

## Galatians 5<sup>1</sup> *Fallen from Grace*<sup>2</sup>

In chapters one through four, Paul emphasizes in every way possible that believers are not under law but grace. He makes it very clear that law has NO PLACE with grace. Paul now encourages them, based on what he has just taught them so far, to stand in this understanding and not allow themselves to be brought back under the bondage of law.

### *Galatians 5:1-3*

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.<sup>2</sup> Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.<sup>3</sup> And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.*

1. Wuest translates verse one this way, *“For this aforementioned freedom, Christ set us free. Keep on standing firm therefore, and stop being held again by a yoke of bondage.”*
  - a. We must stand in the truth that Jesus paid for our freedom from the law. The law, just as the bondwoman, has no part in grace. Legalism, which is attempting to gain acceptance before God (or escape from His wrath) by our works or actions (do’s and don’ts), is a return to slavery.
  - b. We need to stand fast (continue) in the same freedom. It is Jesus who has set us free from law. It is our responsibility to remain free and not get entangled (ensnared-trapped) by a yoke of bondage.

*The word **free** of 4:31 is the translation of the same Greek word rendered **liberty** in this verse. The word is dative of advantage. The teaching is that Christ died on the Cross to give us the advantage of having this liberty or freedom. This liberty consists of the Christian’s freedom from the law. Under the law, the person has no more liberty than a child in its minority under a guardian. The child has no freedom of action nor right of self-determination. He must move within a set of rules prescribed by his guardian. He is not old enough to act alone. He must always act under the restrictions of his guardian. So is it with the person under the law. Here were these Galatian Christians, free from the law, having been placed in the family of God as adult sons, indwelt by the Holy Spirit who would enable them to act out in their experience that maturity of Christian life in which they were placed, now putting on the straight-jacket of the law, cramping their experience, stultifying their actions, depriving themselves of the power of the Holy Spirit. They were like adults putting themselves under rules made for children.-Wuest*

*The word **entangled** is from **enecho**, which means “to be held within, to be ensnared.” It is used of those who are held in a physical (net or the like) or ethical*

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all scripture is taken from the *New King James Version (NKJV)* Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

<sup>2</sup> In this lesson, the number of the point corresponds with the number of the verse.

*(law, dogma, emotion) restriction upon their liberty, so that they are unable to free themselves. The Galatian Christians, having escaped from the slavery of heathenism, were in danger of becoming entangled in the meshes of legalistic Judaism.-Wuest*

- c. In context, the “yoke of bondage” is law; specifically, believing that by following laws we are made perfect.
- d. Knowing the truth liberates us. Lies bind us. If we receive lies, we will not be free. If we know the truth we will be set free. So, the goal is to know the truth and to reject lies. This is HOW we stand fast in our freedom.

*John 8:31-36*

*So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; <sup>32</sup>and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."*

**2. Verse 2 is talking about ceremonial circumcision and not about the medical procedure common today.**

- a. When we come under law as a means of justification or sanctification or perfection or any such thing, we no longer benefit from Christ. It isn't that we become UN-saved, only that we cannot benefit from Jesus while living under law. **IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO WALK IN THE FREEDOM JESUS CAME TO BRING US AND ALSO BE UNDER LAW.**

*Paul is not speaking here of their standing in grace as justified believers. He is speaking of the method of living a Christian life and of growth in that life. Thus, if the Galatians submit to circumcision, they are putting themselves under law, and are depriving themselves of the ministry of the Holy Spirit which Christ made possible through His death and resurrection, and which ministry was not provided for under law. In the Old Testament dispensation, the Spirit came upon or in believers in order that they might perform a certain service for God, and then left them when that service was accomplished. He did not indwell them for purposes of sanctification. The great apostle had taught the Galatians that God's grace guaranteed their everlasting retention of salvation, and so they understood that he was speaking of their Christian experience, not their Christian standing.-Wuest*

**3. If someone is circumcised via the Jewish faith, that person is obligated to keep the whole law. He does not get to pick and choose which part.**

*The believer is free from the law in three respects. First, he is free from the condemnation it imposes upon the one who would disobey it. Second, he is free from the law as a means of justification. Third, he is free from the obligation to render obedience to its statutes. The believer in this Age of Grace is obligated to obey either all of the law or none of it.-Wuest*

**Galatians 5:4-6**

*You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. <sup>5</sup> For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. <sup>6</sup> For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.*

4. If what Paul has said so far has not earned the attention needed to emphasize the importance of what he was trying to communicate, verse 4 should.
  - a. It is clear that we are justified BY FAITH. The Galatian believers were now trying to live their lives being justified by the flesh (the law). The truth is we are both initially justified by faith and LIVE by faith.
  - b. To be “estranged from Christ” is also translated “severed from Christ”, and in the KJV it reads “Christ has become of no effect to you. The word in the Greek<sup>3</sup> is: *kat-arg-eh'-o* and means “to render useless”. It is also translated in other verses as, “nullify, be done away with, released, abolished, fading away, removed, bring to an end, rendered powerless”.
    - i. These words describe well the spiritual existence of a believer who is seeking to be justified (made righteous) by their own actions/flesh (the Law, religious expectations, their own standards).
      1. They either meet the perceived expectations and feel superior to other believers, or
      2. They don’t meet their expectations (or those others place upon them), and feel shame.
  - c. To be justified by law means to be made righteous or to have right-standing before God due to what you do and don’t do. It is clear that we are ONLY EVER justified by faith in Jesus and not in following the law.
    - i. If BELIEVERS seek to be justified or made righteous by works or actions, they have been estranged from Christ (cannot benefit from Him). If you feel that God is distant from you, it possible that you have put yourself under a law of some sort. Ask God to show you what it is. He loves setting us free!
  - d. “Fallen from grace” sounds serious. Most often Bible teachers use this verse to mean that someone has fallen into sin, but there is no room for that interpretation in the context of Galatians. Paul is clearly showing that if we seek to be justified by law we are no longer in grace.
  - e. The Biblical meaning of “falling from grace” is to attempt to be justified (made righteous) by the law instead of God’s grace. The image is that of a flower falling off the stem or a ship being allowed to run aground. The flower is separated from the life of the stem (God’s grace). The ship is no longer under control of the captain (Jesus).

*Note 10 at Gal. 5:4: The expression "you are fallen from grace," "...should be understood not in the sense that grace has been taken away from them, but in the sense that they*

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<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise stated, Greek definitions are taken from Strong’s.

have turned their backs on it. One may also say 'you have put yourself in a place where God cannot be good to you, or show you His goodness'" (UBS Handbook, p. 122).-Andrew Wommack's Living Commentary<sup>4</sup>.

*Justification is a judicial act of God done once for all. Sanctification is a process which goes on all through the Christian's life. Just because the process of sanctification is temporarily retarded in a believer's life, does not say that his justification is taken away. If that were the case, then the retention of salvation would depend upon the believer's works, and then salvation would not depend upon grace anymore. And we find ourselves in the camp of the Judaizers, ancient and modern.-Wuest*

- f. Most believers agree that we are saved by grace through faith alone. However, consider that when teaching about initial salvation, many today DO insert works EVEN AT THE BEGINNING. Even though God is looking at the person's faith and receives them, the stage is already set for a law-based relationship.

**WARNING: Sacred Cows about to be slain!**

- i. The "Sinner's Prayer" puts requirements on the non-believer that are not essential for salvation but will be a fruit of having been born again. Here is a typical prayer: "Father, I know that I have broken your laws and *my sins have separated me from you*. I am truly sorry, and now I want *to turn away from my past sinful life toward you*. Please forgive me, and *help me avoid sinning again*. I believe that your son, Jesus Christ died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite Jesus to become *the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward*. Please send your Holy Spirit *to help me obey You, and to do Your will for the rest of my life*. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."
1. The main problem with this prayer is NO ONE IN RECORDED SCRIPTURE ANYWHERE EVER PRAYED THIS. People simply believed and confessed Jesus as Lord and were saved. The sins of the whole world were forgiven at the cross.
- 1 John 2:2**  
*And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*
- 2 Corinthians 5:18-19**  
*Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,<sup>19</sup> that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*
- ii. Romans 10:9 does NOT SAY, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as the Lord of your life," it says, "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ." These are two very different statements. The first is self-will; the second is acknowledgment of Who Jesus is. One is flesh, the other is faith.

<sup>4</sup> AWLC

- iii. “Giving our lives to Jesus” would be more akin to a trade. It would be like saying, I’ll give You my life so that I can have Your life...almost like a purchase. NO! Jesus gave HIS life so that we could have HIS life. There is no exchange or purchase from our end. It is by GRACE through FAITH.  
Period.

5. Paul continues his point in verse 5, “*For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith*”. “Righteousness by faith and NOT BY LAW...that is the point.

- a. Waiting for the hope of righteousness is waiting for the fruit of all the benefits of walking in His gift of righteousness (of walking in grace not law).

6. In verse 6 Paul again emphasizes FAITH. In Christ Jesus being circumcised or not being circumcised doesn’t do anything. Only FAITH working through love.

- a. To whose love is he referring? It is God’s love expressed in His grace toward us. Our faith works through His love for us. Faith is a RESPONSE to His grace. It isn’t something we have to work up. We simply believe in Him.

*It is also accurate to say that love produces faith or is what makes faith work. We naturally trust those who we know love us. A revelation of God's unconditional love for us will make faith just naturally abound in us. Anyone who is struggling with faith has a deficiency in understanding how much God loves him. -AWLC*

- b. Yet, we must not miss this point Paul is making here and has been making in his entire letter. Following the law, any part of the law does not make us perfect or provide continued justification, only FAITH WORKING THROUGH LOVE.
- c. Grace through faith: That’s how we are born again, and that’s how we live. *Colossians 2:6-7*

*As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, <sup>7</sup>rooted and built up in Him and **established in the faith**, as you have been taught, **abounding in it** (in the faith)<sup>5</sup> with thanksgiving.*

### Galatians 5:7-10

*You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? <sup>8</sup> This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. <sup>9</sup> A little leaven leavens the whole lump. <sup>10</sup> I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.*

7. Paul tells them that at first they “ran well”, but later “someone” hindered them from obeying the truth.

- a. The term “obeying the truth” is usually used by Bible teachers to refer to obeying laws, but CLEARLY Paul is NOT talking about law. He is referring to the truth that our walk with the Lord is based on our faith in Him which works through His love. Someone taught them something that hindered them.
  - i. Hindered means “to cut in, to impeded, to hinder”.

<sup>5</sup> Author’s Comment and underlining

*The word hinder is from **enkopto** which means "to cut in, to make an incision, to hinder." Inasmuch as Paul is using the figure of a race, this word suggests a breaking into the race course, a cutting in on a runner by another runner, thus slowing up his progress. The Galatian Christians were running the Christian race well, but the Judaizers cut in on them and now were slowing up their progress in their growth in the Christian life. They had deprived the Galatians of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the latter had been thrown back upon self-effort in an attempt to obey a set of legal restrictions, with the result that their lives had lost the fragrance of the Lord Jesus and the enabling power for service which the Spirit formerly gave them.*

8. It is highly likely that Paul knew just who had been hindering the Galatians, so verse 7 is rhetorical. In verse 8 He states the obvious that this way of thinking is not from God. Surely the Judaizers had claimed to be speaking for God. Paul insists that these teachers are NOT from God.
9. Leaven here refers to the false teaching that we must add law to grace. It only takes a small amount of yeast, less than a tablespoon, to cause 6-7 cups of flour to rise. The leaven grows and enters the entire loaf.
  - a. So, just a tiny bit of false teaching about adding laws to our faith will destroy grace through faith righteousness entirely.

*"Even the smallest influence of a false gospel will eventually corrupt all, causing the whole system of grace to fall."-Andrew Wommack's Living Commentary*

10. Verse 9 is an amazing vote of confidence from Paul and a stunning pronouncement of judgment on the Judaizers.
  - a. Paul expresses his confidence in the Galatians and in the Lord that they will no longer think this way.
  - b. Whoever teaches that we must add laws to our faith "will bear his judgment". Stunning.
  - c. "The judgment of God would be the grievous burden which anyone would have to bear who would disturb the faith of the Galatian Christians."-Wuest

*Note 19 at Gal. 5:10: Paul is preaching grace, and yet he pronounces judgment on those who had troubled the Galatians with these legalistic heresies. The only people that Jesus ever openly rebuked were the legalistic Jews who totally rejected grace (see note 1 at Mt. 23:1)...The worst sin of all is self-righteousness. God is longsuffering to all manner of sin, but those who maintain their own holiness as sufficient fall under the judgment of God.*

*Paul may not have been wishing this judgment to come on these legalistic Jews. He might simply have been stating the inevitable conclusion of their actions. It is true that those who proclaim that God is a harsh, judgmental God, giving us only what we deserve, get what they preach. Paul knew this first hand. At one time, he had been more legalistic than any of these Jews he was rebuking.-AWLC*

**Galatians 5:11-12**

*And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.<sup>12</sup> I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!*

- 11.** Paul is saying that when he preached circumcision, he wasn't persecuted; that is to say when he taught a righteousness based on law, he was left alone.
- a. He's saying, "I'm suffering great persecution and it's not because I am teaching what these false teacher are teaching."
  - b. The offense of the cross is clear: We are made righteous by God's grace through faith ALONE.
  - c. ANYONE who teaches this truth will be persecuted. No one is going to bother you if you teach the same-old-same-old junk that we have to do certain things in order to be made perfect<sup>6</sup>. (See note below.) Everyone will applaud you and give you praise before others. However, stand up for the truth and declare that our initial, continued, and ultimate salvation is based on God's grace through faith alone, and YOU WILL BE PERSECUTED. GUARANTEED. If you want praise from religious man, you will have to compromise the gospel. If you want praise from God, you will suffer persecution.

*The persecution of Paul had its basis in the fact that the Cross was an offense to the Jew. What made the Cross an offense to the Jew? Paul tells us in the words, "If I yet preach circumcision, then is the offense of the cross ceased." That is, if circumcision be preached as one of the prerequisites of salvation, then the Cross of Christ would cease to be an offense. Thus, the offensiveness of the Cross to the Jew lay in the teaching that believers in the Lord Jesus are free from the Mosaic law. That was the very point at issue when the Sanhedrin was trying Stephen. The charge was not that he was worshipping the Crucified One. It was that he was speaking blasphemous words against the Jewish Temple and the law of Moses (Acts 6:13, 14).-Wuest*

- 12.** Many versions and commentators try to soften verse 12. However, in context it is apparent that Paul is suggesting that those who are trying to persuade the Gentiles to be circumcised, should just go all the way and castrate themselves. These strong words express Paul's intensity about this topic. This was serious, and Paul is using very strong language to makes his point.

*The words cut off are from apokopto. The word refers to bodily mutilation. Paul expresses the wish that the Judaizers would not stop with circumcision, but would go on to emasculation. The town of Pessinus was the home of the worship of Cybele in honor of whom bodily mutilation was practiced. The priests of Cybele castrated themselves. This was a recognized form of heathen self-devotion to the god and would not be shunned in*

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<sup>6</sup> Teachers get around this truth by using different terminology. They will say, "No, we aren't trying to be perfected by doing these things. We are doing them to PLEASE God." The implication is the same, if you don't do the things they teach, you are not pleasing God. Or they will say, "We need both grace and truth," and redefine "truth" to mean some form of law, when actually, the TRUTH is we are free from law. Truth does NOT equal Law.

ordinary conversation. This explains the freedom with which Paul speaks of it to his Galatian converts. In Philippians 3:2, the apostle speaks of the Judaizers as the concision, that is, those who mutilate themselves. Vincent expresses his conception of Paul's words as follows: "These people are disturbing you by insisting on circumcision. I would that they would make thorough work of it in their own case, and instead of merely amputating the foreskin, would castrate themselves as heathen priests do. Perhaps this would be even more powerful help to salvation." He says that this is perhaps the severest expression in Paul's epistles. The great danger in which Christianity was placed by the Judaizers, made such a severe statement necessary. The man who could beseech his converts with the meekness and gentleness of Christ, could also deal in a most severe way when the occasion for such treatment presented itself. The whole expression shows that circumcision had become for Paul a purely physical act without religious significance, and, performed for such a purpose as that for which the Judaizers used it, it became a bodily mutilation not different in character to the mutilations of the heathen religions. Thus, by glorying in the flesh, the Galatians would be returning to the bondage of their former heathenism. -Wuest

### Galatians 5:13-15

*For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. <sup>14</sup> For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>15</sup> But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!*

13. Is Paul now introducing law? Is he "balancing" grace with do's and don'ts? No.
  - a. He had just said to stand fast in the liberty which set us free, free from the law. We are free; now don't go back to the "weak and beggarly elements" which Paul refers to in Colossians as "touch not taste not". Paul is saying, don't use your freedom as a way of living in the flesh. Don't make your freedom to be what you do and don't do. Use your liberty as opportunity to serve each other in love.
  - b. If you spend all your spare time trying to be perfected in the flesh through whatever system of law you've been taught (spiritual disciplines, etc.) you will have little time left to serve each other in love. When we know that we are RIGHTEOUS BY FAITH, we have time to fulfill the one command of Christ, to love one another as He loved us.
14. The Galatians had become very concerned about obeying the Law of Moses as a means of being perfected. He isn't now changing all he said and then turning around and putting them under the law. He is saying that since they are so concerned about keeping the law, it's quite simple: love each other. We don't need the law to guide us. We are guided by God's grace. Because we are loved, we love each other, and without one nod to the law, we fulfill it.
15. Why is Paul suddenly talking about biting and devouring each other? It might seem he is now instructing them about how to behave. We believe this goes much deeper when considered in context. When believers begin to base their righteousness by a certain set of standard of behavior (law), they then turn to each other and insist that others follow

their rules. This biting and devouring of each other is not what grace is about. Grace allows others to hear from God and be led by the Spirit. Our lives are not to be led by preachers of law, but by the Spirit. When we walk in the flesh, trying to improve or justify ourselves by the flesh (law), hostile relationships follow.

- a. If you have relationships which are hostile, take note. A law lurks. Either it is a law you are trying to impose on someone or one that someone is trying to impose on you. This can be especially true in the family setting. It is as easy as 1-2-3 to ruin a loving marriage by turning it into law (spoken and unspoken). Parents, without even meaning to, can give children the impression that their love for them is based on obedience.

### Galatians 5:16-18

*I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

*<sup>17</sup> For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

16. Commentators vary greatly in their explanation of verse 16. Here is ours. In the book of Galatians, “flesh” refers to one’s effort to be made pleasing to God by one’s actions. We know also from context that the works of the flesh are those things recorded in verses 19-20. How do we not get involved in self-righteousness that leads to the works of the flesh? By walking in the Spirit.

- a. Many have turned “walking in the Spirit” into a list of things we have to do to stay focused, but clearly from Paul’s letter, self-effort is not the answer.
- b. Others say that we have two natures a new one and a sinful nature, and so this verse means to walk according to the new nature, not the old. THIS IS NOT TRUE. We are NEW creations. Our old nature is dead. Paul is STILL TALKING ABOUT SPIRIT VERSES LAW.

#### 2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

- c. “Walk in the Spirit” clearly indicates that the believer is already in the Spirit and need only walk in Him. The Holy Spirit lives in us and is leading us. We don’t need to try and be in the Spirit. The Spirit is in us and we are already of the Spirit and not the flesh.
- d. Walking in the flesh = Walking in law. Those who walk in the Spirit walk by grace through faith. Those who walk in the flesh seek a righteousness or perfection based on law. If you live in the Spirit, you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. If you live in the flesh; that is, under law, you will end up fulfilling the lust of the flesh.
  - i. This might have been Paul’s answer to the usual accusations that if you tell someone he/she is free from law, he/she will go on a sinning spree. Paul is probably addressing this false assumption. He is saying, if someone is walking in the Spirit, that person will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

- e. Walk in His grace (Spirit), conscious of all that the finished work of Jesus accomplished, and you absolutely will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, caused by trying to live by the law.
- f. It is assumed by Paul that born again believers are not in the flesh but in the Spirit and will be led by the Spirit not the flesh.

Romans 8:1-4, 9

*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.<sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.<sup>3</sup> For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,<sup>4</sup> that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit...<sup>9</sup> But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.*

- 17. If we try to live our Christian lives in the flesh; that is, live our lives in our own strength and using our own self-effort to keep certain laws, we will fall from grace. Once back under law, we will not benefit from Christ. We will lack power in our lives. We will end up like the man described in Romans 7, unable to do what he wants, and unable to not do what he doesn't want to do<sup>7</sup>.
- 18. For anyone who might be doubting this interpretation of what Paul is really saying, consider verse 18, where he brings us all back into focus: "***But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.***" Paul is **STILL** talking about not being under law. He is clearly saying that we are not under law and that **BECAUSE** we are not under law, we are free to live free from sin. In Romans 6:4 Paul writes, "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace." **WHY DOES SIN NOT HAVE DOMINION OVER US?** It is NOT because we have the law to guide us or to "balance" grace. It is precisely because we are NOT under law that we are free from the dominion of sin AND because we are under GRACE!!!

*Paul's statement becomes intelligible and consistent when we recognize the following points; first, that believers through their new relation to the Lord Jesus, are released from the whole law as statutes, and from the obligation to obey its statutes, second, that all which God's law as an expression of His will requires, is included in love, and third, when the believer acts on the principle of love, he is fulfilling in his actions toward God, his fellowman, and himself, all that the Mosaic law would require of him in his position in life were that law in force. -Wuest*

### Galatians 5: 19-21

*Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,<sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,<sup>21</sup> envy, murders,*

<sup>7</sup> It is clear from the context of Romans 7 that Paul is NOT talking about the normal Christian life. He is talking about someone who is under the law.

*drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

19. The works of the flesh are the works of trying to live according to law. If you are living a law-based life, your relationships will be a mess. Every evil behavior listed in verses nineteen through twenty-one have to do in some way with relationships; either those with God or those with man. These behaviors are a result of someone living in law for law is the strength/power of sin.
20. It might surprise the reader to find “heresies” among the list, but it is blatantly true that those who preach heresy have NO CLUE about what it means to walk in the Spirit. MOST heresies involve law as a means of continued justification.
21. Believers who understand that we are justified by grace through faith alone will not engage in these types of behavior as a practice.
  - a. Paul is NOT saying here that if the Galatians behave this way, they will go to hell. He is saying that this is how NON-Believers behave. The Galatians are indulging their flesh by trying to be justified by law which will only bring about these types of behaviors. They will begin to behave LIKE UNBELIEVERS!!!
  - b. He is saying that unbelievers behave this way and they have no part in the kingdom of God, so why would believers behave like this?

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11**

*Do you not know that the unrighteous (we ARE the righteous)<sup>8</sup> will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,<sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*

- c. Another way to view “not inherit the kingdom of God” is as follows:

*The word do is from prasso which means “to do, to practice.” It is durative in action, thus speaking of the habitual practice of such things, which indicates the character of the individual. -Wuest’s*

*The phrase “shall not inherit the kingdom of God” may be rendered in some languages as “will not enjoy having God rule over them,” or “will never have the joy of God ruling them” (UBS Handbook, p. 139). -AWLC*

**Galatians 5:22-26**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.*

<sup>8</sup> Commentary and underlining within scripture that of authors.

22. Paul is talking about the life we live guided by the Spirit NOT the law. The fruit of that life is contrasted with the works produced by someone who is living in the flesh (following the law).

- a. When we live in the Spirit we are taught by grace, not the law. We are motivated and controlled from within. This rest produces what everyone desires.

**Titus 2:11-14**

*For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, <sup>12</sup> teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

23. The mistake many teachers and believers make is seeing this list as commands instead of FRUIT. When love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control become things we STRIVE to do, we fall back under a law. Amazingly, when someone is walking in a mixture of grace and law, that person can turn even the most beautiful truths into law. These are the RESULTS of walk in the Spirit without law added to it.

- a. “Against such things there is no law” is probably Paul’s way of:
  - i. Stating the obvious, that there are no laws against this type of behavior, and/or
  - ii. Driving home his point that we don’t need law in our Christian life.

24. Notice the past tense. We ALREADY “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires”. We are already dead to sin and alive unto God. (See Romans 6.)

*“Have crucified the flesh” is in the aorist tense, suggesting an action that took place in the past.-AWLC*

25. If we live by His grace (undeserved favor) let us walk by His undeserved favor.

- a. In other words live out your Christian experience the same way you received it, by the Spirit. Don’t rely on laws and formula to bring about fruit that only the Spirit can produce.

26. The last verse almost seems out of place until one considers the pride that enters the scene when someone feels justified about following laws. Law-followers tend to be self-righteous, and they are not usually satisfied with following the laws themselves, but feel the need to force others to also follow their laws or at the very least, look down on them for non-compliance.

27. The good news is that God wants to give us rest. He wants us to cease from our own labors and simply believe in His Son.

**Matthew 11:25-30**

*At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. <sup>26</sup>Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight... <sup>28</sup>Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>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. <sup>30</sup>For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*