becoming grace as enjoyment to us. Then Christ became the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, who is the very blessing of the promise **(Gal.3:14)** The believers are grafted into this Christ. If they go back to the Law, they detach themselves from the superior tree (Christ).
- B. The ensnared believers who return even to just one part of the Law (e.g. by being circumcised) become debtors to the whole Law. **(Gal.5:3, James 2:10)**
- C. Such believers who are trying to be justified by law, are not only ensnared by and become debtors to the Law, they are brought to nothing and have fallen from grace. **(Gal.5:4)**
1. Different translations render "brought to naught" in the following manner: You are severed from Christ (ASV); Christ is become of no effect to you (KJV); You are cut off from Christ (Conybearre); You are done with Christ (Moffat); Have finished with Christ (Gdspd); You are deprived of all profit from the Christ (Darby)
 2. According to Dean Alford, in the literal sense of the Greek, it means to be annihilated, i.e. to bring something to nothing. According to W.E. Vine, it is to reduce to inactivity, to render useless. Those who seek justification by the Law are severed from Christ, they are **rendered in active in relation to Him. (John15: 6)**

III Expecting The Hope of Righteousness By the Spirit By Faith

- A. If righteousness, i.e., being right with and justified before God, is not achieved by the works of law through effort of the flesh, then how can one hope they will ever be righteous? According to **Gal.5:5**, any hope we have of achieving righteousness is by the Spirit, Who is versus the flesh **(Gal.3:3)** and by faith, which is versus the works of law **(Gal.3:2)**.The Spirit goes together with faith. As we enjoy the Spirit by faith, we eagerly expect the hope of righteousness.
- B. This faith operating through love avails in us or is capable of producing certain results in us. That is, this faith operates in us to work out the fulfillment of the law through love, thus making us right with God. **(Gal.5:6, 13-14)**
- C. *"Love is related to our appreciation of Christ. Without such an appreciation, faith cannot operate. The hearing of faith awakens our loving appreciation and the more we love the Lord, the more faith operates to bring us into the riches, the profit, of the all-inclusive Spirit."* Faith receives the Spirit of life **(Gal.3:2)**, which is full of power and operates through love not only to fulfill the law, but also to fulfill God's purpose. **(Gal.3:29, 4:28,7)**