

Galatians 5: The Faithful Life in Christ

2.15-21: *Propositio*: The Heart of the Letter to the Galatians

Justified = *Dikaiousune*, 'just' or 'righteous' (2 Cor. 3.9, 6.14; Ephesians 4.24; Romans 5.17; 10.3-5)

Genesis 15.5-6 (Romans 4.3): *And (God) brought (Abraham) outside and said, "Look towards heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then (God) said to (Abraham), "So shall your offspring be." 6 And Abraham believed the LORD, and (God) counted it to him as righteousness.*

4.1-7: From Minors and Slaves to Sons and Heirs

Torah functioned as a Guardian when God's people were spiritual minors. With the Incarnation of Christ, believers are to live freely as mature sons 'in Christ', no longer under the supervision of the Law.

4.21-31: The Hagar-Sarah Allegory

Genesis 16.1-16; 21.1-21; The Targums (ancient Jewish commentary on the OT) have voluminous writing about Hagar/Sarah and kids

30 the climax of the allegory – Sarah's uncharitable words in Genesis 21.10 are applied to the Galatian situation. Paul's message: 'legal bondage and spiritual freedom cannot coexist' (Bruce *Galatians* 225)

5.1-12: Freedom in Christ

Verse 1 debate – many different Greek manuscript readings. Why? 'The List of Suspected Readings' *The NT in the Original Greek*, 1881

'Stand Fast' – 1 Cor. 16.13; Phil. 1.27; 4.1

3 Circumcision and Torah

4-6 Paul's ARGUMENT summed up!

7 wordplay – circumcision/'who cut into you?'

9 'a little yeast' – also in 1 Cor. 5.6; the adiaphora debate

11 Paul is responding to an accusation of hypocrisy - that he preaches circumcision to other churches.

12 mutilate - lit. 'emasculate' – likely sarcasm, another play on words alluding to circumcision

5.13-18: Life in the Spirit

Do not abuse your Freedom (from slavery to Torah [2.15-21; 3.1-4.11])

'The Spirit and the Flesh'

AW Barclay: 'The flesh is what man has made himself in contrast with man as God made him. The flesh is man as he allowed himself to become in contrast with man as God meant him to be. The flesh is human nature as it has become through sin. . . .'

'The flesh stands for human nature weakened, vitiated, tainted by sin.' *Flesh and Spirit* 22.

Love – the ethical obligation of commitment to Christ. Motivated by Christ's love for us.

HD Betz proposed that Paul distinguishes between the 'doing' and the 'fulfilling' of Torah – doing is not required, but fulfilling is. *Galatians* 275. Also Romans 8.4; 13.8, 10

Love thy Neighbor – Leviticus 19.18. Rabbi Hillel

16 Hebrew halak – 'walk', used repeatedly in the OT to mean 'conduct one's life'

16-18 – Led by the Spirit – Romans 7.14-25. The antidote to license in the Christian life is not laws, but being led by the Spirit, and the Christian life is rooted in and directed by the HS.

5.19-26: The Works of the Flesh and the Fruit of the Spirit

The OT does not contain catalogues of virtues and vices. This form derives from Greek philosophy – Plato's Republic, Aristotle's Rhetoric and Nicomachean Ethics. Especially from Zeno (c. 308 B.C.) and the Stoics.

Mark 7.21-22; Romans 1.29-31; 1 Cor. 5.9-11; 6.9-10; Ephesians 4.31-32; 5.3-5; Colossians 3.5-8

15 Listed Vices: *Porneia* – unlawful and immoral sexual relationships; **morally dirty/impure** (20 times in LXX); **licentiousness/debauchery** – 'a love of sin so reckless and so audacious that a man has ceased to care what God or man thinks of his actions' (*Flesh and Spirit* 31); **idolatry; pharmakeia** – dispensing drugs (to poison people), a la witchcraft (used in Rev. 9.21 and 18.23); **enmity/hostility/hatred; quarreling/discord** (Rom 1.29; 13.13; 1 Cor. 1.11; 3.3; etc); **envy/jealousy** (1 Cor.3.3; James 3.14-16); **anger/fits of rage** (2 Cor. 12.20; Eph. 4.31; Colossians 3.8); **selfish ambition** (Rom. 2.8; 2 Cor. 12.20; Phil 1.17); **dissent/ sedition** (Rom. 16.17); **factions** (1 Cor. 11.19; 2 Peter 2.1); **malice/ envy** (Matt.27.18; Mark 15.10; Romans 1.29); **drunkenness; carousing/orgies** (Romans 13.13; 1 Peter 4.3)

21b – Those who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God (Mark 10.15 etc)

22-23a The Fruit of the Spirit – great memory verse

Self control – an ethical term introduced by Socrates used 4 times in the NT (Acts 24.25; 2 Peter 1.6; Titus 1.8).

24 The Selfless, Sacrificial Death of Christ on the Cross is the central salvific theme of Galatians

The Role of the Spirit in the life of faith

'keep in step' with the Spirit – to agree with, be aligned with; Phil 3.16; Acts 21.24

6.1-10: Doing Good to All

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."