



'Grace is the only force in the universe powerful enough to break the chains that enslave generations.'

Philip Yancey.



'The goal of Christian discipleship is the understanding that we move from a toddler boy who needs the law, to a mature spiritual man in Christ who is able to live by the spirit of the law.'

John Eldridge.



'You may be able to compel people to maintain certain minimum standards by stressing duty, but the highest moral and spiritual achievements depends not on a push but on a pull. People must be charmed into righteousness.'

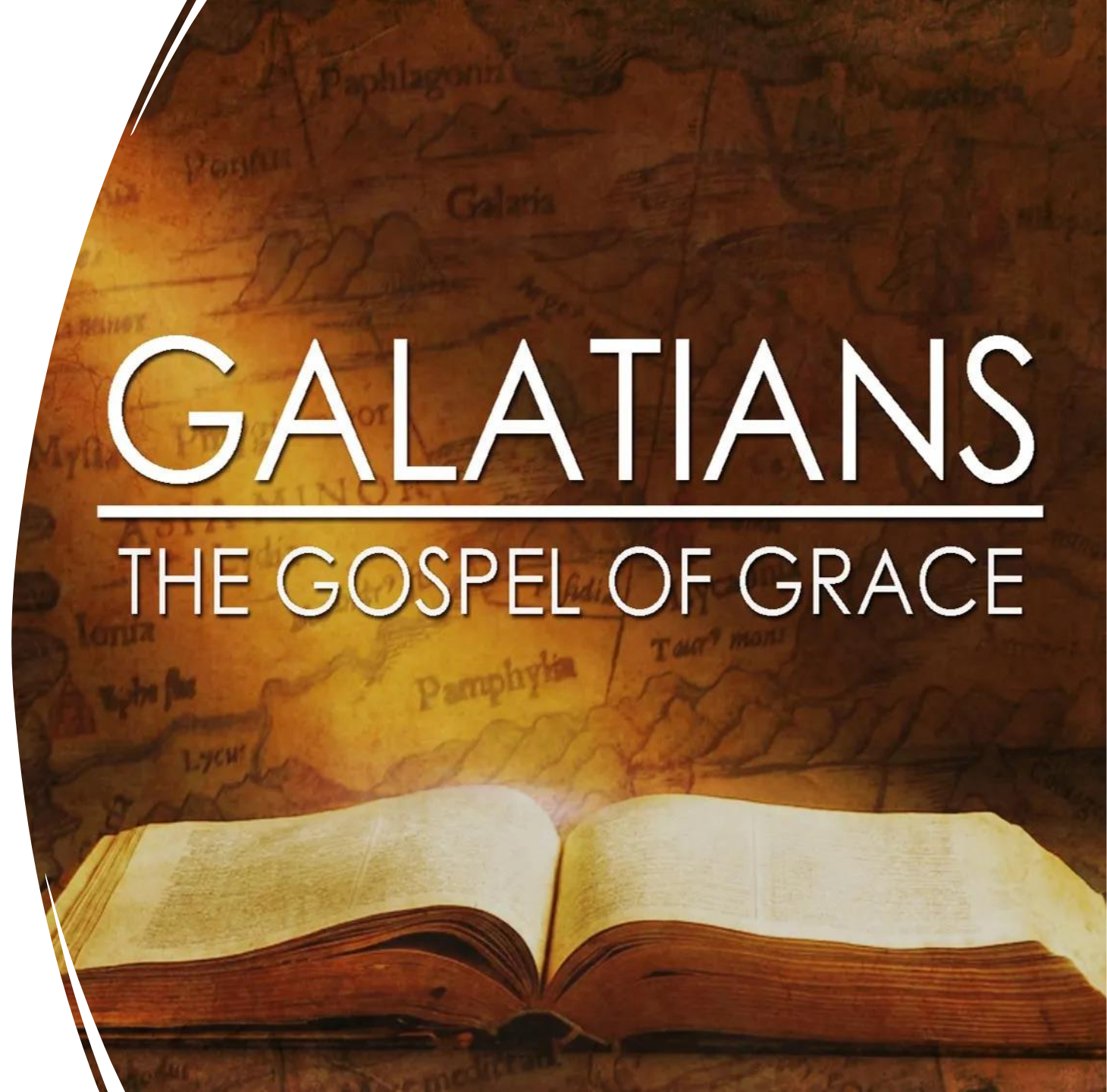
Reinhold Niebuhr.



***LICENCE,
LEGALISM
OR LIBERTY IV.***

GALATIANS

THE GOSPEL OF GRACE





'Laat niemand julle dan oordeel in spys of in drank of met betrekking tot 'n fees of nuwemaan of sabbat nie, wat 'n skaduwee is van die toekomstige dinge; maar die liggaam behoort aan Christus.



Laat niemand julle van jul prys beroof nie, al sou hy behae hê in nederigheid en verering van die engele en indring in wat hy nie gesien het nie, en sonder oorsaak opgeblase wees deur sy vleeslike gesindheid, en nie vashou aan die Hoof nie, uit wie die hele liggaam deur die gewrigte en verbindings ondersteuning ontvang en saamgebind word en so met goddelike groei groot word.



*As julle dan saam met Christus die eerste
beginsels van die wêreld afgesterf het, waarom
is julle, asof julle nog in die wêreld lewe,
onderworpe aan insettinge soos: raak nie,
smaak nie, roer nie aan nie? –*



*‘...almal dinge wat deur die gebruik bestem is om te vergaan - volgens die gebooie en leringe van mense, wat, alhoewel dit ‘n skyn van wysheid het, in eiesinnige godsdienste en nederigheid en in gestrengheid teen die liggaam, geen waarde het nie, maar strek tot versadiging van die vlees.’ **(Kol 2:16-23)***



The Judaizers were early converts to Christianity who tried to force believers from non-Jewish backgrounds to adopt Jewish customs as a condition of salvation. They were a segment of Jews who believed in salvation by grace but that one was kept by works.



In order to be saved a person had to add works like circumcision, observing certain days and feasts and dietary requirements to grace & faith in Christ.



Gal 4:1-31.

'Look at it like this – a child can inherit a business, but as long as he is underage, he is no better off than one of the employees, even though he owns the whole estate! He is supervised by those guardians and his affairs are managed by trustees, until the date set by his father..



Gal 4:1-31.

So we Jewish Christians also, when we were spiritual infants, were kept like slaves under the rules of Hebrew ritual and subject to the elementary teachings of a system of external observations and regulations.



Gal 4:1-31.

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son born of a woman. She was a Jew, so He was born subject to the law, so that He might redeem those of us who have been kidnapped by the law and give us the full status of grown-up sons.



Gal 4:1-31.

Because you too have been recognized as God's sons, He sent the Spirit of His Son into our innermost beings, so that we cry out 'Daddy!' (which is exactly how Jesus addressed His heavenly Father).



Gal 4:1-31.

This proves that each of you is a son of God and no longer a slave; and if you are His son you are also His heir, and He will make sure you get the estate. There was a time when you had no personal relationship with God. But your religion bound you to do so much for so called 'gods' who weren't even real!



Gal 4:1-31.

But now that you know God as He is (or rather, now that He has introduced Himself to you) how can you possibly go back to that weak and worthless religion! Do you really want to be in their bondage again?



Gal 4:1-31.

Already you're observing a calendar of so-called 'sacred' days and months and seasons and years. I am beginning to have a horrible fear that all my efforts to help you have been wasted.



Gal 4:1-31.

My dear friends, what I would really like you to do is try to put yourselves in my shoes to the same extent that I, when I was with you, put myself in yours. You've never hurt me before. You know it was because of physical illness that I first came to tell you the Good News. My condition must have been a real trial to you, but you never made fun of it, nor were you disgusted with me.



Gal 4:1-31.

You chose to treat me as well as you would have treated an angel of God – as well as you would have treated Jesus Himself if He had visited you. You were so pleased and proud to have me. Where have all those feelings gone? I recall vividly that you wished it was possible to donate your eyes for transplanting in me.



Gal 4:1-31.

Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? Those heretical teachers go to great lengths to flatter you, but their motives are rotten. They want to shut you out of the free world of God's grace so that you will always depend on them for approval and direction, making them feel important.



Gal 4:1-31.

Don't get me wrong – special attention is always fine, provided the intentions are right. You are my special concern, even when I am not actually with you.



Gal 4:1-31.

My little children, for whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you! Oh, I keep wishing that I was with you. Then I wouldn't be reduced to this blunt, letter-writing language out of sheer frustration. Tell me this – you seem to have such a strong urge to be governed by the Law of Moses, but have you really listened to everything it says?



Gal 4:1-31.

What about this one recorded incident? Abraham was the father of two sons by two women, one a slave-girl and the other free. The slave-girls' boy was the natural result of a physical act; but the child of the free woman only came as the supernatural result of a divine promise.



Gal 4:1-31.

This contrast is intended to picture spiritual realities, for the two sons represent two very different kinds of relationship with God. One stems from Mount Sinai and its children are born into bondage. Their symbolic mother is the slave-girl Hagar, whose connections were with Arabia, where Mount Sinai stands. She corresponds to the present Jewish capital of Jerusalem, whose leaders and subjects are under oppression.



Gal 4:1-31.

But there is another Jerusalem of heavenly origin, represented by the free woman, and she is the mother of all of us who believe. The Old Testament says of her 'Celebrate you barren woman who never had a child, burst into cries of joy, you who never knew the pain of labour; for the lonely wife will have a far bigger family than she who has a husband'.



Gal 4:1-31.

My brothers, we are like Isaac, for our life was brought into being by a divine promise. As in his day, the child born in the normal course of nature persecuted the one born by the power of the Holy Spirit, so it is today. But look what Scripture says about the outcome of this; 'Throw out the slave-girl and her son, for he will never share the father's property with the Son of the free woman'.



Gal 4:1-31.

So, brothers, get this quite clear in your minds – we are not the children of a slave-girl but of a free woman.



Twée Seuns	ISAK	ISMAEL
Twée Vroue	Sara	Hagar
Twée Verbonde	Belofte na die gees	Sinai, Wet na die vlees
Twée Stede	Hemelse Jerusalem	Aardse Jerusalem
Twée Resultate	Vryheid	Slawerny



Gal 5:1-26.

*'It is for freedom then that Christ has set us free.
So hang on to it and don't get tied up again in
the chains of slavery!'*



Gal 5:1-26.

Listen! I Paul, a Jewish Christian, make this serious statement – if you get circumcised, Christ Himself will be of no more value to you. Let me repeat that. I give my solemn assurance to anyone who submits to the initiation ceremony of circumcision, that he has put himself under an obligation to obey every single obligation of the Jewish law.



Gal 5:1-26.

The operation will not only cut-off part of your body; it will cut you off from Christ!



Gal 5:1-26.

Anyone of you who tries to get right with God by keeping the commandments will find you have slipped beyond the range of God's undeserved mercy. We Christians build our hope on a very different basis. By the help of Holy Spirit we wait expectantly for that right standing and state which result from trusting in Jesus Christ.



Gal 5:1-26.

Once we are part of Him, it doesn't count for anything whether we are circumcised or not. The only thing that matters is the kind of believing that is expressed in loving.



Gal 5:1-26.

You were running superbly! Who caused an obstruction and stopped you from putting the truth into practice? This detour doesn't come from God Who called you into the race in the first place. And please, don't ignore this as insignificant. It only takes a minute amount of yeast to permeate an entire loaf of bread.



Gal 5:1-26.

Deep down, the Master has given me confidence that you will not defect. But the one who is confusing and disturbing you, he will one day have to give account and take his punishment, whatever his position is now..



Gal 5:1-26.

As for the rumour that I continue to preach the ways of circumcision (as I did before I came into Christ), that is ridiculous. Why do I still suffer persecution at the hands of other Jews? If I was preaching that old message, no one would be offended if I mentioned the cross now and then – it would be so watered-down it wouldn't matter anyhow.



Gal 5:1-26.

I wish that those agitators who confuse you to cut off your foreskins would go all the way and completely cut off their male organs!



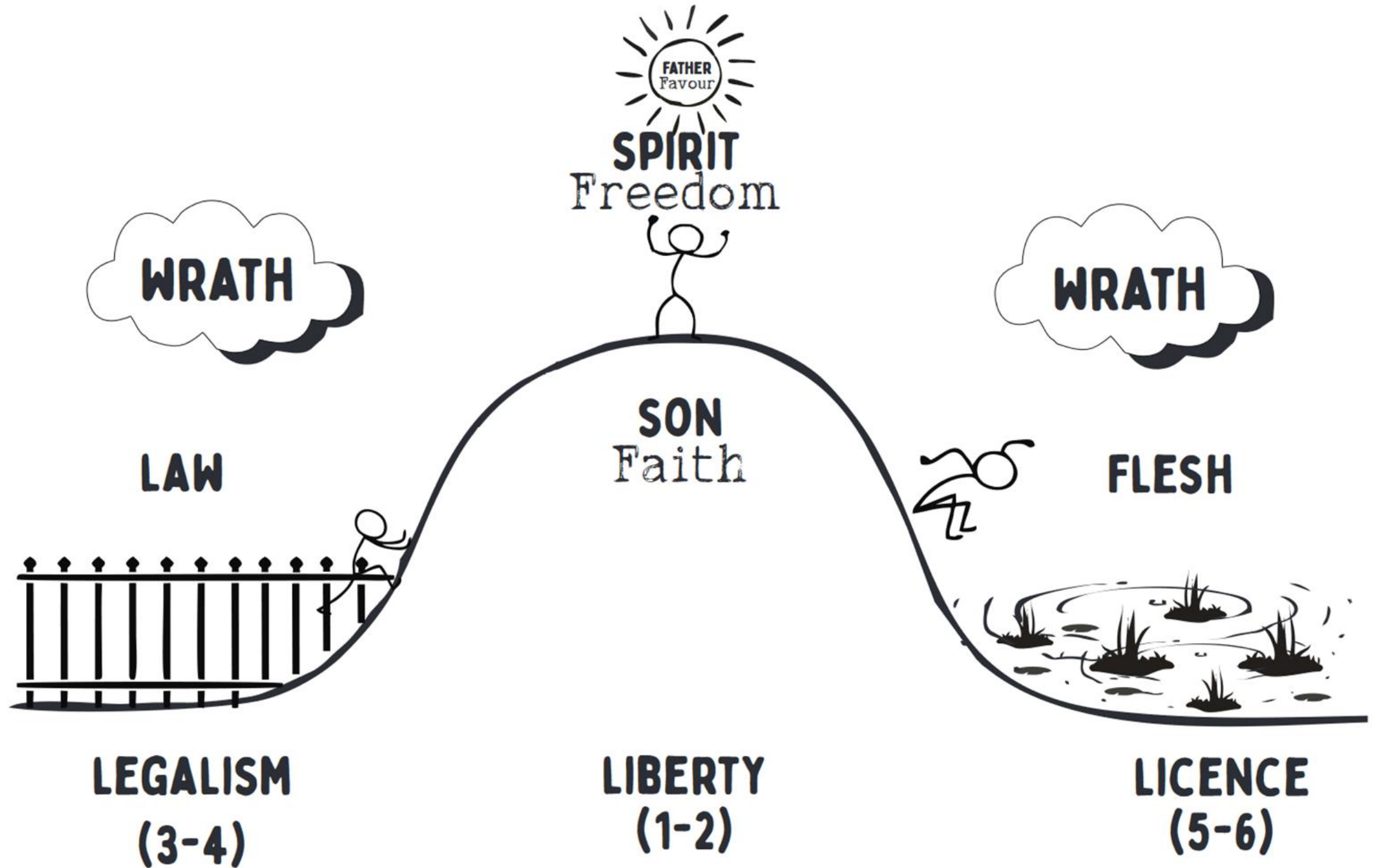
Gal 5:1-26.

So, my brothers, God meant you to be free. On the other hand, don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and so destroy your freedom.



Gal 5:1-26.

Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows. The entire law is summed up in a single command: Love your fellow-man as yourself.





Gal 5:1-26.

If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. The approach I'm advocating is to let Holy Spirit decide each step you take. Then you just won't try to satisfy the desires of your old self, whose cravings are diametrically opposed to what the Spirit wants – and vice-versa.



Gal 5:1-26.

The two are incompatible, in conflict with each other, which is why you find that you can't always do what you really want to. If the Spirit is leading your life, you have nothing to fear from the law. When the old self is at work, the results are pretty obvious.



Gal 5:1-26.

It will produce things like repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage, frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; occultism and idolatry, drug addiction, cut-throat competition, a brutal temper, hatred, the vicious habit of depersonalising everyone into a rival, drinking parties and things like that.



Gal 5:1-26.

I've warned you before, that people who go on doing this sort of thing will have no share in God's coming kingdom.



Gal 5:1-26.

When God's Spirit is at work though, a fruit appears in the character. Each cluster includes loving care, deep joy and quiet serenity; endless patience, practical kindness and generosity; steady reliability, gentle humility and firm self-control.



Gal 5:1-26.

No law has ever been passed forbidding such virtues! They have much room to grow because those who belong to Christ have nailed their old self to the cross, together with all its passions and appetites.



Gal 5:1-26.

If Holy Spirit is leading our lives, let the same Spirit also keep us in step with each other. We get out of step when our selfish pride wants a reputation of being ahead, regards others as rivals and is envious of their progress.



Gal 6:1-18.

‘Brothers, if someone slips and falls into sin, those of you who are spiritually mature should forgivingly restore and get him on his feet again, saving your critical comments for yourself. You might be needing forgiveness before the day’s out, for sudden temptation could just as easily hit you!’



Gal 6:1-18.

When the strain is too much, help to carry each other's burdens; this is simply carrying out Christ's instructions. If you think you are too good for that, you are badly deceived. Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that.



Gal 6:1-18.

Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others. For each must carry his own load of responsibility.



*'Dra mekaar se laste...' (**Gal 6:2**) Gr: 'baros' (**bar-os**) Beteken 'a heavy burdensome weight, too heavy to carry alone...'*



*‘Want elkeen sal sy eie pak dra...’ (Gal 6:5) Gr:
‘phortion’ (**for-tee-on**) Beteken ‘n takie of ‘n
stukkie dienswerk, iets soos ‘n klein rugsakkie,
maar papierlig.*



Gal 6:1-18.

A person who is being taught to understand God's Word should give his teacher a share in the material things in life. Do not be deceived. No one makes a fool of God. It is a universal law that a man must reap exactly what he has been sowing.



Gal 6:1-18.

If he cultivates his old self, he will harvest a character that has gone rotten. If he cultivates God's Spirit, that Spirit will produce life of a lasting quality. So let us never get fed-up with doing good. One day there will be a grand harvest, if we don't give up.



Gal 6:1-18.

So whenever we get the chance, let's give as much help as we can to everybody, and especially to our immediate family of fellow-believers.



Gal 6:1-18.

Now, in these last sentences, I want to emphasise in the large letters of my personal handwriting the immense importance of what I have written to you. It is those who are concerned about outward appearances and like to show off who are pressurizing you into being circumcised. Their real motive is to avoid the unpopularity that is associated with the cross of Christ.



Gal 6:1-18.

Even though they observe circumcision, they don't seem to bother about the rest of the Jewish law. They only want to get you circumcised so that they can brag about the number of converts to their ritual.



*'Gajus, my gasheer en ook van die hele
gemeente, groet julle.'* **(Rom 16:23)**



*‘want ek was baie bly as daar broeders kom
en van jou waarheid getuig, soos jy in die
waarheid wandel.’ **(3 Jh 1:3)***



Gal 6:1-18.

As for me, I am going to boast about nothing but the cross of Christ our Lord. Because of that cross and its execution I am crucified and dead in relation to the world and society and society and the world is dead to me.



Gal 6:1-18.

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor non-circumcision avails anything but a new creation. Peace and mercy on all who walk according to this principle, they are the Israel of God.



Gal 6:1-18.

From now on, let no one interfere with my work again because I carry on my body the scars gained in the service of Jesus. May the generous grace and love of Jesus our divine Master and anointed Saviour fill your spirit, my brothers. Amen.'



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