

The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians

A Commentary on the Greek Text

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Pumpkin Cottage Publications

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Contents

Preface

Abbreviations

See Series Addendum

Commentaries on Galatians

Analysis

Introduction

Abstract

The Text and Commentary

1:1-10	23
1:11-2:10	35
2:11-14	55
2:15-21	63
3:1-5	79
3:6-19	87
3:10-14	94
3:15-18	104
3:19-24	111
3:25-29	123
4:1-7	129
4:8-11	138
4:12-20	145
4:21-5:1	156
5:2-12	167
5:13-18	182
5:19-25	191
5:26-6:10	202

	6:11-18	213
Excursus I		223
Key propositions in 2:16		
Excursus II		227
The New Perspective on Paul		
Greek Glossary		
See Series Addendum		

Preface

The Rural Deanery meeting is one of those Anglican institutions which are begrudgingly attended by overworked parish clergy; it's an extra meeting we can all well do without. Still, it's good to get together with the boys and girls for prayer, Bible Study, and the examination of Parish-pump politics.

One of the most interesting meetings I attended was during the 1980's in Wollongong, a steel manufacturing town south of Sydney. The Bible study was led by Raymond, a shining light in both theology and liturgy; a light that was dimmed by a poor appointment in later years.

The Bible study was taken from Galatians, and Raymond honed down on the issue of Law in the Christian life. I can't remember exactly what he said, but I well remember the consequences. The immediate consequence was a rather heated argument. I must say, this was the first time I had ever seen frayed tempers at a Rural Deanery meeting, but it was on for young and old. The general thrust of the argument against Raymond was something like "Why not sin that grace may abound?" - this rings a bell! The other consequence was personal; the message affected me, and I was never the same.

I guess on that day I had my Wesley moment, the moment I discovered the all-encompassing grace of God. If we believe the stories, Wesley worked it out in five minutes, but it took me five years and a Sabbatical to work through my pious presuppositions to find the freedom that is ours in Jesus. Galatians, was for me, the book that enabled me to discover, as Phillip Yancey puts it, that in Jesus there is nothing I can do to make God love me more, and there is nothing I can do to make Him love me less.

It is my hope that these notes aid your task of knowing the mind of Christ.

Bryan Findlayson, 2020.

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Notes

Commentary Intention: This exegetical commentary aims to provide a foundation for expository preaching, assisting fellow pastors with *rusty* Greek to come to grips with the text. The Greek level is college years 2/3, with a focus on syntax to aid an understanding of the text - accents are only used where necessary. Highly technical issues are avoided, with the exposition primarily guided by the expressed views of respected published commentators. Where possible, the commentary is structured to conform with the readings of the Revised Common Lectionary.

Format: RCL study units - synopsis, context, structure, interpretation, homiletical suggestion and exegesis: the Greek word or phrase; a limited parsing; the English text (NIV and/or NIV11); a literal English translation (TNGEI, Accordance, Louw & Nida); syntax where necessary; comment, often with a published translation.

Copyright: No copyright provision covers this commentary, nor is citing expected. Where citing is required for academic purposes; Findlayson, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians; A Commentary on the Greek Text, 2021*.

Abbreviations: See Series Addendum.

Print: Format; A5. For mono laser "render colour black."

Greek: Nestle-Aland / UBS 4 Greek New Testament.

Greek Glossary: See Series Addendum.

Inclusive language: Numerous older translations and paraphrases are used throughout the studies to enhance the meaning of the text. Latitude is given to sexist language, although alterations are sometimes made to the original text.

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Dedication: To my children, Marelle, Paul and Justyne.

Typos: Forgive me! I keep finding clangers.

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Key:

Level of complexity: **1**, non-technical, to **4**, requiring a knowledge of Greek.
Deceased: **D**. For publications no longer in print, search bookfinder.com
Other identifiers: Recommended **R**; Greek Technical **G**; Theology **T**

The above is a selection of some of the English Bible Commentaries available on Galatians

Analysis

Prologue

1. Introduction, 1:1-10

Background

2. Historical survey, 1:11-2:14:

i] Paul's apologia, 1:11-2:10

ii] Paul's confrontation with Peter at Antioch, 2:11-14

Proposition

3. Paul's thesis, 2:15-21

The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ

Argument Proper

4. Arguments in support of the proposition, 3:1-4:7

i] New life in Christ is not dependent on our faithfulness, 3:1-5

ii] God's new life is inherited by the spiritual descendants of Abraham, 3:6-9

iii] It is not possible to inherit the blessing of new life through obedience to the law, 3:10-14

iv] The promise is independent of the gift of the law, 3:15-18

v] The Law functions to promote death until everything is put right by Christ, 3:19-24

vi] The evidence of a worldwide people united before God, apart from the law, 3:25-29

vii] In Christ we now have the full enjoyment of sonship in God, with all its blessings, 4:1-7

Application

5. Exhortations, 4:8-6:10:

Introduction: You are slipping back into slavery, 4:8-11

i] Strengthen the bonds between us, 4:12-20

ii] Stand firm and do not submit again to the slavery of the law, 4:21-5:1

iii] Do not cut yourself off from Christ by submitting to the Mosaic law, 5:2-12

iv] Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for sin, but be guided by the Spirit, 5:13-18

v] Be led by the Spirit and not by the flesh, 5:19-25

vi] Care for one another, 5:26-6:10

Conclusion

6. Postscript, 6:11-18

Introduction

The thesis of Paul's letter to the Galatians may be summed up with the words "Christ supplemented is Christ supplanted", Hendriksen. In this letter, Paul sets out to demolish the heresy of nomism (the heresy which looks to dependence on the law to facilitate divine blessing) by establishing the grand truth that the appropriation of God's promised blessings rests on what Christ has done for us and not on what we might do for God. The fullness of new life in Christ, life now through the renewing power of the Spirit, life eternal, is wholly ours when we rest on what Christ has done for us on the cross. There is nothing we can do to improve on the riches of God's grace in Christ. So it is that Paul pointedly says to the Galatians, "Are you so senseless that having begun your Christian journey by means of the Spirit you are now trying to bring yourselves to perfection by means of law-obedience?" Gal.3:3 - *Christ supplemented is Christ supplanted.*

The structure of Galatians

The structure of Galatians reflects its literary form as a personal letter which, due to the fact that it is to be read in a congregational situation, adopts rhetorical forms and conventions. As a letter it has a prescript, 1:1-5, and a postscript or conclusion, 6:11-18. Betz argues that the body of the letter presents as an example of forensic / judicial rhetoric, a defensive apologetic, although many commentators argue that it is more likely an example of deliberative rhetoric where the author / speaker seeks to persuade his audience concerning a particular matter. It does seem likely that Paul is trying to persuade the Galatians that faith has superseded law as the means of progressing the Christian life, and so the letter leans more toward deliberative rhetoric than forensic. Of course, Galatians, as with the other New Testament letters, is not a technical example of rhetoric and so cannot be strictly classified, but none-the-less, it does reflect the accepted conventions of the day, conventions used to progress an argument. Betts proposes the following rhetorical structure:

Exordium - the introduction, where the subject matter is raised and personal links established, 1:6-11;

Narratio - background facts related to the subject matter, 1:12-2:14;

Propositio - the proposition / thesis is to be proved, 2:15-21;

Probatio - arguments in support of the proposition, 3:1-4:31;

Exhortatio - exhortations, 5:1-6:10.

Peroratio - Conclusion, 6:11-18.

The structure offered on this site adopts a rhetorical format, although not always in alignment with Betts.

The churches of Galatia

We are not at all sure which churches Paul addresses in this letter. Galatia can refer to two regions in Asia Minor (modern Turkey), both of which fall in the Roman Province of Galatia. There is the northern region where the Galatians themselves live, and there is the southern administrative area commonly known as Galatia. We have no record of Paul evangelizing and developing churches in the northern region. We do know that during his first missionary journey he established churches in the towns of Pisidia (known as Pisidian Antioch, which is distinct from the Antioch found in Syria), Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. These towns were made up of mixed Hellenised peoples, each with small Jewish communities. Paul's letter seems to be directed to such churches and so the majority of scholars today opt for the "South Galatian Theory". None-the-less, the "North Galatian Theory" is held by some and is supported by Gal.4:13. In this verse Paul says he preached the gospel to the Galatians "on an earlier occasion", but **το προτερον** could mean "the first time". This may link with Acts 16:6-7 where Luke says that "they travelled through Phrygia and the Galatian territory having been prevented by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in Asia." The suggestion is that Paul had a bout of illness and headed for Pessinus to recuperate, a well serviced Roman town in Galatia proper.

Date of writing

It is not possible to fix an exact date for Paul's letter to the Galatians, nor do we know where the letter was sent from. It was obviously sent after Paul's first missionary journey and most likely soon after the Jerusalem Council in 49AD, cf., Acts 15. The letter may have been written from Antioch (in Syria), a town that tended to be Paul's base-camp during his early years of ministry. If this is the case, it was written before his second missionary journey and is therefore one of his earliest letters (probably after Thessalonians).

The purpose of the letter

Paul writes his letter to the Galatians to address a heresy promoted by members of the circumcision party - the judaizers. These, mainly Jewish Christians from the Jerusalem church, were following up on Paul's missionary work in order to correct his depreciation of the Mosaic law with Gentile converts.

The problem we face with Galatians is that at no point does Paul actually explain the heresy he is addressing, and this because his readers in Galatia know only too well the issue at hand. We, of course, are left in the dark. Most scholars, up till recent times, have taken the view that the issue bothering the Galatian

church was some form of legalism, probably justification by obedience. In more recent times, those commentators who accept the new perspective on Paul proposed by Wright, Sanders and Dunn, suggest that the issue bothering the Galatian church is Jewish exclusivism, the imposition of Jewish religious culture (eg., circumcision) on Gentile believers. These notes propose a somewhat left-of-field theory, namely that the heresy promoted by the members of the circumcision party (the judaizers) in Galatia is sanctification by obedience, nomism.

Nomism (nomistic / pietistic Christianity) is the belief that, although a person is justified (set right before God, judged covenant compliant) on the basis of Christ's faithfulness ("faith of Christ") appropriated through faith, law-obedience ("works of the law" - obedience to the law of Moses) is essential to restrain sin and shape holiness for a believer to move forward in the Christian life and so appropriate the fullness of new life in Christ (the promised Abrahamic blessings - the gift of the Spirit, etc.). As far as Paul is concerned, the full appropriation of the promised covenant blessings is found in Christ alone, by grace through faith, apart from law-obedience. A return to law-obedience for blessing serves only to undermine the basis of a believer's salvation, namely grace through faith.

Paul's Thesis

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but rather Christ who lives in me, and the life I now live, subject to the limitations of my human nature, I live in faith, that is to say, in the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and surrendered himself up to death for me", cf., 2:20.

The apostle proposes that a justified person's reliance on the faithfulness of Christ, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates the full appropriation of God's promised blessing of new life in Christ. This proposition is encapsulated in Paul's key text, Habakkuk 2:4, as expounded in his general letter to the Romans.

Text: *"The righteous out of faith will live", Habakkuk 2:4.*

The righteous reign of God (his setting all things right)
in justification (in judging right / setting right a people before him),
out of FAITH (based on Christ's faithfulness + our faith response),
establishes the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God's children
(covenant compliance),

facilitating God's promised covenant BLESSINGS

(the full appropriation of his promised new life through the Spirit),
and its fruit, the WORKS of the law (a striving to keep God's law).

cf. Rom.1:16-17

The Pauline synthesis:

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS = **BLESSINGS** = WORKS.

Paul is not a libertine in stressing "apart from works" for he accepts that those in Christ naturally seek to live as Christ, and to this end he exhorts believers to be what they are. He stresses "apart from works" in response to the nomist heresy of his opponents who taught that:

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS + **WORKS** = BLESSINGS.

James' synthesis:

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS = BLESSINGS = **WORKS**.

James is not giving undue weight to works of the law, as Luther thought, but is seeking to counter the argument of libertine believers who taught that:

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS = BLESSINGS - **WORKS**.

Luther's synthesis:

FAITH = **RIGHTEOUSNESS** = BLESSINGS = WORKS.

Luther is Pauline in his view of justification, but his perspective is somewhat different to Paul because his opponents are not nomists, but legalists who taught that:

FAITH + **WORKS** = RIGHTEOUSNESS = BLESSINGS.

Luther focuses on how a person can be saved, but Paul focuses on how a person may fully appropriate the promised Abrahamic blessings / new life in Christ.

The New Perspective synthesis:

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS - LAW = GENTILE INCLUSION.

This flawed synthesis proposes that Paul is not dealing with the issue of how a person appropriates the full blessings of the covenant, but rather how a Gentile can be included in God's covenant community, namely, by the removal of Jewish exclusivism, ie., works of the LAW.

Terms defined:

FAITH: **εκ πιστεως εις πιστιν**, "from the faith / faithfulness of Christ toward our faith response." Faith entails the linkage of **εις Χριστον Ιησουν επιστευσαμεν**, "we have come to believe in Jesus Christ" (our faith / reliance upon the grace of God), and this operative **δια πιστεως Ιησου Χριστου**, "through the faith of Christ" / by means of the faith / faithfulness of Christ, Gal.2:16. So, FAITH = Christ's faith / faithfulness (his atoning sacrifice on our behalf) and our faith-response.

RIGHTEOUSNESS: Right standing before God, "covenant compliance", Dumbrell, "uprightness", Fitzmyer; "(the state of) rectification", Martyn. Gaining the condition of righteousness is expressed by the verb "justified", *just-if-I'd never sinned*, which word takes one or all of the following shades of meaning:

- "confer a righteous status on", Cranfield;
- judge as covenant compliant, "judged in the right with God", Dumbrell, "count/treat as right/righteous", Barrett;
- "set right before God", Bruce, "rectify", Martyn. (NP = a divine declaration of covenant membership).

BLESSINGS: The promised blessings of the covenant / the fullness of new life in Christ.

WORKS: Paul, following Jesus' lead, uses the term to describe submission to the law of Moses, extending to God's law in general (NP = Jewish badges of covenant membership, eg. Sabbath law, circumcision), which law serves the following ends:

- to expose sin and so reinforce a reliance on divine grace expedited through faith;
- to guide the life of a child of God.

Critical Issues

It should be noted that scholars are divided on many important issues which affect the exegesis of this letter:

ij Nomism, or legalism?

Due to the influence of both Luther and Calvin, commentators have tended to treat Galatians as a theological treatise on the means of salvation, and this against Paul's opponents who argued for a salvation by works of the law, ie., the error of legalism. The approach taken in these notes is that Paul's opponents were not legalists in that they did understand that their salvation rested on the faithfulness of Christ, in much the same way as any faithful Jew understood that their covenant standing rested on God's grace. Paul's opponents were nomists, as were most religious Jews at this time. Paul's opponents, the members of the circumcision party in the early church, saw obedience to the Mosaic law as a necessary requirement for the full appropriation of the promised covenant blessings. For Paul, the promised blessings of the covenant, of life in all its fullness, is found in Christ alone. Paul argued that to move beyond the faithfulness of Christ for the appropriation of covenant blessings served only to undermine a person's standing before God. So, Paul's letter to the Galatians is all about going forward in the Christian life, not about getting saved.

ii] The New Perspective on Paul

The exposition of Galatians is in a state of flux with some commentators adopting the Dunn-Wright synthesis of the new perspective on Paul, and others continuing to follow a traditional liberal or reformed synthesis. Take for example the latest commentaries published on Galatians: Don Garlington, *A Reading from the New Perspective*, 2002, rev. 2007, as opposed to Peter Barnes in the EP Study Commentary series, 2006, or Philip Ryken, in a Reformed Expository Commentary, 2005. The issues in this debate are central to an understanding of the book of Galatians.

iii] The date of Galatians

Although not overly important, commentators are divided as to whether the letter was written before or after the Jerusalem Council, cf., Acts 15. These notes proceed on the assumption that the letter was written after the Jerusalem Council and refers to Peter's actions in Antioch following the arrival of the circular letter from the Jerusalem church, Acts 15:20, (Gal.2:12, not "certain people came from James", but "certain instructions came from James").

iv] The circumcision party

Central to any understanding of Galatians is the identity of the judaizers, "the members of the circumcision party", who were undermining Paul's ministry in his mission churches, and whose activities Paul focuses on in this letter. Some commentators regard them simply as unconverted Jews, but it is more likely that they are believers, many being converted Jews, and that they are committed to the Torah, outwardly expressed in the sign of circumcision.

v] Works of the law

Crucial to an understanding of Galatians is how both Paul, and the members of the circumcision party, view the law. Both do seem to be speaking about the law of Moses, the Torah, but from totally different perspectives.

For Paul, the primary role of the law is to expose sin and thus drive the sinner to seek a righteousness that is apart from law-obedience, a righteousness found in Christ's faithfulness. At a secondary level, the law does serve to guide the life of faith, but it cannot appropriate the blessings of the Christian life, and this because the riches of God's grace are found in Christ. For a believer to use the law as a mechanism to appropriate the blessings of the Christian life, serves only to place themselves again under the curse of the law, and thus under judgment.

Clearly, the members of the circumcision party saw the law in quite a different light, although, since we only have Paul's critique of their position, it is not easy to know exactly what they taught. Most commentators regard these

judaizers as legalists, that is, they taught that obedience to the law earned a person their salvation, it justified them, but this seems unlikely.

It is more than likely that the judaizers were influenced by 2nd temple Judaism. A faithful Jew understood that a person's covenant status was a gift of God's grace, a gift of his covenant mercy. Yet, when it came to the maintenance of covenant standing and thus of access to the promised blessings of the covenant, they mistakenly treated the regulations of the Mosaic covenant as a binding codicil to the Abrahamic covenant. So, for the judaizers, a person who is right before God, is there by grace, but they must go on by obedience.

The judaizers, and probably most Israelites, had failed to recognize that the prime function of the law is to expose sin and thus compel Israel to seek a righteousness like Abraham's, a divine approval that rests on God's covenant mercy (grace), a mercy appropriated through faith. Note how Jesus used the law in his many confrontations with law-bound Jews. He constantly pushed the law into the area of ideals such that it was impossible to claim righteousness under the law. In the parables of The Rich Young Ruler and The Good Samaritan, the Law is presented as an ideal for which repentance is the only way forward.

It is claimed by some commentators that the judaizers were simply arguing for the maintenance of Jewish traditions, in particular, circumcision, but again, this seems doubtful. It seems more likely that they were nomists - Paul was confronting a form of pietism.

v] Sanctification

Sanctification has always been a hotbed of debate in Christian circles. Sanctification is often viewed as the process of making holy, a process advanced by a faithful attention to God's law, both to restrain sin and progress holiness. Yet, as far as Paul was concerned, in Christ we are already holy, nothing can progress our standing further; we are fully justified before God, "just-if-I'd never sinned", perfectly holy in Christ. Of course, Paul then faced the obvious retort, "why not sin that grace may abound?", but in truth, a person in Christ will naturally strive to be like Christ, irrespective of the demands of the law. So, *sanctification, as a product of justification, is a state of holiness, which, in the renewing power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ, we seek to realize in our daily life, albeit, always imperfectly.*

vii] Justification

Paul promotes what we might loosely call "full justification". Often, justification is understood as a declaration of righteousness (of right-standing before God) at conversion, which must then be maintained by a faithful attention to God's law. Yet, it is likely that this is the very heresy that Paul is addressing. For Paul, justification is the divine bestowal of an eternal right-standing before

God, which standing, of itself, comes with all the inherent blessings that belong to a person who is recognized as being in the right with God. Justification is a gift of God's grace, facilitated in the faithfulness of Christ, such that in Christ we possess the fullness of God's promised new life, and this apart from law-obedience; See Excursus I.

Reformed commentators have divided on the *declared*, or *made right* issue, although we probably need to accept that what God declares so is so. If God declares that we are members of his covenant community, that we are covenant compliant, then we are that way. Of course, just because we stand eternally approved before God does not mean that we should lose sight of the imperatives so evident in scripture. Paul certainly doesn't, and it is particularly noticeable that he doesn't in Galatians. As far as Paul is concerned, In Christ we are perfect, so let us strive to be the perfect person we are in Christ. Of course, we never will; as Luther put it, "the old Adam retains his power until he is deposited in the grave". None-the-less, we press forward.

Neither libertarianism, nor perfectionism has any place in Paul's understanding of justification.

Grammatical Note:

This corrected edition uses a descriptive classification for a genitive of source, rather than an ablative classification. See *A Note on the Genitive* in the **Series Addendum**, page 69.

Abstract

In the opening passage of his letter, 1:1-5, Paul dispenses with his usual thanksgiving and prayer on behalf of the church and begins with a condensed salutation, moving on quickly to denounce those who are promoting "a different gospel", v6-10.

Paul then goes on to relate the events of his life after his conversion, focusing particularly on his relationship with the apostles in Jerusalem, 1:11-24. This account serves to vindicate Paul's apostolic authority and the validity of his gospel message. Paul then recounts the events surrounding the Jerusalem Council where both his apostolic authority and the validity of his gospel message, is recognized by the leaders of the Jerusalem church, 2:1-10.

Paul's historical survey climaxes in 2:11-14, with the account of his clash with Peter in Antioch. This clash followed the arrival of the Jerusalem council's letter outlining the requirements for the maintenance of table fellowship between Jews and Gentiles. Paul confronts Peter when he legalistically applies the council's regulations and withdraws fellowship. Paul maintains the authority of his gospel of grace, even against Peter whose actions interfere with "the freedom we have in Christ Jesus".

In 2:15-21, "the central affirmation of the letter" (Longenecker), Paul outlines the theological argument appropriate to Peter's actions, an argument which similarly applies to the judaizers and those in Galatia who have adopted their false teachings. First, Paul identifies with his combatants, stating a doctrine that all Jewish believers hold to be true, namely, that a person is justified (set right with God) on the basis of Christ's obedient sacrifice ("faith of Christ" = Christ's perfect reliance on the will of God = the faithfulness of Christ), appropriated by trusting Jesus rather than obeying the law, v15-16. The trouble is, when a believer applies this doctrine in their Christian life, living under grace rather than law, it can seem that they disregard the law of God ("are sinners") and implicate Christ in their supposed apostasy, v17. For Paul, the opposite is the case. The nomists' dependence on law-obedience to promote the riches of God's promised blessings actually leads to rebellion and death, v18. In the law we die, in Christ we live. To "live", to access the fullness of new life in Christ, to appropriate "the unsearchable riches of Christ", Eph.3:8, is ours in Christ apart from the law. A believer lives "in faith", that is, we experience this new life by resting on the faithfulness ("faith") of the Son of God, namely, his death on our behalf, v19-20. In v21 Paul rounds off his argument by categorically stating that his gospel does not set aside God's kindness in his gift of the law, and this because

the law was never intended to promote the life of a person already set-right with God.

Paul now embarks on a series of arguments in support of his proposition that a person, who is in the right with God on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ, experiences the fullness of God's promised new life apart from law-obedience, 3:1-4:7.

For his first argument, Paul draws on the personal experience of the Galatians, 3:1-5. Having experienced the renewing power of the Holy Spirit (a new heart within, Jer.31:33) through faith in Jesus Christ, the Galatians should have realized by now that their participation in the blessings of the kingdom (the promised blessing of the Abrahamic covenant) is based on Christ's faithfulness, not their faithfulness.

The truth stated in 3:5, that God's promised blessings rest on Christ's faithfulness, leads Paul to his second argument, one supported from scripture, 3:6-9. In this argument, Paul reminds his readers of Abraham, a man who stood right before God due to his reliance on the faithfulness of God, v6. Paul then exegetes this verse, aligning Abraham's trust in God with the trust of believers in his own day, identifying them as Abraham's true children and therefore recipients, in like manner to Abraham, of the promised covenant blessing, v7-9.

In his third argument, 3:10-14, Paul establishes from scripture that the promised blessing of life is not a product of law-obedience. All that law-obedience does is inculcate the curse of the law, v10. The promised new life is not facilitated by a faithful attention to the law, rather, it rests on the faithfulness of Christ, Hab.2:4, v11, and this because the commandments must be "done" to find life in them, Lev.18:5, v12. The simple fact is that the promised Abrahamic blessing, now realized in this present moment through the gift of the Holy Spirit, a gift experienced by Gentile believers as well as Jewish believers, rests wholly on Christ's atonement, v13-14.

In Paul's fourth argument, 3:15-18, he makes the point that the promise, a promise encapsulated in the covenant with Abraham and now realized in the gift of new life in Christ, is independent of the Mosaic covenant such that "the law does not have the power to specify and thus to alter the promise", Martyn. The giving of the law four hundred and thirty years after the establishment of the Abrahamic covenant, does not supplement, nor replace, God's agreement with Abraham.

The fifth argument is outlined in 3:19-24. Here Paul sets out to explain the role of the Mosaic law in relation to the Abrahamic covenant and in so doing counters the notion that the Mosaic covenant supplements the Abrahamic covenant, such that the promised blessings of the covenant, "life", rest on both grace and law. Paul's argument is that the Mosaic law does not facilitate the

blessing of new life in Christ, rather it is nothing more than an interim measure devised to support the promise.

Paul now develops his sixth argument, 3:25-29. It is obvious that the blessing of new life in Christ has nothing to do with our submission to the restrictive oppressive supervision of the Mosaic law. The Mosaic law, as a temporary measure designed to complement the Abrahamic covenant, is terminated in Christ. The promised blessing to Abraham of a worldwide people united before God, is even now unfolding before our very eyes, and this, not on the basis of law obedience, but on the basis of what Christ has done for us. We are all one in Christ.

In 4:1-7 Paul outlines his seventh and concluding argument. Christ, "born under the curse of the law" ... fulfills all its requirements, absorbing its curse by his death on the cross", Dumbrell. "God's purpose [in all this] was both to redeem and to adopt, not just to rescue from slavery, but to make slaves into sons", Stott. Consequently, as adopted sons in Christ, both Jews and Gentiles receive God's promised blessings, a foretaste of which is the gift of his life-giving Spirit. So, a believer, as a son of God, is rightly an heir to the promised blessings of God [and this apart from law-obedience].

Paul now embarks on a series of exhortations ("the request section of the letter", Dumbrell), running through to the postscript, 6:11-18. Most of the exhortations address the nomist problem besetting the Galatian believers.

In 4:8-11, Paul introduces his exhortations by expressing his deep concern for the believers in Galatia. They are drifting back into the prescriptions and ordinances of religion to progress their Christian lives and so Paul has to face the terrible possibility that his ministry in Galatia "may have been wasted."

The first exhortation, 4:12-20, is in the form of a "personal appeal" (Garlington, Dunn) which seeks to re-establish the personal relationship that existed between Paul and the Galatians, cf., Bruce, Barnes..... Given the Galatians' defection, due to the influence of the members of the circumcision party, Paul pleads with his readers to establish again the strong personal trust and respect that once existed between them and their founding apostle. This exhortation, found in v12, is supported by the rest of the passage:

- The strength of the relationship that Paul has had with the Galatians, v13-16;
- The intentions of the judaizers to promote another gospel (namely, that the promised blessings of the covenant are appropriated through obedience to the law of Moses), 17-18;
- Paul's tender desire that Christ again be the centre of their Christian life (rather than the law), v19-20.

In his second exhortation, 4:21-5:1, Paul uses the Hagar-Sarah story to make the point that the Galatian believers are confronted with a choice of two ways forward in the Christian life: the present Jerusalem/Mount Sinai, or Jerusalem above; flesh or promise, law or Spirit, slavery or freedom. Paul reminds the Galatian believers that they are the children of the free woman, the children of promise, v31, and that therefore they are to live out this reality, casting out the nomism of the judaizers, v30, reaffirming the freedom they possess in Christ and refusing to submit again to the slavery of law for blessing, 5:1.

In Paul's third exhortation, 5:2-12, he encourages the Galatian believers to resist the temptation that they submit themselves to the Mosaic law as the means of facilitating full-standing before God (full justification) for the appropriation of God's promised blessings. To choose this course of action will serve only to cut the Galatian believers from Christ and the gift of new life found in him through the renewing work of the Spirit. As for those who are promoting this heresy, the members of the circumcision party, they "will pay the penalty"; their infection needs to be resisted.

Paul's exhortations to the Galatians up to 5:12 focused on the dangers associated with nomism - law-obedience for the purpose of appropriating the fullness of new life in Christ. From 5:13 to 6:10 Paul focuses on the danger of libertarianism, reminding us that the Christian life is "at once free and holy", Allan.

In 5:13-18, Paul's fifth exhortation, he explains how love, the quality that sums up the ethical demands of the law, is realized in the life of a believer when they rest on the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit of Christ. When we are in Christ, the love of Christ compels us. So, Paul encourages his readers that they "not let the possession of [their] freedom serve ... as an opportunity for yielding to the promptings of the lower nature", but rather that they "let [their] lives be guided by the Spirit", Cassirer.

In the sixth exhortation, 5:19-25, Paul gives an overview of the "works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit". The sinful nature, stirred up and impelled forward by the law, promotes "the works of the flesh"; the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit of Christ promotes "the fruit of the Spirit." So, since we possess the fullness of new life in Christ, we must let the Spirit of Christ renew us.

Paul concludes his exhortations in 5:26-6:10 with a practical word on achieving unity between the "libertines" and "legalists" in the Galatian fellowship. He begins with a negative exhortation in 5:26 and follows this up with an exposition on "exercising our freedom to serve each other, with the contrasting warning added to avoid proud attitudes. By so doing they will fulfil the law of Christ amid the present tensions in Galatia", Dumbrell.

In the final verses, Paul summarizes the main points of his letter: he denounces the members of the circumcision party; he states clearly that circumcision (and what it stands for - law-obedience for blessing) is of no value whatsoever; and he again declares that the cross is the means by which we gain the fullness of God's promised new life.

Commentary

1:1-10

1. Introduction - the opening address, 1:1-10

The greeting and Paul's apologia

Argument

In the opening passage of his letter, 1:1-5, Paul dispenses with his usual thanksgiving and prayer on behalf of the church and begins with a condensed salutation that moves immediately to the issue at hand, 1:6-10. Some members of the Galatian churches had adopted "a different gospel" promoted by "certain people" (the judaizers) rather than "the gospel of Christ" promoted by Paul, a message that expedites the grace of God in the risen Christ. Because of the damage being caused by these false teachers, "let God's curse be on them."

Issues

i] Background: Throughout the Gentile world, Paul's gospel was maligned by the Judaizers, members of the circumcision party within the Christian church in Jerusalem. They seemed set on following up on Paul's missionary work in order to counter his antinomian gospel. So, Paul's mission churches constantly suffered from the heresy of nomism, ie., the heresy of sanctification by obedience (the heretical law-obedience doctrine promoted by the Judaizers). Galatians sits firmly in the middle of this doctrinal debate which was troubling the early church. Paul even gives us a bit of its history and how it actually played out in the early church, but more particularly, he tackles the heresy head on for us, although not with the same detail as he does in Romans.

Nomism is the heresy that law-obedience ["works of the law" - obedience to the law of Moses] is essential to restrain sin and shape holiness [sanctify] for the maintenance of right-standing before God [covenant compliance] and thus the appropriation of God's promised blessings [the promised blessings of the Abrahamic covenant = life = the gift of the holy Spirit, etc.]. Paul calls the nomist heretics in Rome "the weak", cf. 14:1-15:13.

It is likely that this heresy entered the Christian church through converted Jews long indoctrinated in the nomism of 2nd Temple Judaism. They probably made up the core members of the circumcision party. Pious Jews of the 1st. century (eg., Pharisees) were infected by the heresy of nomism; they knew that their standing as a Jew rested on divine grace, but they believed that remaining true to that standing rested on obedience to the Law (ie., they were nomists, not

legalists). Jesus constantly tried to expose the flaw in their thinking by revealing the idealistic demands of the Law. Although they were proficient at tithing mint and cummin, they were unable to obey the weightier matters of the Law and so needed to find another way to retain their standing as children of God and so fully appropriate the promised blessing of the covenant. The answer lay with divine mercy, the way of grace through faith.

Paul, serving as the exegete of Jesus, argues for a gospel that rests on the grace of God, such that the full appropriation of the covenant promises is realized through faith (Christ's faithfulness and our faith response) apart from works of the law:

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS = **BLESSINGS** = WORKS.

The nomists / judaizers / pietists / members of the circumcision party argue that:

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS + **WORKS** = BLESSINGS.

In short, the nomists believed that law-obedience both restrains sin and progresses holiness for the appropriation of the promised Abrahamic blessings, which, for a believer, entails the fullness of new life in Christ. These nomistic believers certainly understood that their salvation rested on the person and work of Christ appropriated by faith, although their notion of justification was probably limited to forgiveness. When it came to the appropriation of the promised blessings of the covenant, attention to the law of Moses was essential. For Paul, justification, being set-right before God and thus holy before God, of itself facilitates the totality of God's promised blessings.

ii] Context: Galatians presents as an example of epideictic first century rhetoric which serves to argue a case and persuade the reader to adopt it. The letter / sermon / speech presents as follows:

Introduction, 1:1-10:

superscriptio, adscriptio and *salutatio*, 1:1-5:

exordium - an introduction which serves to introduce the subject matter, often seeking to elicit sympathy from the audience / reader, but in Galatians is more an expression of Paul's anger than anything else, 1:6-10.

Background, 1:11-2:14:

narratio - a narrative section which focuses on Paul's relationship with the Jerusalem church, the Jerusalem Council and Paul's conflict with Peter. A narrative is not always present in deliberative rhetoric, but in Galatians it is a very important introduction to the issue at hand.

Proposition, 2:15-21:

propositio / partitio - a summary statement of the thesis, namely, that the gospel, of itself, and apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ.

Argument Proper, 3:1-4:7:

probatio - rhetorical proofs / arguments in support of the proposition. There is not much agreement among commentators as to the exact formation of these arguments, but these notes propose seven arguments.

Application, 4:8-6:10:

exhortatio, or concluding exhortations.

Conclusion, 6:11-18:

a concluding postscript.

iii] Structure: *The introduction to Paul's letter to the Galatians:*

The salutation, v1-5:

Paul's authority, v1-2;

Paul's gospel, v3-4;

from whom, to whom.

The rebuke, v6-10:

a gospel lost, v6-7;

Paul's gospel is the true gospel, v8-9;

Paul's motives, v10.

iv] Interpretation:

Members of the Galatian congregation had succumbed to the preaching of a false gospel. Paul is amazed that his converts are so easily and quickly persuaded to accept a fraudulent ("different") gospel and thus abandon the one who called them, namely God. They had been called into the grace of God which is found in Christ, but now they have turned from God's free grace to a different gospel, which is no gospel at all. The preachers of this "new" gospel may well have called it the "full gospel". It was a message which contained the "little extra", the little extra that guarantees a believer's standing before God, secures their full sanctification, and thus the promised blessings of God. The "extra" is what Paul calls "the works of the law" - submission to the law of Moses, even down to a Gentile believer being circumcised. For Paul, salvation, complete and full, is by grace through faith, and nothing more.

v] Homiletics: *The little extra*

I always feel uneasy in the presence of someone who claims to have found that little extra in the Christian life, an extra that secures for them superior Christian standing.

Of course, it gets called different things: "full sanctification"; "complete holiness"; "the higher life"..... For Pentecostals the little extra is Spirit baptism; for Baptists it is Believers' baptism by full immersion; for Adventists it is Sabbath observance; for those wearing my badge, Anglicans and Episcopalians, it is confirmation, and so on. Without the little extra we are second-grade Christians; we have failed to make it.

It is no easy matter dealing with someone who confidently asserts they have an inside line on the Christian faith. We are all looking for the extra dimension in our lives and when we come across someone who claims to have found the secret, we are more than worried. All of us have doubts, we are all struggling, and so to be confronted with the exuding confidence of someone who has "found it", is disturbing to say the least. They have the answers, we have the problems; they have found the secret, but we are still searching.

All that we can ever hope for as a child of God rests on the free gift of God's grace available to us through faith in Christ Jesus. If we want more than that, we may end up with nothing. When it comes to our eternal hope, depend on Jesus and nothing else.

Text - 1:1

The greeting and apologia, v1-10: i] The salutation, v1-5. a) Paul's authority, v1-2: The letter begins with Paul stating by what authority he writes - "Paul, an apostle". The letter is also from the "brethren", Paul's fellow missionaries, and is addressed to the churches in Galatia.

αποστολος [ος] "apostle" - [PAUL] AN APOSTLE. Nominative in apposition to "Paul". Those chosen by Christ as his special messengers/witnesses - the twelve. On replacing Judas, the person chosen was someone who had been with Jesus from the beginning. Paul is a post-resurrection apostle serving as Christ's special messenger to the Gentiles. "From Paul the apostle", Cassirer.

ουκ απο + gen. "**sent not from [men]**" - Possibly expressing source, "my apostleship comes from no human source", Barclay, but also possibly agency; "was not commissioned by human authority", TNT.

δια +gen. "**by [man]**" - [NOR] BY MEANS OF [MEN]. Probably expressing agency, but again possibly instrumental, means. So, either "by", or "from". Whether or not Paul intends a distinction between the two prepositions is unclear (**δια** is repeated for Christ and the Father), but his point is clear enough;

"appointed and commissioned (Gk. "sent") not by men but by Jesus Christ and God the Father", Phillips. If a distinction is intended then the point is that Paul's apostleship "neither originated nor was mediated by human agency", George.

αλλα "but" - Adversative. On the contrary, Paul's apostleship was from God. Paul is further emphasizing his authority.

του εγειραντος [εγαιρω] aor. gen. part. "**who raised [him from the dead]**" - [THROUGH JESUS CHRIST AND GOD FATHER] THE ONE HAVING RAISED [HIM FROM DEAD]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "the Father"; "Father who raised ..." Paul may be alluding to the fact that he was commissioned by the risen Lord.

v2

οι αδελφοι "the brothers" - [AND ALL] THE BROTHERS. Nominative absolute. Presumably Paul's fellow workers / missionaries, rather than believers in general.

συν + dat. "with [me]" - Expressing association.

ταις εκκλησιας [α] dat. "**to the churches"** - TO THE ASSEMBLIES. Dative of indirect object with something like "greetings" assumed; "greetings to the churches in Galatia", Cassirer / dative of recipient. Note, "churches" plural, i.e. Paul is addressing numerous congregations. "Greetings to the congregations in Galatia from myself and the other members of my missionary team."

της Γαλατιας [α] gen. "**in Galatia"** - OF GALATIA. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic, limiting "churches"; "the churches *which are located in Galatia.*"

v3

b) Paul's gospel, v3-4: Paul uses his typical greeting, "grace and peace to you." "Grace" is God's free and unmerited favour toward us, and "peace" is the state of wholeness we possess in Christ as a consequence of God's grace. This blessing has its source in God - Father and Son. Paul reminds his readers of what Jesus has done; "he offered himself as a sacrifice for our sins." And the purpose of this action was to rescue us from this present age of shadows - this present evil age. All this is willed by God, so "may he be praised for ever more." There is no verb in v3, but obviously a wish is intended; "may grace and peace rest upon you", Cassirer.

χαρις [ις εως] "**Grace"** - grace [to you]. Nominative absolute. A common greeting in letters of the time so Paul may not intend anything of substance in his use of the word in the terms of "God's unconditional goodwill toward his people", Barnes.

ειρηνή [η] "**peace**" - [AND] PEACE. A common Jewish greeting in the sense of "may God's peace (his favour = peace) rest upon you".

ὑμιν pro. "**to you**" - Dative of interest, advantage, "for you", or locative, place / sphere "upon you", or recipient, "to you", or possession, "be yours."

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM [GOD FATHER OF US AND LORD JESUS CHRIST]. Again, possibly expressing origin/source, "derived from", but also possibly agency, "bestowed by". As in v1, both the Father and the Son are together in the blessing; "from the Father and the Son."

ἡμων gen. pro. "**our**" - The genitive is adjectival, relational.

πατρος [ηρ ρος] gen. "**Father**" - Genitive is apposition to "God".

v4

του δοντος [διδωμι] aor. gen. part. "**who gave [himself]**" - THE ONE HAVING GIVEN [HIMSELF]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting by describing "the Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself for our sins." Here we have a classic atonement statement in the terms of Mark 10:45. "The gospel is about Jesus Christ's gracious self-giving for our sake, and that self-giving must be understood as an apocalyptic rescue mission", Hayes.

ὑπερ "**for [our sins]**" - ON BEHALF OF [THE SINS OF US]. In the NT usually representation / advantage, "on behalf of / for the benefit of"; Christ's sacrifice was for our benefit in that it addressed our sins. Possibly here expressing cause / reason, "because of our sins", also possibly just relational; "who offered himself as a sacrifice for our sins", Bligh.

ὅπως + subj. "**to [rescue us]**" - IN ORDER THAT [HE MIGHT RESCUE US]. This construction forms a purpose clause; "His purpose was to rescue (lit. "remove") us from the present evil world", Barclay.

εκ "**from**" - OUT OF, FROM. Expressing source/origin, or better separation, "away from."

του ενεστωτος [ενιστημι] gen. perf. part. "**[the] present**" - The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "the age."

του αιωνος [ων ωνος] "**evil age**" - [EVIL] AGE. The age that we are now part of, as opposed to the age to come. "The present (lit. "imminent") age with all its evils", Lightfoot.

κατα + acc. "**according to**" - Expressing a standard; "in accordance with." That the cross was according to God's divine plan reminds us that it was not an afterthought implemented following the failure of his covenant with Israel.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**[the will] of [our] God**" - [THE WILL] OF GOD. This genitive is adjectival, either verbal, subjective, or descriptive, idiomatic / source, "*delivered by / derived from.*"

ἡμῶν gen. pro. "**our**" - [AND = EVEN FATHER] OF US. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

v5

c) From whom, to whom, v5: Paul concludes his salutation with an ascription of praise to God. Again, there is no verb so it must be assumed. "Glory be to him for ever and ever, Amen", Barclay.

ὧ dat. "**to whom**" - The dative is adverbial, reference/respect; referring to "our God and Father", v4, or dative of possession.

ἡ δόξα "**glory**" - *be* THE GLORY. "God's power in action", Martyn.

εἰς "**for**" - TO, INTO, TOWARD. "Into eternity", so "for ever and ever." Temporal use of the preposition.

τοὺς αἰῶνας [ὡν ὠνος] gen. "**ever**" - [INTO THE AGES] OF THE AGES. The genitive may be classified as adjectival, possibly possessive, although Turner sees it serving as an intensifier for a colloquial phrase; "to the uttermost depths of eternity", Bligh.

ἀμην "**Amen**" - Used to express confirmation; "may it be so".

v6

ii] Paul explains his reason for writing, v6-10. a) A gospel lost, v6-7: Paul now gets into the issue at hand, namely, the adoption of a "different" gospel by some members of the Galatians churches.

θαυμάζω pres. "**I am astonished**" - I MARVEL AT. "I am surprised", Barclay. Probably with a bit of directed anger; "I am astonished at you", Martyn.

ὅτι "**that**" - Here introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Paul is astonished at.

οὕτως adv. "**so [quickly]**" - Adverbial intensifier. Obviously a temporal sense is intended, presumably so quickly moving from the gospel that Paul had preached to the Galatians. Possibly so quickly adopting the "different gospel" promoted by the Judaizers.

μετατιθεσθε [μετατιθῆμι] pres. "**deserting**" - YOU ARE TURNING, CHANGING, TRANSFERRING, DESERTING, DEFECTING. Middle voice, being reflective, expresses the sense "transferring yourself". "The word is used for changing sides in politics, warfare and philosophical disputes", Bligh. "I am amazed that you have so quickly transferred your allegiance", Phillips.

ἀπο + gen. "-" - FROM. Expressing separation, "[you are turning] away from."

τοῦ καλεσαντος [καλεῶ] aor. part. "**the one who called [you]**" - THE ONE HAVING CALLED, SUMMONED [YOU]. The participle serves as a substantive. It is unclear who is "the one calling", but most likely God in Christ through the gospel

is intended, although there is an outside possibility that Paul is referring to himself as the apostle who proclaimed God's Word to the Galatians. "The God who called you", Barclay.

εν + dat. "**by [the grace (of Christ)]**" - IN / BY [GRACE OF CHRIST]. Space/sphere may be intended, "the sphere in which" (this sense can extend to movement toward, "to/toward the sphere of", or "entrance into the sphere of", i.e., = **εις**, "into the merciful kindness of", Junkins), or adverbial, instrumental "the means by which", as NIV, or modal, or even causal, "because of", but unlikely. The sense of the prepositional phrase is clouded by the fact that "of Christ" (+ "of Jesus Christ", "of God",) is a variant. The shorter reading seems more likely with the implication that it is "God's grace", the grace (covenant mercy) of the one who calls us. So, "in grace" probably means "to/into/in the sphere of God's grace", Martyn, Betz, Garlington, Dumbrell, Fung, Guthrie, although possibly "by means of God's grace", George, Burton, Bruce, Lightfoot, Longenecker. Dunn cheats with "the grounds on which and the means by which"!!!

εις + acc. "**and are turning to**" - TO. Probably, having deserted they have gone over into The verb "are turning" is supplied. "I am amazed at you for and for your readiness to go over to a different gospel", Cassirer.

ἕτερον pro. "**a different**" - ANOTHER, DIFFERENT. Pronoun as an adjective limiting "gospel". The gospel adopted by the nomist (law-bound) Galatian believers is a gospel of another kind. Central to Galatians is "the truth of the gospel", 2:5, 14, a truth distorted by the Judaizers and their sanctification-by-obedience teachings.

ευαγγελιον [ον] "**gospel**" - IMPORTANT MESSAGE. The word meaning "important message", as in the sense of a message carried from a battlefield, serves as a short-hand word for the divine message concerning the fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant in Christ - "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand / near / upon us."

v7

ὃ οὐκ ἐστίν "**which is really no gospel at all**" - WHICH IS NOT. The clause serves as a corrective - there is only one gospel, so the message of the Judaizers is no gospel. "There is really only one true message", CEV.

ἄλλο pro. "-" - ANOTHER. Predicate nominative. Probably not taking its usual meaning of "another of several" = "which is not another gospel". Possibly pleonastic (redundant), "serving to introduce **εἰ μὴ**", Ridderbos.

εἰ μὴ "**evidently**" - EXCEPT, UNLESS, BUT. Often used to express an exception, but here serving to limit the previous statement; "although there are some who are promoting another gospel, a perversion of the gospel of Christ."

τινες pro. "**some people [are]**" - [THERE ARE] CERTAIN, SOME. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. A little more definite than "some people", so "certain people", Barclay.

οι παρασسونτες [ταρασσω] pres. part. "**throwing [you] into confusion**" - ONES SHAKING, TROUBLING, DISTURBING [YOU]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the substantive pronoun **τινες**, "some *people*"; There are some people who are troubling you." The present tense is durative, expressing ongoing action. "Trouble" in the sense of undertaking "seditious activity", Guthrie.

οι θελοντες [θελω] pres. part. "**[and] are trying**" - DESIRING, WISHING, WILLING. Again, the participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "some"; there are some who are wishing. A desiring which is "not unwitting or unconscious", Ridderbos; they actually "intend" to undermine the gospel proclaimed by Paul, Martyn.

μεταστρεψαι [μεταστρεφω] aor. inf. "**to pervert**" - TO PERVERT, CHANGE ABOUT, TURN AROUND TO THE OPPOSITE. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the participle "trying to change the gospel of Christ into its opposite", Martyn.

του Χριστου [ος] gen. "**[the gospel] of Christ**" - The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / content, "about Christ", or source, "from Christ."

v8

b) Paul's gospel is the true gospel, v8-9: The true gospel is the one which Paul and his associates had preached to the Galatian churches. This was the message originally accepted by them. Those who present a different message are accursed.

αλλα "**but [even]**" - Adversative with an ascensive **και**, as NIV; "but even if we or an angel ...", Barclay.

εαν + subj. "**if**" - IF [WE SHOULD PREACH]. Introducing a conditional sentence 3rd. class, where the condition has the possibility of being realized, "if, as the case may be then [let him be cursed]."

αγγελος [ος] "**[or] an angel**" - Paul is making the point that the gospel is immutable, and does so with a bit of exaggeration - it is unlikely that an angel from heaven would convey a false message from God. Of course, he may have in mind Satan, a fallen angel.

εξ + gen. "**from**" - OUT OF, FROM [HEAVEN]. Expressing source/origin. The prepositional phrase "out of heaven" is adjectival, modifying "angel".

παρα + acc. "**other than**" - BESIDES, BEYOND [WHICH]. Again possibly "in addition to" the one preached by Paul, but better "beyond [that which]", Bruce,

so "in departure from", or better "as opposed to", "at variance with", Fung, "contrary to what we proclaimed to you", NRSV.

ευηγγελισαμεθα [ευαγγελιζω] aor. "**we preached**" - Paul probably uses the plural to include the other members of the missionary team that evangelized Galatia.

υμιν dat. pro. "**to you**" - Dative of indirect object.

εστω [ειμι] pres. imp. "**let him be**" - LET BE. "Let him be eternally condemned", George.

αναθεμα [α] "**eternally condemned**" - ACCURSED, FOR DESTRUCTION. Predicate nominative. Used of something devoted for destruction, so possibly of "excommunication", Williams, but more likely of divine disapproval, as opposed to divine favour.

v9

ως "**as**" - AS, LIKE. Comparative.

προειρηκαμεν [προειπον] perf. "**we have already said**" - WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY SAID, SAID BEFOREHAND. The perfect expresses the idea that what Paul has said in the past applies to the present and for all time.

αρτι παλιν "[so] **now [I say] again**" - [AND] NOW AGAIN [I SAY]. The grammar implies that Paul is restating what he had said on an earlier occasion when he was with the Galatians, not just repeating what he has just said in v8 since "now (a temporal statement) I say again" separates v9 from v8 in time; "even as we have said on a previous occasion", Wuest. This is probably putting too much weight on the grammar. It is more likely that Paul is simply reinforcing the point he made in v8. "I've said it once, I'll say it again", Peterson.

ει + ind. "**if**" - Conditional sentence, 1st class, where the condition is assumed to be true, "if, as is the case, then" - in v8 the condition was 3rd class.

τις "**anybody**" - ANYONE [PREACHES *a gospel* TO YOU BESIDES WHICH]. Someone or something indefinite, although probably with the more identifiable group referred to in v7 in mind. "Whoever", Moffatt. "A gospel" is supplied, although the verb ευαγγελιζομαι probably carries the intended sense "preach the gospel".

παρελαβετε [παραλαμβανω] aor. "**[what] you accepted**" - YOUR RECEIVED [LET HIM BE A CURSE]. "Which you received" replaces the "which was preached to you" of v8. "What you received originally", Patterson; "the one you have already heard", Phillips

v10

c) Paul's motives, v10: The preachers of this "different gospel" had obviously implied that Paul was a "man-pleaser", someone who watered down the gospel message to make it easier to sell to the Gentiles, ie., Paul did not present the "full" gospel since it would undermine his success-rate. So, Paul asks his readers if his words so far are those of a soft-sell preacher. This verse is possibly an aside and so is best treated as a parenthesis, eg., "(Does this make you think now that)", Phillips. Paul presents a three-part question, with each question expecting a negative answer, "No, of course I'm not trying to", followed by a conditional clause.

γαρ "-" - FOR. More reason than cause, establishing a logical connection with the previous verses; "given what I have just said, is anyone willing to suggest that I am into the business of trying to win" Possibly just functioning here as a connective and so left untranslated, as NIV.

αριθ ετι "[Am I] now [trying? If I were] still" - These two temporal adverbs, one heading up the three-part question, the other the conditional clause, seem to indicate that Paul is answering a previous charge against him that he is a "man-pleaser". Presumably this charge would have come from the Judaizers, implying that Paul adapts the gospel to his hearers - his is an "all things to all men" person. So for Gentiles, the charge is that Paul plays down the importance of the law to keep them on side, and by doing so he denies Gentile believers the sin-restraining and holy-shaping service of the law. Paul will answer the theological elements of this charge in his letter as a whole, but at this point he asks whether his words so far are those of a "man-pleaser".

πειθω pres. "am I trying to win the approval of" - AM I PERSUADING, CONVINCING. The present tense is probably tendential (conative), expressing attempted action, so "am I trying to persuade". Obviously "win the favour of", Burton, "gain something from someone by playing up to what they want", Ridderbos. Yet, why use the word "persuade"? Paul is referring to "the art of persuasion", Betz, the methodology of philosophical rhetoric used in the first century to persuade the hearer to the speaker's point of view, often by "deception - making the weaker argument stronger." So probably, "am I trying to manipulate people with my words?"

ανθρωπου "men / human beings" - MEN. Here the sense is "anyone / human beings"; "am I engaged in rhetorical arguments designed to sway the crowds?", Martyn.

η τον θεον "or of God" - OR GOD. The second element of the question, "am [I trying to persuade] God?" The verb for the first question applies to the second, so "am I into trying to manipulate God, using rhetorical skills to bring him over

to my way of thinking?" Betz, Bruce, ... certainly take this question as one expecting a negative answer, but there are others who think it expects a positive answer, so Martyn ie. What is Paul about; is it "to seek the approval of God, or to curry favour with men?", Barnes. Better, "am I trying to manipulate God?"

ἢ "or" - Disjunctive.

αρεσκειν pres. inf. "**[am I trying] to please**" - [AM I SEEKING] TO PLEASE [MEN]. The infinitive may be classified as complementary, completing the sense of "seeking", or as introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what he is seeking, namely, to please people. "Please" must still be understood in the terms of rhetorical argumentation; "am I trying to sway the crowds with pleasant words?"

ει + ind. αν + ind. "**if**" - IF [STILL]. Introducing a conditional clause, 2nd class, where the conditions is assumed to be untrue, "if, *as is not the case*, I was still trying to please (manipulate) people, then I would not be a servant of Christ."

ηρεσκον [αρεσκω] imperf. "**trying to please**" - I WERE PLEASING. A past tense (imperfect) is required for a 2nd class condition, but expressed as a tendential present, as NIV.

ανθρωποις [ος] dat. "**men**" - MEN. Dative of direct object after the verb "to please." "If I were trying to win human approval", Phillips.

δουλος [ος] "**servant [of Christ]**" - [I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN] A SLAVE [OF CHRIST]. We are bonded to Christ by being "in Christ", and it is by being in Christ that we become what Christ is - perfect before God (of course, always imperfectly!!!). If, as some say, Paul is a "man-pleaser" then obviously he is not in Christ, not a slave of Christ, not a Christian.

1:11-2:10

2. Historical survey, 1:11-2:14

ij Paul's apologia

Argument

From 1:11 to 2:14 Paul presents an autobiographical defence of both his gospel and his apostleship. Paul is aware of the personal attacks directed against his ministry by members of the circumcision party and how these attacks are undermining the gospel which he proclaims in the Gentile churches. Paul therefore, sets out to establish the authenticity of both his ministry and his message.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-10. Following his opening address, Paul goes on in 1:11-2:14 to relate the events of his life after his conversion, focusing particularly on his relationship with the apostles. This account serves to vindicate Paul's apostolic authority and the independence of his gospel message.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *Paul's historical survey with respect to his gospel:*

Paul's conversion and call, v11-17:

Christ's gospel is Paul's gospel, v11-12;

The source is Christ, v13-17.

The first Jerusalem visit, v18-24.

The second Jerusalem visit, v1-10.

The apostles accept Titus as a brother, v1-5;

The Pauline gospel is accepted by the apostles, v6-9;

The one instruction - remember the poor, v10.

iv] Interpretation:

Paul opens his historical survey, 1:11-2:10, *A Personal Defence of my Gospel*, with an introduction to the subject in v11-12. The next step in his argument, v13-17, serves as an expansion of the introduction, making the point that his gospel does not derive from a human source. Paul supports this contention by relating his limited contact with both the apostles and the Jerusalem church, as well as the churches throughout Judea, v18-22. Paul then recounts the events surrounding the Jerusalem Council where both his apostolic authority and the validity of his gospel message is recognized by the leaders of the Jerusalem church, 2:1-10.

There is debate as to whether the visit to Jerusalem referred to in 2:1 aligns with the famine visit, Acts 11:30, or the Jerusalem Council, Acts 15:2ff. Although Bruce, Dumbrell, Fung, ... opt for the famine relief visit, the majority of commentators opt for the Jerusalem Council. Given the subject matter, the visit is most likely for the purpose of the Jerusalem Council, where Paul's gospel of grace is examined and confirmed by the apostles. It also works well with regard the sequence of events, particularly if we read a rather interesting little textual variant. Paul's confrontation with Peter at Antioch is possibly in response to Peter's literal reading of the instructions that were circulated to Paul's missionary churches by the Jerusalem church following the Jerusalem Council. In v12 the variant **τινῶν** is neut. pl. = "certain *things*" = presumably "the instructions from the Jerusalem church."

So, the account recorded in 2:1-10 refers to Paul's actions prompted by the visit of some members of the circumcision party who came down from Judea to Antioch and attempted to link law-obedience with progress in the Christian life, and thus the full appropriation of the promised Abrahamic blessings. Paul sets off for Jerusalem to sort out the issue, cf., Acts 15:1-35. Paul's understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it relates both to Jew and Gentile believers, is that holiness, righteousness, and thus the full appropriation of God's promised blessings, is through faith (Christ's faith/faithfulness appropriated by faith) and not works of the law. This understanding of the gospel was accepted by the leaders of the Jerusalem church. As Paul put it, the apostles "added nothing to my message", such that he did not give in to the "false brothers" (members of the circumcision party, the "judaizers"). The leaders of the Jerusalem church fully recognized Paul's ministry ("the grace given to me"), giving him the "right hand of fellowship" and agreed that he "should go to the Gentiles." The only thing asked of Paul was that he undertake a collection for the poor.

v] Homiletics: *The call of God*

As with the Old Testament prophets, Paul the apostle had a strong sense of God's call to ministry. Much like the prophets of old, or even the messiah, Paul said of himself, God "set me apart from birth, and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles." Paul's ministry was marked by a strong sense of God's directives, rather than the directives of others.

When it comes to God's use of particular people for particular purposes, there are two points worth underlining:

- Divine service is within the sovereign will and foreknowledge of God. As Paul puts it, God intended this special task for him "from birth".

- Divine service is supported by God. For Paul, Christ was "revealed in" him; he was equipped with the message.

Few of us are called to divine service as Paul was called, but we are called to place ourselves in the centre of God's will. When we submit ourselves to the will of God we then find ourselves equipped and directed for service - God enables us to do what he intends.

Text - 1:11

Paul's apologia: i] His conversion and call, v11-17: a) Christ's gospel is Paul's gospel, v11-12. Paul begins by arguing that the gospel he proclaims is not a product of human devising, and certainly not something taught him by some other person, rather, it came directly by divine revelation. The gospel which Paul proclaims is actually a revelation that was given him by God through the person of Jesus Christ. Paul may be referring to his Damascus road confrontation with Jesus, but also possibly to the time he spent in Arabia where he grew in his understanding of God's grace in Christ.

γαρ "-" - FOR. Variant **δε**, "but/and", may be read as a connective and so untranslated. Sometimes **γαρ** serves as a connective and that may well be its function here, but it could be introducing a causal clause explaining why those who do not preach the gospel that was originally accepted by the Galatians should be rightly condemned, v9, namely because their gospel is of human origin.

γνωριζω pres. "**I want [you] to know**" - I MAKE KNOWN. A formula statement, "take note of this"; "I tell you brothers", Barclay.

υμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - TO YOU [BROTHERS]. Dative of indirect object.

οτι "-" - THAT. Here introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Paul makes known to the Galatians, namely, that the gospel he preaches is "not according to man".

το ευαγγελισθεν [ευαννελιζομαι] aor. pas. part. "**I preached**" - [THE GOSPEL] HAVING BEEN PREACHED. Accusative of reference. The participle serves as an adjective, attributive, limiting "gospel"; "which I preached." The word **ευαγγελιον**, "gospel", means an important message, and it is used in the NT of an important message from God regarding the renewal of the covenant in and through Jesus. The verb, as here, refers to the communication of that important message. The message entails "the unsearchable riches of Christ", Eph.3:8.

υπ [υπο] + gen. "-" - BY [ME]. Expressing agency.

κατα + acc. "[not something that man] made up / not of [human origin]" - [IS NOT] ACCORDING TO [MAN]. Here expressing standard, although the sense of the prepositional phrase is unclear. The gospel preached by Paul is not:

- A product of human thinking;
- Given to Paul by another person;
- Communicated out of human motives (eg. financial).

The first option seems best, as NIV, although v12 implies the second option.

v12

γαρ "-" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Paul's gospel is not of human devising. "The gospel I preached was not of human invention or devising because it was not communicated to me by any human person."

ουδε ουτε "**not ... nor**" - NEITHER [I FROM MAN RECEIVED IT] NOR [NOR WAS I TAUGHT *it*]. Forming a negated comparative construction.

παρελαβον [παραλαμβανω] aor. "**I did [not] receive [it]**" - In the sense of receive a set tradition.

παρα + gen. "**from [any man]**" - FROM, BY [MAN]. Here expressing source/origin; "from beside." Emphatic, due to the closeness of this preposition to the preposition "according to." "From/by any person."

εδιδαχθην [διδασχω] aor. pas. "**[nor] was I taught it**" - NOR WAS I INSTRUCTED. In the sense of formal instruction.

αλλα "**I received it**" - BUT. Strong adversative; "I did not receive it but rather."

δια + gen. "**by**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [REVELATION]. Instrumental, expressing means.

Ιησου Χριστου "**from Jesus Christ**" - OF JESUS CHRIST. Is the genitive subjective or objective? If subjective (Longenecker), Jesus produces the action suggested by the verbal noun "revelation", ie. Jesus revealed the gospel to Paul, so NIV and most translations. If objective (Bruce, Fung, Betz, ..), Jesus receives the action suggested by the verbal noun "revelation", ie. "God is the subject of the verb [verbal noun], being the actor who carried out the invasive revealing. Christ is the object of God's revelatory act. And Paul's receipt of the gospel is the result", Martyn. cf. v15-16. The genitive may be plenary, that is, both subjective and objective. Of course, it may simply be expressing source; "but rather, through a revelation *that I received from* the person of Jesus Christ."

v13

b) The source is Christ, v13-17. Only a divine revelation could have turned Paul away from his former life as a fanatical Jew, v13-14. As a pious Pharisee, Paul happily persecuted the church, but then he met the risen Lord on the road to

Damascus and his world changed. Now, as apostle to the Gentiles, Paul's enemies have suggested that he has moved in his understanding of the gospel from what was first explained to him by the apostles at the time of his conversion. Yet, the truth is, it was years after his conversion that Paul got to meet the apostles. Paul's gospel of grace apart from the law, is a direct revelation from God, as is his commissioning as apostle to the Gentiles. As far as Paul is concerned, his commissioning is a sovereign act of God. The language he uses is of the call of an Old Testament prophet, the servant of Jehovah.

γαρ "for" - More reason than cause, supporting his claim that he received the gospel by divine revelation, the support being his dramatic conversion.

ποτε adv. "**previous**" - ONCE, FORMERLY, AT ONE TIME. Temporal adverb. Placed to emphasize the former period when Paul was a practising Jew. "In my former career, that is, when I was a leader in the Jewish religion."

την ... αναστροφην [η] "**way of life**" - [MY] CONDUCT, BEHAVIOUR, COURSE OF LIFE. Accusative of reference; "with regard to my conduct", Silva.

εν + dat. "**in**" - Expressing sphere, as of involvement in; "when the religion of the Jews was my religion", Barclay.

τω Ιουδαισμω [ος] "**Judaism**" - Jewish religious belief and social practice.

οτι "**how**" - THAT. Here introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what his readers heard, namely, "that I intensely persecuted the church."

καθ υπερβολην "**intensely**" - ACCORDING TO EXCESS = EXCEEDINGLY. This prepositional phrase is adverbial, expressing manner; "I persecuted the church with fanatical zeal", Phillips.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**[the church] of God**" - [I WAS PERSECUTING THE CHURCH] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, probably possessive; "God's own church."

επορθουν [πορθεω] imperf. "**tried to destroy**" - [AND] DESTROYING, SACKING, DEVASTATING, RAVAGING [IT]. Possibly repeating the idea of "persecute" for emphasis' sake, but "destroy" is likely. Paul is presumably referring to his persecution of the "church of God" in Jerusalem. "Blast it out of existence", Barclay.

v14

προεκοπτον [προκοπτω] imperf. "**was advancing**" - I was growing, advancing, progressing. Imperfect expressing ongoing action. A technical term referring to progress in the Jewish religion. "I was progressing in my knowledge and exact observance of Jewish law and tradition", Blich.

εν + dat. "**in [Judaism]**" - [AND I WAS ADVANCING] IN [JUDAISM]. Expressing sphere, "in the sphere of"; "in devotion to Judaism", Berkeley.

ὑπερ + acc. "**beyond**" - Comparative use.
συνηλικιωτας [ης ου] "**[of my] own age**" - [MANY] CONTEMPORARIES.
"Well beyond those of my own age group."

εν + dat. "**among [my people]**" - IN [THE NATION OF ME]. Local, expressing sphere.

ὑπαρχων [ὑπαρχω] pres. part. "**and was**" - BEING. The participle is adverbial, possibly causal, "because I was extremely zealous", even instrumental, "by being far more zealous."

περισσοτερωσ adv. "**extremely**" - MORE ABUNDANTLY, EXTREMELY. Here used as an adjective qualifying the noun "zealous". The comparative force of the word makes for a strong phrase; "fanatical enthusiasm", Barclay.

ζηλωτης [ης ου] "**zealous**" - A ZEALOT. Possibly indicating Paul's association with the Zealots, but more likely a general reference to his "enthusiasm" for Judaism.

των πατρικων μου παραδοσεων gen. "**for the traditions of my fathers**" - OF MY ANCESTRAL TRADITIONS. Genitive of direct object after the verbal phrase "being zealous for." Paul is most likely referring to the teachings of the Pharisee party.

v15

ὅτε "**when**" - [BUT/AND] WHEN, WHILE. Introducing a temporal clause which covers three verses, serving to form a complex sentence. Note how Barclay moves the temporal idea past the parentheses, v15b-16a; "When he called me I did not seek the advice of any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to visit those who were apostles before I was", Barclay.

ὁ αφορισας [αφοριζω] aor. part. "**who set me apart**" - [GOD] THE ONE HAVING SEPARATED, DIVIDED, SET APART [ME]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "God". The variant "God" was possibly added to identify who it was who set Paul apart. Probably Paul is alluding to a prophet's call and therefore "set apart" in the sense of "consecrated."

εκ + gen. "**from [birth]**" - FROM [WOMB OF THE MOTHER OF ME]. Expressing source / origin, but possibly separation, "away from." Again, an OT allusion, Jer. 1:5, Isa. 49:5. The preposition is probably temporal, rather than local; "from the moment of my birth", Phillips.

ὁ ...καλεσας [καλεω] aor. part. "**called**" - THE ONE HAVING CALLED, INVITED. Again, the participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "God". The strength of this word is determined by our own personal view of election. So, Paul may have been "invited" by God to serve as apostle to the Gentiles, or God may have determined, as an act of his sovereign will, that Paul would serve as apostle to the Gentiles (or both!).

δια + gen. "**by**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF. Identifying the instrument / means of his being "set apart" and "called", namely, God's gracious kindness which is applied apart from any worthiness on the part of the recipient.

αυτου gen. pro. "**his [grace]**" - [THE GRACE] OF HIM. The genitive may be adjectival, possessive, or descriptive, idiomatic / source, "grace *that flows from him*."

ευδοκησεν [ευδοκew] aor. "**was pleased**" - [*Christ*] WAS WELL PLEASED. Carrying the sense of divine kindness, graciousness; "in God's good pleasure", REB.

v16

αποκαλυψαι [αποκαλυπτω] aor. inf. "**to reveal**" - What is the antecedent of this infinitive? If it is the verb "was pleased" then the infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "pleased", so NIV. If "set apart / called", then it is final, identifying the purpose of the call, "called in order to reveal ..." The first option seems best; God's generous kindness expressed itself in the revelation of Jesus to Paul.

αυτου gen. pro. "**his [Son]**" - [THE SON] OF HIM - The genitive is adjectival, relational.

εν + dat. "**in [me]**" - IN, TO, WITH, BY [ME]. It would be reasonable to argue that Paul is speaking of a revelation that involved a personal indwelling of Christ "in" him, in which case the preposition is local, space, incorporative union, but that the revelation was "to" Paul seems better, ie., **εν** stands in for a dative of indirect object / interest. "He chose to reveal his Son to me", Moffatt.

ινα + subj. "**so that [I might preach]**" - IN ORDER THAT. This construction introduces a purpose clause. The purpose of the revelation was that Paul might preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

εν + dat. "**among [the Gentiles]**" - [I MIGHT PREACH HIM] AMONG [THE GENTILES]. Usually taken as local, expressing sphere, with a distributive sense, "among", but again possibly serving as a dative of indirect object, "to the Gentiles."

ου προσανεθεμιν [προσανατιθημι] aor. "**I did not consult**" - [IMMEDIATELY] I DID NOT CONFER. I did not confer with, consult to gain information. "I did not confer with any person as to the substance of the gospel message."

σαρκι [ξ κος] dat. "**any human being**" - IN/WITH FLESH [AND BLOOD]. The dative of direct object after the **προ** prefix verb "to consult with."

v17

ουδε ανηλθον [ανερχομαι] aor. "**nor did I go up [to Jerusalem]**" - Neither height nor direction, but up to the big city.

προς + acc. "**to see**" - TO, TOWARD. "See", "meet with", etc. assumed. Seeing that Paul never met with the apostles, his opponents cannot argue that he had been instructed in the proper place of law, as it relates to the gospel, but has now shifted from this apostolic instruction and is preaching a heretical law-free gospel.

προ εμου "**[those who were apostles] before I was**" - [TOWARD THE APOSTLES] BEFORE ME. Taking a temporal sense, as NIV, and modifying τους ... αποστολους, "the apostles", so adjectival, attributive, "to the apostles who were before me." Paul's apostleship is authorized by having met with the risen Lord and having been commissioned by him.

αλλα "**but**" - Strong adversative; "but".

ευθεως adv. "**immediately**" - IMMEDIATELY, AT ONCE. Temporal adverb. Taken from v16; "immediately I did not consult ...", but obviously modifying the following positive clause, as NIV.

Αραβιαν [α] "**Arabia**" - [I WENT AWAY INTO] ARABIA [AND AGAIN RETURNED TO DAMASCUS]. The Nabataean kingdom with its capital of Petra. It is often argued that Paul moved into this area, after his meeting with Christ on the Damascus road and subsequent stay in Damascus, to preach, but it would be more likely for reflection - getting his head together. Paul then "returned to Damascus" to commence his preaching ministry. Acts 9 doesn't record Paul's time in Arabia.

v18

ii] Paul's first visit to the Jerusalem church, v18-24. Paul tells us that he did eventually visit Jerusalem. This took place some three years after his conversion. During a fifteen day stay he got to see the apostle Peter, as well as James the Lord's brother, but none of the other apostles. Paul then went off to Syria and Cilicia, during which time he remained out of contact with the Judaeen Christian church; they only heard of his preaching ministry.

επειτα "**then**" - NEXT. Introducing the next sequence of events.

μετα + acc. "after" - AFTER [THREE YEARS]. Temporal use of the preposition.

ιστορησαι [ιστορω] aor. inf. "**to get acquainted with**" - [I WENT UP TO JERUSALEM] TO GET TO KNOW [CEPHAS]. The infinitive here introduces a purpose clause, "in order to ..." Possibly in the sense of visiting for the purpose of getting information, or simply just to "meet", cf., Acts 9:26-30. "I went up to have an interview with Peter", Bruce.

προς + acc. "**with**" - [AND I STAYED] TO, TOWARD [HIM FIFTEEN DAYS]. Expressing the not so common sense of association, "with", as NIV.

v19

Some commentators argue that the opening clause, a negated pronoun with a genitive noun, is indefinite, such that Paul is not specifically saying that he saw only Peter. "Apart from the apostles I saw no one but James, the Lord's brother", Trudinger. It is more likely that Paul is stressing the fact that the only apostle he met was Peter, and as an afterthought includes James, and therefore it is not possible to argue that he was instructed by the apostles in the gospel, which instruction, it is claimed, he has now deviated from.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Here contrastive, refining the point made in v18, so Levinsohn; "but I saw none of the other apostles", ESV.

των αποστολων [ος] gen. "**of the [other] apostles**" - The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

ει μη "**only**" - [I DID NOT SEE] EXCEPT, ONLY. Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception. James' status as an apostle is raised in this verse. Does the expression "except" refer to the whole first clause, meaning that Paul saw no other apostles while in Jerusalem, although he did get to see James, the brother of Jesus, an important person but not an apostle, or does it refer only to the verb "I did not see", meaning that he did not get to see any other apostles, other than James, who, although not one of the twelve, did see the risen Lord, and so is properly an apostle? The last option is the one commonly accepted. "The only other apostle I saw was James, the Lord's brother", CEV.

του κυριου [ος] gen. "**[the brother] of the Lord**" - [JAMES THE BROTHER] OF THE LORD. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

v20

The literal sense of the verse is "Look here, these things I have written to you (regarding my limited contact with the apostolic team) (I witness) before God that I do not lie."

ιδου "**I assure**" - [BUT/AND WHAT THINGS I WRITE TO YOU], PAY ATTENTION, BEHOLD. Interjection.

ενωπιον + gen. "**before [God]**" - IN FRONT OF, BEFORE [GOD]. Spatial; "in God's very presence", Cassirer.

οτι "**that**" - THAT [I DO NOT LIE]. Note actual placement. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Paul witnesses (understood) before God, namely "I do not lie."

ὅ "what" - THOSE THINGS. Accusative direct object of the verb "to write." What particular writings? Presumably Paul's statement that he has only met with Peter, and in passing, James. "If anyone thinks that I met with the whole apostolic team at this time, they are very much mistaken. This I swear before God."

ὁμιν dat. pro. "[I am writing] you" - TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

v21

επειτα adv. "then" - THEN [I WENT INTO]. Sequential temporal adverb; "afterward I went into the region of Syria", Berkeley.

τα κλιματα [α ατος] "-" - THE REGIONS, DISTRICTS.

της Συριας [α] gen. "Syria [and Cilicia]" - OF SYRIA [AND OF CILICIA]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / locative limiting "region"; "the region known as / which is called Syria and Cilicia."

v22

τω προσωπω [ον] dat. "personally" - [BUT/AND I WAS UNKNOWN] TO THE FACE. Dative of reference / respect.

αγνωουμενος [αγνωεω] pres. pas. part. "I was [personally] unknown" - I WAS UNKNOWN. The participle with the imperfect verb to-be ημην forms a periphrastic imperfect construction translated as a simple past tense, probably expressing the idea of continued action. "I remained personally unknown", Blich; "quite unknown", Moffatt.

ταις εκκλησιας [α] dat. "to the churches" - Dative of indirect object, but instrumental is possibly, "by the churches."

της Ιουδαιας [α] gen. "of Judea" - The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / locative, "which are located in Judea", or possibly partitive, so Silva.

ταις "that are" - THE. The article serves as an adjectivizer turning the prepositional phrase "in Christ" into an attributive modifier of "the churches."

εν "in [Christ]" - IN [CHRIST]. Local, expressing sphere, in particular, incorporative union, "in union with, in fellowship with, in association with, united to, one with Christ." This prepositional phrase is equivalent to "Christians / believers", so "Christian congregations in Judea", REB.

v23

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, here introducing a qualification. Paul was unknown to the churches in Judea, "other than."

ακουοντες [ακουω] "they [only] heard" - [ONLY] THEY WERE HEARING. The participle with the imperfect verb to-be ησαν forms a periphrastic imperfect construction, probably again underlying ongoing action, or particularly here, repeated (iterative) action. "[Other than] they kept on hearing", Bruce.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introduce a dependent statement of perception expressing what they were hearing, namely the report concerning Paul's activities. The words are in the form that would be spoken by members of the Judean churches as they passed on the news concerning Paul.

ὁ διωκων [διωκω] pres. part. "**the man who [formerly] persecuted**" - [THE ONE [ONCE] PERSECUTING, PURSUING [US]. The present tense expressing ongoing (durative) action, while the participle serves as a substantive. Paul had continued to persecute the church.

την πιστιν [ις εως] "**the faith**" - [NOW IS PREACHING] THE FAITH [WHICH ONCE HE WAS RAVAGING]. Accusative direct object of the verb "to proclaim." Obviously here, a "faith" that is preached is "that which is to be believed", Bligh, meaning "the gospel of salvation by faith", Bruce. Yet, is it right to say Paul once tried to "destroy ("ravage", imperf. = durative) "the faith", namely "that which is believed"? What we have is a kind of zeugma (two nouns joined by a single verb that does not properly apply to one of the nouns) where the verb "preached" is an appropriate action for the object, "the faith", while the other verb "ravage" is not. Possibly what we have is an ellipsis: "he is now preaching the faith of the church he once ravaged."

v24

εδοξαζον [δοξαζω] imperf. "**they praised**" - [AND] THEY WERE GLORIFYING. The imperfect expressing ongoing action. "They glorified God on my account every time they heard such news", Bruce.

εν εμοι "**because of me**" - [GOD] IN, ON ME. The preposition **εν**, "in, on", is obviously taking a causal sense, "on the basis of / on account of my ministry, therefore "because of me."

2:1

iii] Paul's second visit to the Jerusalem church, v1-10. Paul goes on to recount his visit to Jerusalem some fourteen years later. This visit, known as the Jerusalem Council, is recorded in Acts 15. Paul goes up with Barnabas, who is an apostle, but not one of the twelve, and Titus, a Gentile believer. Paul gave the apostles a run-down on his understanding of the gospel, seeking their confirmation, but certainly not their authorization, v2, which confirmation was given, since there was no demand, on their part, that Titus be circumcised, v3. Paul did this to counter the Judaizers who were undermining his ministry, v4. So, Paul stood his ground, v5, and the apostles made no attempt to edit his gospel of grace, v6, but rather entrusted him with the mission to the Gentiles, v7-9. The only request made of Paul was that he continued to collect funds for the Palestinian poor, v10.

δια + gen. "[**fourteen years**] later" - [THEN] THROUGH [FOURTEEN YEARS I WENT UP AGAIN TO JERUSALEM]. Temporal use of the preposition; probably "throughout fourteen years", given the sense "after some fourteen years."

μετα + gen. "**with [Barnabas]**" - Expressing association / accompaniment; indicating Paul is leading the delegation.

συμπαραλαβων [**συμπαραλαμβανω**] aor. part. "**I took [Titus] along**" - HAVING TAKEN WITH [AND = ALSO TITUS]. Attendant circumstance participle identifying action accompanying the main verb "went up"; "I went up and also took along Titus." As in taking someone along as a travelling companion.

και "**also**" - AND. Here adjunctive; "also".

v2

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, identifying the next step in the narrative.

κατα + acc. "**in response to**" - [I WENT UP] ACCORDING TO. Expressing a standard, "in accordance with", leaning toward result, "as a result of"; "it was in consequence of a revelation", Moffatt.

αποκαλυψιν [**ις εως**] "**a revelation**" - We know nothing of this divine word to Paul.

ανεθεμην [**ανατιθημι**] aor. mid. "**set before**" - [AND] I LAID BEFORE, DECLARED, COMMUNICATED. The middle voice carries the sense of communicating information, often of giving a report in a formal setting; "I explained the good news I had been preaching to the Gentiles", CEV. Even of seeking the opinion of a higher authority on that report. Apostolic confirmation of Paul's gospel is certainly at the heart of the Jerusalem Council, which confirmation (not authorization) Paul is emphasizing for his readers; "I submitted the (my) gospel (and got their tick of approval)", Moffatt.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**them**" - TO THEM [THE GOSPEL WHICH I PROCLAIM AMONG THE GENTILES]. Dative of indirect object.

κατ ιδιαν "**privately**" - [BUT/AND] PRIVATELY. Idiomatic adverbial phrase of manner. Why privately? It is generally felt that, due to those opposed to Paul's gospel in the Jerusalem church (the judaizers, members of the circumcision party), it was expedient for Paul to first make his case to the leaders of the church before it was presented to the whole assembly.

τοις δοκουσιν [**δοκew**] dat. pres. part. "**to those who seemed to be leaders / with those esteemed as leaders**" - TO THE ONES SEEMING. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object, standing in apposition to **αυτοις**, "them". The sense is unclear, so is Paul being a little facetious, "those who seem to be what they are not", Bligh, or a little vague, as NIV? In 2:6 there is a similar designation. It is more likely that the term is taking its classical sense of "those held in regard", so, "with those of repute", REB, "the authorities", Moffatt.

εν + dat. "**among [the Gentiles]**" - Local, expressing sphere, "among".
μη πως + subj. / ind. "**for fear that [I was running]**" - LEST SOMEHOW [I SHOULD RUN]. The NIV follows Lightfoot and takes the verb τρεχω, "I run", as a subjunctive and supplies "fear." If subjunctive, it may take a future sense; "to make sure that my course of action would be", Moffatt. The construction μη πως "lest somehow" + subj. possibly forms a purpose clause; "in order to make sure that I was not running ...", NRSV. It is very unlikely that Paul would express doubt when it comes to the substance of the gospel and his mission to the Gentiles. The indicative mood seems best; "is it in any way possible that I am running, or have run my course in vain?", Bligh.

εις κενον "**in vain**" - IN VAIN, WORTHLESS, FOOLISHNESS [OR DID RUN]. Adverbial, modal, expressing manner, but possibly final, expressing purpose; "uselessly / without effect", Longenecker.

v3

In this parenthesis, Paul makes the point that the apostles happily confirmed the authenticity of his gospel of grace, apart from "works of the law", because there was no demand on their part that the Gentile Titus should undertake that most devout sign of covenant compliance, namely, circumcision. "I submitted my gospel to the apostles and got their tick of approval [By the way, this is evidenced by the fact that Titus, who was with me at the time, a Gentile, was not forced to be circumcised.]" Of course, there is some debate as to whether Paul did (or had), or did not, have Titus circumcised, but most take the view that Paul did not act expediently with regard to this matter.

αλλ [αλλα] "**yet [not even Titus]**" - BUT [NOT TITUS]. Adversative, although the argument is not overly clear. Note the emphatic position of the negative ουδε.

ο "**who was**" - THE. The article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the prepositional phrase "with me" into an attributive modifier of "Titus", as NIV, but it can be taken as a nominalizer forming a noun clause standing in apposition to Titus.

συν + dat. "**with [me]**" - [THE ONE] WITH [ME, BEING A GREEK]. Expressing association.

ηναγκασθη [ανακαθω] aor. "**was compelled**" - WAS COMPELLED, FORCED, COERCED.

περιτεμνηναι [περιτεμνω] aor. pas. inf. "**to be circumcised**" - The infinitive may be classified as complementary, or epexegetic, explaining what he was not compelled to do, "namely, to be circumcised."

ων [ειμι] part. "**even though he was [a Greek]**" - BEING. The participle may be adjectival, attributive, limiting "Titus"; "who is a Greek / Gentile",

although often treated as adverbial, concessive, as NIV, "although he was a Gentile", or causal, Moule IB., "because he is a Greek", even temporal, "while a Greek." If concessive, a weak "although" fails to emphasize the point Paul is wanting to make; "despite the fact that he is a Greek / Gentile, as you well know."

v4

δια "because" - [BUT/AND] BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF. Causal. Most commentators take the view that there is an ellipsis (missing words - a subject and main verb) at the beginning of this verse, due to Paul's agitation as he writes concerning this emotional time in his life. The words would either refer to the Titus situation specifically, "this matter arose (ie. the pressure on Paul to have Titus circumcised)", NIV, "I mention this because certain false brethren did try to force him to submit to circumcision", Bligh, or more generally, the circumcision of Gentile believers; "the question of circumcising Gentile converts was first raised because some false brothers", Bruce. Grammatically, we are probably better served if we bracket v3 (ie. identify it clearly as a parenthesis) and allow v4 to pick up on v2. So, Paul is saying that the reason he went up to Jerusalem seeking confirmation from the apostles concerning his gospel of grace, was because of the Judaizers who were infiltrating his missionary churches, undermining the freedom that the Gentile believers had found in Christ, and so enslaving them again to the curse of the law.

τους ψευδαδελφους [ος] "false brothers" - THE FALSE BROTHERS. The definite article indicates that they are a specific group of false brothers, "the judaizers", obviously well known to the Galatian believers.

παρεισακτους adj. "-" - SECRETLY BROUGHT IN, INFILTRATING / ALIEN, FOREIGN [FALSE BROTHERS]. "Spurious Christians", Barclay; "counterfeit Christians", Bruce.

οιτινες "-" - WHO. Serving to introduce a relative clause, although for some reason Paul has chosen this indefinite relative pronoun when the antecedent "false brothers" is definite.

παρεισηλθον [παρεισερχομαι] aor. "**had infiltrated our ranks**" - CAME ALONGSIDE, CREPT IN. Stealth is implied; "had sneaked in among us", CEV.

κατασκοπησαι [κατασκοπεω] inf. "**to spy on**" - TO EXAMINE, WATCH OVER / TO SPY OUT. The infinitive introduces a purpose clause, "in order to spy on." Probably a negative treacherous sense is intended.

την ελευθεριαν [α] "**the freedom**" - This noun is used twice more in Galatians, 5:1, 5:13. In what sense are we free in Christ? Obviously not in the sense of free to sin, free to ignore the guidelines of the law. Yet, we are free from the law, in the sense of free from the curse of the law - its role of holding us to the consequence of sin and thus exposing our need for mercy. In Christ we are

free from the condemnation of the law. Right standing in the sight of God, both now and in eternity, is by grace through faith and not by works of the law.

ἡμῶν gen. pro. "**we [have]**" - [THE FREEDOM] OF US [WHICH WE HAVE]. The genitive is adjectival, often taken as verbal, subjective, "the freedom we exercise in Christ", Silva, but possessive may be better, "the freedom we possess in Christ."

ἐν + dat. "**in [Christ]**" - IN [CHRIST JESUS]. Local, incorporative union, "in our union with Christ", or association, "with Christ", even possibly basis, "on the ground of = because of our union with Christ", so Burton.

ἵνα + fut. "**and to**" - IN ORDER THAT [THEY MIGHT ENSLAVE US (to the law)]. The variant aorist subjunctive probably seeks to correct the grammar, although *hina* followed by a verb in the future tense can properly form a purpose clause, as here. "They wanted to make us slaves", NCV.

v5

οὐδε "**[We did] not**" - NOT [FOR AN HOUR DID WE YIELD]. Emphatic by position.

οἷς dat. rel. pro. "**to them**" - TO WHOM. Dative of direct object after the negated verb **εἰξάμεν**, "to withdraw from = we did not yield to." The negative is emphatic, ruling out the possibility of any concession to the theological position held by the judaizers. "We did not make even the slightest concession (with regard Gentile submission to the law) to them."

προς ὥραν [α] "**for a moment**" - TOWARD AN HOUR. An adverbial construction, temporal; idiomatic - "a short time."

τη ὑποταγῇ [η] dat. "-" - IN/BY SUBJECTION, OBEDIENCE (to them / to their teaching). The dative is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, or modal, expressing manner. "We refused to yield for a single instant to their claims", Moffatt.

ἵνα + subj. "**so that**" - THAT [THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL MIGHT REMAIN, CONTINUE (as opposed to being watered down)]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose, although a consecutive clause expressing result is possible.

του ευαγγελιου [ον] gen. "**[the truth] of the gospel**" - Possibly, "the gospel in its integrity", Lightfoot, so, "the true gospel", Bligh, taking the genitive as adjectival, attributed. Possibly also possessive, "the truth contained in, and so belonging to the gospel", Burton, or attributive, "gospel truth", or exegetical, specifying which truth was being preserved, so Silva. It was common practice for Semitic Jews to use a genitive noun to modify / limit a noun, even in Greek, since in Hebrew there are few adjectives.

προς + acc. "**with [you]**" - TO, TOWARD [YOU]. Here we have a preposition expressing movement toward with a stative verb, where motion toward is

obviously not intended, so here expressing association; "we were resolved that the truth of the gospel should remain in full force with you", Bruce.

v6

This verse is often treated as a put-down of the apostles, but it more properly affirms them, particularly as these "great-ones" saw no need to add anything to Paul's message. Again, the verse is difficult to translate.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional; introducing the next step in the argument. Paul continues his account of the Jerusalem Council, pointing out that his gospel of grace was wholly accepted by the apostles (ie., Paul's gospel is apostolic, the judaizers' version is not); "and as for those ..."

απο "as for" - FROM. Expressing source / origin. The grammar of the verse gets confused at this point (an anacoluthon). Paul starts with the idea of "from" the apostles he received nothing, but then in restating, he has the apostles adding nothing - the object of **απο** becomes the subject of the sentence.

των δοκουντων [**δοκew**] pres. part. "**those who seemed / held in high esteem**" - THE ONES SEEMING, SUPPOSING. The participle serves as a substantive. As with v2, it is difficult to understand the sense of Paul's words here such that they are often treated as ironic, so NIV. Yet, it seems more likely that a positive sense is intended, "those regarded important" = "the leading figures in the church (namely James, Peter and John)", Barclay.

ειναι [**ειμι**] "**to be [important]**" - TO BE [SOMETHING]. The infinitive may be classified as complementary, or better epexegetic, specifying what is seeming so about the apostles, namely, that they are important.

οποιοι pro. "**whatever**" - WHAT KIND OF, WHAT SORT OF. Predicate nominative. Referring to the status/rank of the "leading figures."

ποτε ησαν "**they were**" - THEY WERE ONCE, THEN, FORMERLY THEY WERE. This particle with the imperfect verb to-be forms an indefinite temporal adverb, "formerly", NEB. Referring to a previous time in the life of the apostles, probably their early life as common fisherman. Of this life, Paul makes no negative judgment, and neither does God. Of course, a negative sense may be implied where the Judaizers have held up the apostles as those who once walked with Jesus and therefore are to be trusted over and above Paul. The point then being that "whatever they were" is not the point at issue here as far as Paul is concerned, and certainly God is not impressed with externals, what is important is that the apostles accepted Paul's gospel and made no attempt to amend it.

ουδεν διαφερει [**διαφερw**] pres. "**makes no different**" - MATTERS NOTHING, MAKES NO DIFFERENCE. Accusative of reference. As above, the sense is probably "the importance, or otherwise, of the apostles, is not the issue at hand." Both verbs in "matters nothing to me" and "God does not accept the face

of man", take the present tense. Betz suggests they are proverbial presents. Certainly, the second phrase is proverbial: "God is a judge who cannot be corrupted and is no respecter of persons", cf. Deut. 1:17, 16:19, ...

μοι dat. pro. "**to me**" - Dative of reference / respect, "with respect to me = as far as I am concerned", or possibly advantage, "for me."

ανθρωπου [ος] gen. "-" - [FACE] OF A MAN / PERSON. The genitive is adjectival, possessive.

ου λαμβανει [λαμβανω] pres. "[God] **does not judge [by external appearance] / [God] does not show favouritism**" - [GOD] DOES NOT ACCEPT, RECEIVE = God is not a respecter of persons.

γαρ "-" - FOR. More reason than cause, being used to introduce a fix for Paul's opening incomplete sentence. So, the parenthesis beginning "whatever they were ..." ends, and Paul returns to continue the point that he set out to make, namely, that the pillars of the church did not add to his gospel, but as noted above, in doing so, he loses track of his grammar.

εμοι [εγω] dat. pro. "**to my message**" - TO ME [THE ONES SEEMING *to be something* ADDED NOTHING]. Dative of indirect object. "Message" understood. Obviously the addition of law-obedience for the maintaining and progressing of a believer's standing in the sight of God. "They had nothing to add to my gospel", Phillips.

v7

αλλα τουναντιον "**on the contrary**" - BUT WHICH. Adversative construction, as NIV.

ιδοντες [ειδον] aor. part. "**they saw**" - HAVING SEEN. The participle is adverbial, possibly introducing a causal clause, "because ...", or a temporal clause, "when they saw then the so-called pillars of the church gave myself and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship", Moffatt.

οτι "that" - Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they saw.

πεπιστευμαι [πιστευω] perf. pas. "**I had been entrusted**" - I HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED [*with* THE GOSPEL]. The NIV assumes an ellipsis (missing word) here, given that there is only one gospel, not two, ie., one for the Gentiles and another for the Jews. So, the differentiation is in the "task of preaching." Paul is possibly using the language of the Jerusalem Council, so Betz (note Paul's use of the name Peter instead of his usual Cephas). "They realized that God had sent me with the good news for Gentiles, and that he had sent Peter with the same message for Jews", CEV.

της ακροβυτίας [α] "**to the Gentiles**" - OF THE UNCIRCUMCISED. This genitive, as with της περιτομης "of the circumcision", is usually treated as verbal, objective, "for the Gentiles", identifying those who are being evangelized. καθως "**just as**" - AS [PETER OF THE CIRCUMCISION]. Comparative.

v8

γαρ "**for**" - FOR, THEN. Introducing a causal clause explaining why both Peter and Paul equally proclaim an apostolic gospel.

ὁ ενεργησας [ενεργεω] aor. part. "**God, who was at work**" - THE ONE HAVING EFFECTIVELY WORKED. The participle serves as a substantive. "He who equipped Peter to be an apostle of the circumcised", Moffatt.

Πετρῳ dat. "**in the ministry of Peter**" - IN PETER. Dative of advantage, "he who wrought a great thing for Peter to make him apostle of the Jews", Bligh, or locative, space / idiomatic, as NIV.

εις "**as [an apostle]**" - TO, TOWARD, INTO, FOR [AN APOSTLESHIP]. Here spatial, of working "toward" a goal / end-view / purpose. The goal of God's work was for apostleship, so for "Peter's mission to the Jews", REB. So also for Paul's mission εις το εθην, "to the Gentiles" = "for the Gentiles."

της περιτομης gen. "**to the circumcised**" - OF THE CIRCUMCISION. The genitive is usually taken as verbal, objective, as NIV.

και "[**was**] **also**" - AND [WORKED]. Adjunctive; "also".

εμοι dat. pro. "**in me**" - IN ME [TO = FOR THE GENTILES]. Dative of interest, advantage; "for me."

v9

οι δοκουντες [δοκεω] pres. part. "**those reputed / those esteemed**" - [AND REALIZING THE GRACE THE THING HAVING BEEN GIVEN TO ME, JAMES AND CEPHAS AND JOHN] THE ONES SEEMING. The participle serves as a substantive, as above.

ειναι [ειμι] pres. inf. "**as [pillars]**" - TO BE [PILLARS]. The infinitive is expegetic, explaining what was seemingly so of "the ones seeming / being esteemed." "Pillars" in the same sense as the Patriarchs were the foundational members of the covenant community of Israel. See above on "reputed". "Whom all regarded as pillars of the church", Barclay.

εδωκαν [διδωμι] aor. "**gave**" - GAVE [TO ME AND BARNABAS]. Finally, we come to the main verb; "when they saw (v7) they gave...", Moffatt.

κοινωνιας [α] gen. "**[the right hand] of fellowship**" - [RIGHT HANDS] OF FELLOWSHIP. The genitive is adjectival, attributive; "they even gave Barnabas and me a friendly handshake", CEV. Further underlining the apostles' confirmation of Paul's gospel of grace.

γνοντες [γινωσκω] aor. part. "**when they recognized**" - RECOGNIZING, KNOWING. More likely taking a causal sense, "because they recognized", rather than temporal, as NIV. "And so, recognizing as they did the grace which had been bestowed upon me stretched out their right hands to me and to Barnabas in token of fellowship", Cassirer.

την χαριν [ις εως] "**the grace**" - Taking the specific sense of "the grace of apostleship (to the Gentiles)" that had been given to Paul.

την δοθεισαν [διδωμι] aor. pas. part. "**given**" - THE THING HAVING BEEN GIVEN. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "grace", so identifying that God is the giver and Paul the receiver of this apostolic office, "the grace of apostleship which had been given to me."

μοι dat. pro. "**to me**" - Dative of indirect object.

ινα + subj. "**they agreed that**" - . As noted below, there is no verb, although we would assume a subjunctive, as NIV "*should go*." Probably introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing an assumed agreement between Paul and the apostles, but possibly expressing purpose, "gave the right hand of fellowship in order that we should go" This act served to express their "full agreement that our mission was to the Gentiles and theirs to the Jews", Phillips. Some translators regard **ινα** here as taking the sense "on the condition that", although Paul would more likely say "on the understanding that."

εις + acc. "**we should go to [the Gentiles]**" - [WE SHOULD GO] TO [THE GENTILES AND THEY] TO [THE CIRCUMCISION]. Spatial, "to", but possibly advantage "for", depending on choice of the verb which we must supply. Most translations opt for "go". There are other possibilities, "our sphere was to be [for] the Gentiles", Moffatt / Barclay (advantage); "we should concentrate on the Gentiles", Bruce; "we should work among the heathen", Goodspeed; "we should preach to the Gentiles", Longenecker.

v10

μονον "**all they asked**" - ONLY. The verb, "they asked" is supplied. Here introducing an exceptive clause.

ινα + subj. "**that**" - THAT [WE SHOULD REMEMBER]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what "*they asked*" (assumed).

των πτωχων [ος] gen. "**the poor**" - Genitive of direct object after the verb **μνημονευω**, "to remember / think of the poor."

και "-" - [WHICH THIS THING I WAS] ALSO [EAGER TO DO]. Adjunctive, "also", or emphatic, "indeed".

εσπουδασα [σπουδαζω] aor. "**I was eager**" - The aorist here is often regarded as being equivalent to a pluperfect; "this very thing I had already taken

pains to do (since the Jerusalem Council)", Bligh. Yet, the aorist rightly leaves us with a punctiliar sense without a time signature, given that Paul's collections for the saints in Jerusalem are past, present and future. "The very thing I have always made it my business to do", REB.

ποιησαι [ποιεω] inf. "to do" - Complementary infinitive completing the verb σπουδαζω, "to be eager", or it may be classified as forming a dependent statement of perception expressing what Paul was eager to do, namely, help the poor.

2:11-14

2. Historical survey, 1:11-2:14

ii] Paul's confrontation with Peter at Antioch, 2:11-14

Argument

In this passage, Paul records his clash with Peter in Antioch following the arrival of the Jerusalem council's letter. The letter sought to regulate "table fellowship" between Jews and Gentiles - that the Gentile believers "abstain from" food sacrificed to idols, marital union within prohibited kindred and affinity, strangled meat and blood. In response to these regulations, Peter withdrew from the Gentile believers in Antioch. Paul was incensed and sought to maintain the authority of his gospel of grace against Peter, whose actions interfered with "the freedom we have in Christ Jesus".

Issues

i] Context: See 1:11-2:10.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The account of Paul's conflict with Peter:*

The fact of the matter, v11;

Description and evaluation of the conflict, v12-14.

iv] Interpretation:

Although a matter of conjecture, it seems likely that this passage records the fallout from a letter produced by those who attended the Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15. At the conclusion of the council, this circular letter was sent out to Paul's mission churches; it addressed those who "without authorization" were "troubling your minds", Act.15:1. The council determined that as far as the ethical requirements for Christian living are concerned, sensitivity in matters of "table fellowship" between Jews and Gentiles is all that is required - "abstain from" food sacrificed to idols, marital union within prohibited kindred and affinity, strangled meat and blood.

Paul's historical survey climaxes in 2:11-14, with the account of his clash with Peter in Antioch, a clash which followed the arrival of the Jerusalem Council's letter (reading "before certain things came from James", Gal.2:12, as a reference to the regulations from the council, Acts 15:29). Peter had sat at table with the Gentiles, but following the letter, he withdrew due to the ritual uncleanness of the Gentiles, ie., they ate meat that had blood in it, etc. As far as Paul is concerned, even the limited

requirements of the Council cannot be treated as law and thus a means of specifying holiness, cf., Mk.7:17-23. So, Paul confronts Peter over this issue. In doing so, Paul maintains the authority of his gospel of grace apart from law, even against Peter and the mild regulations of the Jerusalem Council.

The motive behind Paul's actions: Paul's rather strong reaction to Peter's behaviour is driven by his fear of a heresy promoted by the circumcision party in the Jerusalem church, a heresy which was infecting Paul's mission churches. Debate rages as to the actual character of this group, but it is likely that they were primarily converted Jews, although some believing Gentiles and God-fearers may well have joined their ranks. It seems clear that they regarded obedience to the Mosaic Law as an essential element of the Christian life, ie., they were pietists. It is unlikely that they believed that obedience saves a person; as with all believers they would have happily affirmed that their salvation rested on faith in Christ. Even a Jew understands that their salvation is dependent on the grace of God. Yet, it is likely that they saw their standing in the sight of God maintained and progressed through obedience to the Law - the Mosaic law, but also God's law in general, along with the "law of Christ" (ie., they were nomists, not legalists). For a nomist, law-obedience serves to restrain sin and progress holiness for the full appropriation of the promised covenant blessings, namely new life in Christ.

For Paul, such a view strikes at the very heart of the gospel. A person's covenant standing / righteousness before God, and thus their full appropriation of the promised covenant blessings, is eternally secure in God's covenant mercy appropriated through faith alone (Christ's faith / faithfulness approached in faith). To return to the law to further secure our standing before God, is to place ourselves under the curse of the law and thus ultimately undermine the standing we already possess in Christ. Peter's move to maintain ritual purity in table fellowship, undermined the very core of the gospel and thus provoked Paul's reaction.

v] Homiletics: *Living in line with the gospel*

As believers, we possess great freedom - "the freedom we have in Christ Jesus." In Christ we find ourselves totally approved before God, no matter how weak our faith, or how compromised our behaviour. Yet, freedom in Christ does not mean freedom to sin; freedom from the law does not mean freedom for lawlessness. We are freed to appreciate, enjoy, to worship our God. Some would want to add, serve our God, but a line

from the television series Big Battalions sums it up well, "kings can be served; God can only be worshipped."

None-the-less, we do need guidelines, principles, for the freedom we possess in Christ. His freedom is not freedom for anarchy. Our reading today identifies one such principle, and it is for Paul the apostle, one of the most important guiding principles for Christian living. Our behaviour should be "in line with gospel truth", Gal.2:14. When Peter separated from his Gentile brothers and sisters over Deuteronomic regulations, he was "not acting in line with gospel truth" and so Paul did not hesitate to expose his "hypocrisy."

Our actions must not undermine the truth that right-standing in the sight of God is a gift of grace appropriated through faith in Jesus Christ. Let us always be children of God's grace.

Text - 2:11

Paul's confrontation with Peter, v11-14. Following the Jerusalem Council, Peter visits Antioch and his actions, during his stay at Antioch, bring him into conflict with Paul. Paul confronts Peter over his inconsistent behaviour and in the strongest of terms tells him, face-to-face, that "he stood condemned before God."

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, probably with an adversative edge. All has gone well at the Jerusalem Council, "but" then at Antioch there is a confrontation between Peter and Paul. "but when Cephas ...", Moffatt.

ὅτε "**when**" - Temporal particle introducing a temporal clause. The wording implies a well-known visit of Peter to Antioch, certainly the confrontation would have been well-known.

Ἀντιοχείαν [**α**] "**Antioch**" - [CEPHAS CAME TO] ANTIOCH. The church in Antioch, although not founded by Paul, served as his missionary base.

ἀνεστῆν [**ἀνίστημι**] aor. "**I opposed**" - I STOOD AGAINST, OPPOSED TO. Expressing active opposition.

αὐτῷ dat. pro. "**him**" - Dative of direct object after the **ἀντι** prefix verb "to oppose."

κατὰ + acc. "**to [his face]**" - ACCORDING TO [FACE]. Here expressing opposition. Idiomatic for a direct person-to-person encounter, although not necessarily a confrontation. "I told him face to face", CEV.

ὅτι "**because**" - THAT. Causal, "because", serving to introduce a causal clause; "since he was manifestly in the wrong", NJB.

κατεγνωσμένος ἦν perf. pas. part. + imperf. verb to-be. "**he was clearly in the wrong**" - HE HAD BEEN CONDEMNED. A periphrastic pluperfect construction,

expressing a past existing state, "had been." Possibly "self-condemned by the inconsistency of his own actions", Lightfoot, treating the participle as middle rather than passive. That is, his actions did not square with what he believed. Yet, a passive is more likely, expressing Paul's view that because of Peter's actions "he stood condemned before God", Longenecker.

v12

Peter, following the Cornelius incident, Act.10:1-11:18, shared in table fellowship (fellowship meals, and in particular, the Lord's Supper) with the Gentiles. By this action he demonstrated that both Jew and Gentile are equally approved before God, by grace through faith, apart from works of the law (Deuteronomic law forbids such contacts with "unclean" Gentiles). When the letter from the Jerusalem church arrives, outlining the decisions of the Jerusalem Council concerning the requirements for table-fellowship, Peter begins to draw back, quietly disassociating himself from the "unclean" Gentiles.

Although most translations say "before the arrival of certain men from James", there is an important variant reading in the Greek which is neuter - "the certain things." Taking "certain things" as original, it most likely refers to the matters of table fellowship contained in the letter from the Jerusalem council. The problem with the council's letter is that it is easily misunderstood. Although the regulations only sought to encourage sensitivity on the part of the Gentiles toward the Jews, they could be taken as if supporting ritual cleanliness. Peter went on to apply the regulations, obviously trying to keep in with the circumcision party, a party made up of Jewish believers centred on the Jerusalem church who insisted on the strict observance of Mosaic law.

γαρ "for" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why Paul opposed Peter; "because"

προ του ελθειν [ερχομαι] aor. inf. "**before [certain men] came**" - BEFORE [CERTAIN ONES / THINGS] CAME [FROM JAMES]. This construction, the articular infinitive led by the preposition **προ**, forms a temporal clause, antecedent time. It is likely that the prepositional phrase "from James" depends on "certain men" rather than "came", so underlining the fact that the "ones/things" came from James. "Before the arrival of certain men/things from James", cf. Bligh.

τινα "certain men" - CERTAIN THINGS. The neuter variant, as here, is rarely accepted by translators, yet it is easy to understand why the neuter would be changed to masculine, but there is no reason why a masculine would be changed to neuter. Dr. Donald Robinson, former Anglican archbishop of Sydney Australia, argues for "certain things", taking the view that they are the instructions contained in a circular letter from the Jerusalem council concerning matters of sensitivity to Jews which, for the maintenance of table fellowship,

should be addressed by Gentiles. These matters are namely: food sacrificed to idols, marital union within prohibited kindred and affinity, strangled meat and blood. There is much debate as to the purpose of these instructions and their nature. It is likely that their purpose is for the maintenance of table fellowship between Jew and Gentile. As to their nature, *porneia*, "fornication / sexual immorality" is unclear, but again Robinson suggests it is possibly a kindred and affinity issue. Paul's terminology here probably indicates that he has little time for these "things". As a guide to table fellowship between Jews and Gentiles, the instructions have some use, but in their potential to divide Jew and Gentile, or even worse, to give the impression that purity is somehow realized by law, rather than grace, they are less than useful. "Prior to the arrival of the instructions from James and the Jerusalem church concerning matters of table fellowship, Peter used to eat with Gentiles."

απο + gen. "from [James]" - Expressing source / origin.

συνησθιεν [**συνεσθιω**] imperf. "**he used to eat**" - HE WAS EATING. The imperfect expressing past ongoing, habitual action, "he used to always eat." General table fellowship may be intended, or in particular, the Lord's Supper.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - Expressing association / accompaniment; "in company with."

των εθνων "**the Gentiles**" - The word may generally refer to "people", but it is more likely that "Gentiles" is intended.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point, as NIV.

ότε "**when**" - Temporal conjunction.

υπεστελλεν [**υποστελλω**] imperf. "**he began to draw back**" - HE WAS DRAWING BACK. Probably an inceptive imperfect, as NIV, indicating a subtle drawing back, possibly not done openly. The verb often takes the sense of withdrawing out of cowardice.

αφοριζεν [**αφοριζω**] imperf. "**[he began] to separate [himself]**" - [AND] WAS SEPARATING [HIMSELF]. Inceptive imperfect again, although possibly tentative, "tried to completely separate himself", Barclay.

φοβουμενος [**φοβω**] perf. pas. part. "**because he was afraid**" - FEARING. The participle is adverbial, best treated as causal, "because", as NIV. What was he afraid of? "Barrett suggests that the circumcision party, centred in the Jerusalem church, was obviously very powerful and Peter feared the threat of their breaking off fellowship.

τους "**those who [belonged to the circumcision group]**" - THE ONES [OF CIRCUMCISION]. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the prepositional phrase "from circumcision" into a substantive. The noun **περιτομης**,

"circumcision", refers to "the circumcision party", the "judaizers". The preposition **εκ**, "out of / from", may take the sense "converts from Judaism", Lightfoot, or "belonged to", although this is unlikely. The preposition is probably being used for a partitive genitive, "those of the circumcision party" = "those in the congregation who were members of the circumcision party." "The party who insisted on the observance of the Jewish law", Barclay.

v13

Peter's actions were inevitably an affront to the gospel of God's free grace and sadly, his behaviour led others astray; even Barnabas was swept along with it. Paul describes Peter's behaviour as "hypocrisy", it was sinful, and Peter had now led others into this sin.

λοιποι adj. "**the [other] Jews**" - [AND] THE [REST OF] JEWS. Obviously referring to the Jewish believers in the Antioch fellowship, or more widely those committed to the law of Moses..

συνυπεκριθησαν [συνυποκρινομαι] "**joined [him] in his hypocrisy**" - [AND = ALSO] JOINED IN PRETENCE, TOGETHER ACTED INSINCERELY [WITH HIM]. Used of hiding one's true feelings or thoughts under a guise, so for instance, an actor behind a mask. Possibly indicating that the Jewish believers didn't fully agree with their separation from the Gentile believers, or at least, didn't understand the theological import of their actions; "the other Jewish Christians showed the same lack of principle", REB.

και "-" - AND. Variant, probably adjunctive, "also"; "The rest of the Jews also acted hypocritically with him."

αυτω dat. pro. "**him**" - Dative of direct object after a **συν** prefix verb; "acted hypocritically along with him", ESV.

ωστε "**so that**" - Expressing result, "with the result that"

τη υποκρισει [ις εως] dat. "**by [their] hypocrisy**" - BY THE HYPOCRISY. The dative is instrumental, expressing means, as NIV. A sense like "false play", Moffatt, "insincerity", NJB, "pretence", Williams, is too soft. Paul regards this behaviour as evil, so "hypocrisy", as NIV. "Even Barnabas was swept along with their hypocrisy", Bligh.

αυτων gen. pro. "**their**" - OF THEM. Often classified as verbal, object, but possessive, may be better; it was their hypocrisy that even led Barnabas astray.

και "**even [Barnabas]**" - AND. Ascensive; "even".

συναπηχθη [συναγω] aor. pas. "**was led astray**" - [BARNABAS] WAS LED AWAY TOGETHER. "Swept along", Bligh.

v14

Paul exposes Peter's hypocrisy by showing how his actions do not "square with gospel truth." Peter, although a Jew, is no different to a Gentile sinner. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God; none are righteous, no not one. Peter, as with his Gentile brothers and sisters, stands before God only by the grace of God, appropriated through faith in Christ. His standing rests on Christ's death and resurrection, not on obedience to Biblical law. "How then", says Paul, "can you, a person who believes that none are righteous no not one, pressure Gentiles into Jewish law-obedience?" Why must Gentiles adopt the law when purity before God has nothing to do with obedience? Paul's words are very harsh, and this because Peter's position in the church would serve as a powerful influence on others, and this is exactly what has happened. The following passage, v15-21, contains the gist of Paul's theological argument against Peter, although his words are focused, not on Peter, but on the "circumcision group" in Galatia.

αλλα "-" - BUT. Strong adversative, contrasting the action in v12-13. "But when I saw", Williams.

οτε "**when**" - Temporal conjunction introducing a temporal clause.

ειδον aor. "**I saw**" - The aorist is punctiliar, "once I noticed that .."

οτι "**that**" - Here introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what Paul saw.

ουκ ορθοδοδουσιν [ορθοδοδεω] pres. "**they were not acting in line with**" - THEY DID NOT WALK CONSISTENTLY, STRAIGHTFORWARDLY, UNSWERVINGLY. Possibly in the sense of "sincerely", but more likely in the terms of the right direction, "they were not on the right road toward the truth of the gospel", Kilpatrick.

προς "**in line with**" - TOWARD. Spatial, metaphorical; "toward" here in the sense of "in conformity with", "according to", or reference / respect, "with respect to."

του ευαγγελιου [ος] "**[the truth] of the gospel**" - Possibly, "the gospel in its integrity", Lightfoot, so, "the true gospel", Blich, taking the genitive as adjectival, attributed. Possibly possessive, "the truth contained in, and so belonging to the gospel", Burton, or attributive, "gospel truth."

τω Κηφα [ας α] dat. "**[I said] to Cephas**" - Dative of indirect object.

εμπροσθεν + gen. "**in front of [them all]**" - BEFORE [ALL]. Spatial. The anarthrous (without an article) "all" indicates "in the presence of the whole congregation", rather than "all the hypocrites."

ει + ind. "-" - IF, *as is the case* [YOU BEING A JEW LIVE AS A GENTILE, *then* HOW DID YOU COMPEL THE GENTILES TO LIVE AS JEWS]? Introducing a first-class

conditional clause where the condition is assumed to be true. The present tense of "live" indicates that Peter habitually lives like a Gentile. Paul is possibly saying that Peter normally doesn't observe Jewish dietary laws and that therefore his behaviour on this occasion is inconsistent, but it is more likely that Paul is making the point that Peter, by his return to ritual purity, shows he has forgotten that when it comes to obedience to the law, that he, as with all believers, is like a Gentile sinner - none are righteous, no not one; none are pure, all are like filthy rags. The issue is not inconsistency, but rather the overturning of "gospel truth", ie., Peter's actions imply that justification is by obedience to the law (purity regulations etc.) rather than by grace through faith. Jew and Gentile stand pure before God (covenant compliant), not by submission to the Mosaic law, but by grace (God's covenant mercy) appropriated through faith (a faith like Abraham's).

τῷ Κηφᾷ [ασ] dat. "**[I said] to Cephas**" - Dative of indirect object.

ὑπαρχῶν [ὑπαρχῶ] pres. part. "**[you] are [a Jew]**" - [YOU] BEING [A JEW]. The participle is possibly adjectival, attributive, limiting "you", "you who are a Jew", although being without an article it may well be adverbial, concessive, "you although a Jew."

εθνικῶς adv. "**yet you live like a Gentile**" - Hapax legomenon. Adverb of manner; "in Gentile manner", Silva. Also **Ιουδαικῶς**, "in a Jewish manner."

πῶς "**How is it, then, that**" - HOW. This interrogative adverb serves to introduce the apodosis of the conditional sentence. The sense of the question is unclear because it is typically Semitic. The question serves to identify an inconsistency which the person facing the question is bound to accept. So, the question is: "how can you, a person who believes that none are righteous no not one, and that includes you (the protasis of the conditional sentence), pressure Gentiles into Jewish law-obedience." The answer is "obviously, I can't."

αναγκάζεις [αναγκάζω] pres. "**you force**" - ARE YOU COMPELLING, FORCING, MAKING NECESSARY. Possibly a tendential present where the action is being contemplated, but it would seem more likely that Peter's action is achieving results, so the sense is probably "bring pressure to bear", Bligh.

ιουδαιζειν [ιουδαιζω] pres. inf. "**to follow Jewish customs**" - TO LIVE AS A JEW. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "compel". The NIV "customs" is far too soft. "To live as a Jew" is to live under the law of Moses. "To live by the Jewish law", Barclay.

2:15-21

3. The central proposition of the letter, 2:15-21

The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ

Argument

Paul now outlines the argument he used against Peter at Antioch. Peter had withdrawn from his fellow Gentile believers over purity issues, and as far as Paul was concerned, his behaviour struck at the very heart of the gospel. So, Paul makes his argument, namely, that the gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ. This argument serves as a defining statement which guides the rest of the letter.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-10. We are unsure where Paul leaves off his confrontation with Peter and where he moves into his doctrinal dissertation. Most commentators opt for 2:15/16 as the commencement of the doctrinal dissertation. Yet, it is more likely that in 2:15-21 Paul outlines the gist of his argument against Peter, although with an eye to those in Galatia who, like Peter, have adopted the theological standpoint of the judaizers, cf. Bruce.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The thesis of Paul's dissertation:*

Proposition:

The gospel of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ.

Explanation:

A person is set right before God / justified on the basis of faith in the faith / faithfulness of Christ; v15-16;

Faith alone may give the impression that it promotes license, v17, but license is a product of the law, not faith, v18;

The law leads to Christ and the new life found in him, v19, a new life lived out in him by faith, v20;

The law was never designed to facilitate the new life of the justified, v21.

Note: When Paul speaks of the ζῶν, "life", a believer lives by faith, he is using the word "life" to encapsulate the promised blessings of the covenant. This new life in Christ entails both "soteriology as well as ethics", Betz.

iv] Interpretation:

In this "central affirmation of the letter", Longenecker, Paul outlines the theological argument appropriate to Peter's actions, an argument which similarly applies to the judaizers, and those in Galatia who have adopted their false teachings. First, Paul identifies with his combatants, stating a doctrine that all Jewish believers hold to be true, namely, that a person is justified (set right with God) on the basis of Christ's obedient sacrifice ("faith of Christ" / faithfulness of Christ = Christ's perfect reliance on the will of God), appropriated by trusting Jesus rather than obeying the law, v15-16.

The trouble is, when a believer applies this doctrine in their Christian life, living under grace rather than law, it can seem that they disregard the law of God ("are sinners") and implicate Christ in their supposed apostasy, v17. For Paul, the opposite is the case. The nomists' dependence on law-obedience to restrain sin and so promote the riches of God's promised blessings, actually leads to rebellion and death, v18 - in the law we die, in Christ we live. To "live", to access the fullness of new life in Christ (to appropriate "the unsearchable riches of Christ", Eph.3:8) is ours in Christ apart from the law. A believer lives "in faith", that is, we experience this new life by resting on the faithfulness ("faith") of the Son of God, namely, his death on our behalf, v19-20. In v21

Paul rounds off his argument by categorically stating that his gospel does not set aside God's kindness in his gift of the law. The reason being that the law was never intended as a mechanism for justification (God's program of setting everything right in Christ); the law does not have the power to restrain sin and progress holiness.

What does Paul mean by "the law" in Galatians? "Law", νόμος, for Paul, primarily means the law of Moses, the Torah, while έργα νομου, "works of the law", used six times in Galatians, probably refers to the observance of the Mosaic Law." A more general sense may well be intended - God's law in general. Such would include the Torah and "the law of Christ", as well as NT ethics in general. Of course, nothing is simple, so other suggested interpretations have emerged over the years, eg., Paul is only referring to cultic law, not the moral law, or the new perspective line that Paul is speaking of "Jewish exclusivism", Dunn..... See Introduction.

v] Homiletics: *Believing and doing*

In our reading today, Paul begins by basing his argument on a proposition that Peter, and all believing Jews, accept to be true. All know

well enough that a person is not judged in the right with God ("justified") by obedience to the law of Moses. Rather, a person stands right with God on the basis of faith in the faithfulness of Christ, namely, faith in his sacrifice on our behalf. It is for this reason that Paul, Peter and all believing Jews, have put their trust in Jesus for their salvation.

But there is a problem. If a believer applies this doctrine in their life, it can be argued that they disregard the law of God ("are sinners") and implicate Christ in their sin, v17. It can be argued that by promoting a doctrine of grace through faith without giving due regard to the sin-restraining function of the law, Paul is promoting sin, and because of his apostolic standing, he is implicating Christ in his sin. "No way", says Paul.

In verses 18-19, Paul answers the charge against him. A believer who returns to law-obedience to restrain sin and progress their holiness, ends up as a "lawbreaker", and this because the law was never designed as an instrument of moral improvement. The function of the law is to make sin more sinful and thus drive the sinner to God for mercy. So, the person who has allowed the law to drive them into the arms of Jesus is now free from the law; the law has served its function - they have died to the law. Thus, they are now set free to live for God.

In verse 20 Paul explains how it is that a believer, who has been set free from the enclosure of the law, finds that they are now free to do what the law requires, as opposed to the believer who submits to the law and ends up doing the opposite of what the law requires. A believer who rests in faith on the right-standing that is theirs in the faithfulness of Christ, has died with Christ and risen with Christ. Their old life of sin is covered by Christ's sacrificial death, and in the power of the risen and indwelling Christ they begin to "live" as the righteous person they are in Christ.

Paul concludes his argument in verse 21. At no point does Paul set aside God's kindness in his gift of the law. Yet, when it comes to a believer's eternal standing before God, yesterday, today and tomorrow, of restraining sin and progressing holiness to attain the full measure of God's promised blessings, if the law could do that then Christ died for nothing.

Text - 2:15

The Proposition: The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ, v15-21.

i] *The gospel, as accepted by all parties in this dispute, states that a person is set right before God [justified] on the basis of Christ's faithfulness [Christ's atoning sacrifice], appropriated through faith and not by obedience to the law of Moses, v15-16.*

In developing his argument, Paul first aligns himself with Peter, and by implication the judaizers, in a doctrine that all believers, particularly Jewish believers, hold to be true, namely, that a person's justification rests on the faithful obedience of Christ ("faith of Jesus Christ", not "faith in Jesus Christ"). So, when it comes to the issue of salvation, Peter, the apostles, the judaizers, Jewish believers, all believers, accept, as a principle of belief, that their salvation rests on (faith in) the faithfulness of Jesus and not works of the law.

It is often argued that this key propositional statement serves as a direct attack on the flawed theology of Peter and his nomist / legalist friends, but it is likely that Paul is stating an agreed foundational truth. This is a truth that Peter and the Judaizers also hold to be true, although they have failed to recognize its full implications. If this is correct, then whatever is troubling the Galatians, it is not legalism, ie., it is not about getting saved through obedience to the law, even though many commentators argue that it is. When it comes to getting saved, Paul and his opponents agree - faith in the faithfulness of Jesus does the trick. The issue troubling the Galatians concerns access to the benefits of salvation - the promised new life in Christ. Paul is setting out to argue against a limited atonement (as opposed to "full justification", Wesley), ie., Paul's argument in Galatians is against the notion that all believers are forgiven, justified, on the basis of grace through faith, BUT THAT the full appropriation of the promised blessings of salvation rests on obedience to the law, ie., through a faithful attention to law, sin is restrained and holiness, sanctification, is progressed for blessing. As far as Paul is concerned, holiness, as well as forgiveness, is wholly dependent on what Christ has done for us, appropriated through faith. To bring law-obedience into the business of appropriating God's promised covenant blessings, serves only to undermine a believer's standing before God, which standing is eternally dependent on God's grace (covenant mercy) appropriated through faith (Christ's faith/faithfulness [evident in the atonement], and our faith response toward his faith/faithfulness).

ἡμεῖς pro. "we" - Nominative subject of the verb "to believe", so serving as the subject of the sentence covering v15, 16. "We" = "we apostles", or "we believing Jews."

φυσει [ις εως] dat. "**by birth**" - BY NATURE [JEWS]. Instrumental dative, "we ourselves are Jews by birth", ESV, or reference / respect, "with respect to our birth."

εξ + gen. "[**and not**]" - [AND NOT] FROM. Possibly expressing source/origin, Jews don't find their heritage from among sinful Gentiles, but also possibly taking the place of a partitive genitive, "not sinners of the Gentiles."

εθνων [ος] gen. "**Gentile [sinners]**" - [SINNERS] OF GENTILES, NATIONS. "Gentiles" is anarthrous (without an article), but none-the-less the specific sense "Gentile" is most likely intended. The phrase εκ εθνων ἁμαρτωλοι is possibly a common Jewish descriptor for the Gentiles which Lightfoot suggests it is a touch ironical (or worse!).

v16

The Gk. sentence covering v15-16 is somewhat complex. The main verb is **επιστευσάμεν**, "we believed", a punctiliar aorist. "Even we Jewish believers [more so than Gentile believers] know that a person is not set right with God (justified) on the ground of their faithful observance of the law of Moses, but rather on the ground of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ (his atonement, ie., a person's right-standing in the sight of God depends on Christ's faithfulness not our own). Convinced that no person can gain God's approval by self-improvement, we believed in Jesus as the Messiah so that we might be set right with God, because no one can ever be set right with God on the ground of law-obedience."

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Variant. If read, not adversative as ESV, "yet we know", but coordinative, "and we know", or better ascensive, "and even we know", or simply transitional, "we know ..."

ειδοτες [οιδα] perf. part. "**know**" - KNOWING. The participle is adverbial, probably causal, "because we know that we too have trusted Jesus", Williams, cf. Moffatt.

ὅτι "**that**" - Introducing a dependent statement of perception, expressing what Jewish believers know to be true.

ου δικαιουνται [δικαιωω] pres. pas. "**is not justified**" - [A MAN] IS NOT PUT IN THE RIGHT, SET RIGHT / JUDGED RIGHT. Bruce argues that the meaning of this verb is "to be set right with God." It essential to understand the implied action of this verb. See Excursus I for a more detailed examination of this word. "We are not set right with God by rule-keeping", Peterson.

εξ + Gen. "**by**" - OUT OF, FROM. In NT Greek this preposition with the genitive is a common way to express the ablative - of separation from / source, origin. "By means of" certainly captures something of the intention of the preposition, given that he uses **δια** + gen., in the same context. A means consisting of a source is probably Paul's intended sense. So, the meaning is "a person is not set / judged right before God out of, from / on the basis of, on the ground of works of the law". Note the similar commonly used phrase **εκ πιστεως**, "out of faith", and in particular **οι εκ πιτεως**, "those out of faith" = "those whose justification is drawn from the faithfulness of Christ." See Excursus I for a more detailed examination of this word.

νομου [ος] gen. "[observing] the law" - [WORKS] OF LAW. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "works" = "law works", these are the works Paul has in mind. See Excursus I for a more detailed examination of this word. "By doing what the law (of Moses) commands", Moffatt.

εαν μη "but" - IF NOT, EXCEPT. Technically introducing an exceptive clause, expressing a contrast by designating an exception, but an adversative sense is possible, "but rather", "but only", REB, etc., so Zerwick. Yet, exception is surely intended and is certainly how it would be heard by a reader. The argument would run as follows: Even a Jewish believer, who loves the law, knows that a child of God cannot be set right before God on the basis of law-obedience. The only exception to this is when right-standing is appropriated on the basis of the faithfulness / obedience of Christ. So, that's why we believing Jews have put our trust in Christ and his faithful obedience rather than our own flawed obedience.

δια + gen. "by" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF. See εκ above.

Ιησου Χριστου [ος] "[faith] in Jesus Christ" - [FAITH] OF JESUS CHRIST. Usually taken as an objective genitive, as NIV, but it is likely to be subjective / possessive (identifying a derivative characteristic) such that a person's justification rests on / is based on the faith / faithfulness possessed by Jesus Christ, ie., δια Christ's obedience to the cross for the atonement of sins. For an understanding of this crucial phrase see Excursus I. "The faith / faithfulness of Jesus Christ".

και "so [we], too" - AND [WE]. Ascensive, "even"; "even we who are Jews by birth", Bruce, although better "Jewish believers."

επιστευσσαμεν [πιστευω] aor. "we [too], have put our faith" - [INTO CHRIST JESUS] BELIEVED. Belief/faith/trust in the sense of "committal of oneself to Christ on the basis of the acceptance of the message concerning him", Burton. The aorist is probably constative where the action as a whole is in mind rather than duration (punctiliar or otherwise), although ingressive also works where there is a slight emphasis on the beginning of the action without excluding its continuance, so NIV in translating it as a perfect tense. "So, we put our faith in Christ Jesus", CEV. Of course, we do face confusion with "faith of Christ" and "faith into Christ" and to distinguish the two we may be better served with "trust/belief in Christ". Note a similar technical term used in 3:2, "the hearing of faith" which similarly describes believing in the gospel, although it can be argued that it is a hearing which leads to faith.

εις + acc. "in [Christ Jesus]" - INTO. The idea of believing "in / into" Jesus is also expressed at times with the preposition εν. This spatial use is metaphorical.

ἵνα + subj. "that" - THAT [WE MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED]. Usually taken as expressing purpose, "in order that", but result may well be intended, "with the result that / so that", eg., Cassirer.

ἐκ "by [faith in Christ]" - OF, OUT OF, FROM [FAITH OF CHRIST AND NOT] OF, OUT OF, FROM [WORKS OF LAW]. "On the basis of / ground of." See above.

ὅτι "because [by works of the law no one will be justified]" - BECAUSE [FROM WORKS OF LAW ALL FLESH WILL NOT BE JUSTIFIED]. Here serving to introduce a causal clause, as NIV. Psalm 143:2b, "no mortal man shall be justified [before you]." In Paul's quote of this Psalm, he drops the "before you" and adds "by works of the law". The point of the Psalm is that no person can stand approved in God's court-room and therefore, the willingness of God to answer the psalmist's prayer must rest on God's mercy, and not the psalmist's righteousness.

v17

ii] *It is also accepted that a reliance on the faithfulness of Christ, rather than on works of the law, does give the impression that it promotes licence. Yet, it is obedience to the law of Moses for the promotion of new life in Christ [nomism - law-obedience to restrain sin and progress holiness] that actually promotes licence, v17-18*

In verse 17 Paul alludes to the charge made against him by the judaizers. Paul still has in mind the breaking of table fellowship with Gentile believers by Peter, and the other believing Jews, in response to the arrival in Antioch of the instructions from the Jerusalem Council. Since Peter and Paul, in fact all believing Jews ("we"), hold to the truth of the gospel, as outline in v16 ("seek to be justified in Christ"), then inevitably the law returns to its proper role in the life of a child of God. Having led us to Christ, the law functions as nothing more than a guide to Christian living. From the perspective of a nomist believer (a judaizer) this approach toward the strict requirements of the Mosaic law would be perceived ("it becomes evident") as apostasy ("that we are sinners"). Obviously it was this perception that prompted Peter to withdraw fellowship from the "unclean" Gentile believers. In identifying the charge against him, Paul is making the argument that the perception of sin does not necessarily make for sin, and certainly perceived sin does not, by implication, pollute Jesus, make him a servant of sin ("that Christ promotes sin"). "Absolutely not", says Paul, v17. For Paul, the opposite is the case; nomism promotes sin: A believer who returns to the Mosaic law to facilitate the blessings of the Christian life, ends up putting themselves again in the position of a law-breaker and thus under the curse of the law, under divine judgment, because the prime function of the law is to expose sin, making it more sinful, v18.

The charge made against Paul by the judaizers is best viewed in three parts:

- Paul's stress on justification apart from works of the law, is antinomian, a devaluation of the law and by implication, promotes libertarianism, ie. Paul has removed the sin-restraining influence, as well as the sanctifying influence, of the law;
- Due to his theological stance, Paul has ignored Gentile impurity (to up his evangelistic success rate!!!), and worse, has associated himself in their sin by joining them in their disregard for the strict adherence of the Mosaic law;
- As a recognized apostle of the Christian church, Paul has included Christ/the messiah in this sinfulness.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point. The proposition detailed in v16 is accepted by all Jewish believers, including Paul and Peter, but not so the central proposition in this verse. "But, if"

ει **αρα** "**if**" **does that mean that**" - IF, *as is the case*, [SEEKING TO BE JUSTIFIED IN CHRIST WE WERE FOUND AND = ALSO *ourSELVES to be SINNERS*] THEN [*is* CHRIST A MINISTER OF SIN]? Introducing a conditional sentence, 1st class, where the condition stated in the protasis is assumed to be true. The grammar in this verse is difficult, but what we seem to have is a protasis consisting of two clauses (the "if" clause"), the combined statement of which is true, followed by an interrogative apodosis introduced by **αρα**, "does that mean that / then is it true that"?", which is assumed not to be true, ie. the question expects a negative answer, so Martyn. "If, as is the case, that those who rest only on the faithfulness of Christ for their standing before God are often perceived to be sinners when their life is viewed by the strict standards of the Mosaic law, does that mean then that their liberty in Christ similarly makes Christ a sinner? God forbid!" Of course, there are other possible interpretations, eg. the first clause is true, the second false, with an inferential conclusion which is false, so Betz. The "absolutely not", is usually a response to a provocative question. It is possible, although unlikely, that the "absolutely not" is not Paul's response, but the response of an imagined interlocutor, here obviously Peter. "You may repudiate the position with a **μη γενοιτο**, but that is the position you logically place yourself in by your action, for if I rebuild what I destroy ..." Moule IB.

ζητουντες [**ζητω**] pres. part. "**while we seek**" - SEEKING. The participle is adverbial, possibly introducing a temporal clause, as NIV, but is also possibly causal, "since / because." "Seek", possibly in the sense of "desire / hope"; "while seeking / desiring (eternally) to be set right in the faithfulness of Christ rather than works of the law."

δικαιωθῆναι [δίκαιω] aor. pas. inf. "**to be justified**" - TO BE SET RIGHT / JUDGED RIGHT [BEFORE GOD]. Complementary infinitive to the main verb "to seek". For "justified" see Excursus I.

ἐν + dat. "**in [Christ]**" - Local, space / sphere, incorporative union; "in union with Christ." By means of which union we die with Christ (our sins are covered by his sacrifice) and rise to new life with Christ.

εὕρεθῆμεν [εὕρισκω] aor. pas. "**it becomes evident that / we Jews find**" - WE WERE FOUND [ALSO OURSELVES *to be* SINNERS]. "To speak of intellectual discovery based on observation", BAGD. The passive needs to be noted, as does the punctiliar action (rather than past tense) of the aorist, so "we ourselves are perceived to be sinners". The "we" is in transition, since Paul moves to the autobiographical "I" in v18. None-the-less, the "we" can still include Peter, as well as the judaizers. All believing Jews would accept the doctrinal truth of v17, and if they happen to apply it, their piety may well be viewed with suspicion. Mind you, those doing the viewing / perceiving would obviously be the judaizers. Of the statement itself, it is difficult to determine whether it is of fact, or contra to fact. Most commentators take it as a factual statement - a believer who is grace orientated will be lax when it comes to the law, certainly with regard ritual regulations - circumcision, ... = "sinners" in name only, and this particularly so for Gentile believers. Yet, it is more likely that the statement is contra to fact, as far as Paul is concerned, although not as far as the judaizers are concerned.

αὐτοι pro. "**ourselves**" - Serving as an emphatic intensifier.

ἁμαρτωλοὶ [ος] "**sinners**" - Nominative complement of **αὐτοι**, "selves = ourselves"; "we find ourselves sinners." Here in the particular sense of "neglecting the strict regulations of the Mosaic law."

ἀρα "**does that mean that**" - THEN. A marker of a negative response to questions, usually implying anxiety or impatience - 'indeed, then, ever.' "how, then, could Christ ever be a servant of sin?"* Not all commentators read this particle as interrogative, but rather inferential, so Moule IB; "it follows that Christ has acted as the servant of Sin!", Bligh. An interrogative (question) sense seems best.

ἁμαρτίας [α] gen. "**[does this mean that Christ] promotes sin?**" - [IS CHRIST A SERVANT] OF SIN? The genitive is possible adjectival, attributed, "a sinful servant", although usually taken as verbal, objective, as NIV. As with this verse as a whole, interpretations of this clause are legion. As stated above, the clause probably reflects the charge against Paul that by preaching an antinomian gospel and living himself as a "Gentile sinner" (ritually impure), he has, because of his position as an apostle, implicated Christ in his sin; "he has, in effect, turned Christ into one who condones and even facilitates sin, rather than combating it!", Martyn. As such, the clause evidences the charge against Paul that having

"abandoned the covenant" he had become "a promoter of apostasy - a scandalous idea to those who believed that the Messiah was to be sinless. Proof positive was Paul's willingness to allow Jews and uncircumcised Gentiles to partake of the same (non-kosher) food!", Garlington. Betz suggests the following line: If, as the judaizers claim that "Gentile Christians are still sinners until they come under the Torah, then Christ has in fact become a servant of sin"; see above.

μη γενοιτο [γίνομαι] opt. "**Absolutely not!**" - The optative usually expresses a wish, "may it not be so" = "God forbid!" Serving as a response to a rhetorical question.

v18

"For, as the incident in Antioch reveals, the way in which I show myself to be a transgressor would be to rebuild the walls of the Law that I have torn down", Martyn.

γαρ "-" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining the reason why it is "absolutely" not true that Paul's antinomist gospel promotes sin. The truth is, nomism promotes sin. Look at the Antioch situation. "Absolutely not! For [as the incident in Antioch reveals] the way in which I would show myself to be a transgressor"

ει "if" - IF, *as is the case*, [WHAT I DESTROYED THESE THINGS I REBUILD *then* I DEMONSTRATE MYSELF TO BE A SINNER]. Introducing a conditional sentence, 1st class, where the stated condition is assumed to be true.

παλιν οικοδομω [οικοδομew] 1st. sing. pres. "**I rebuild**" - again I build up. Both "rebuild" and "destroy" are words related to the construction of a structure, here possibly of an enclosure. The first person is often regarded as inclusive (a rhetorical feature), but it is likely Paul has himself in mind since he is the one whose application of justification is being criticized. Possibly a tendential present expressing a contemplated action; "if I start building up again", REB.

ἃ pro. "**what [I destroyed]**" - THAT WHICH. Accusative direct object of the verb "to destroy." Namely, the law as a means of maintaining and progressing God's work of setting things right. "If I try to rebuild again the whole structure of justification by the law", Phillips.

κατελυσα [καταλυω] aor. "**I destroyed**" - I ANNULLED, ANNIHILATED, DESTROYED. The aorist serves to underline the punctiliar nature of the action. Better to take the sense "dismantled", obviously referring to the law/Torah. See below, "died to the law", for the possible ways the law is "annulled" for Paul. "The law that I have torn down", Martyn.

συνιστανω [συνιστημι] pres. "**I prove / then I really would be**" - I DEMONSTRATE, SHOW, PRESENT [MYSELF]. Possibly "show myself to be a sinner", but probably stronger, "constitute myself a transgressor", Weymouth;

"make myself a sinner", Phillips; "then indeed I do put myself in the position of a law-beaker", Bruce.

παρὰβᾶτην [ης] "a lawbreaker" - A TRANSGRESSOR, ONE WHO DISOBEYS THE LAW. Complement of the object **εμαυτον**, "myself", serving in a double accusative construction; "I show myself a transgressor." Equivalent to "sinner", being outside God's grace, a state caused by a reliance on the law, which reliance serves to inculcate the curse of the law and thus undermine God's work of setting all things right. "The way in which I would really prove myself a sinner would be by rebuilding", Barclay.

v19

iii] *In the law we die, in Christ we live. God's promised blessing of new life, which is part of his setting all things right, is fully realized in us through our identification with the faithful obedience of Christ on the cross, and this apart from the law, v19-20.*

Paul has answered the charge against him that in preaching an antinomian gospel and living as "a Gentile sinner", he has, because of his standing as an apostle, implicated Christ in his apostasy. As far as Paul is concerned, he has done the opposite, he has glorified Christ through his "apostleship, to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles", Rom.1:5. The nomists' approach to the law actually undermines new life in Christ, inevitably promoting sinful living, while Paul's approach to the law enhances new life in Christ, inevitably promoting godly living. Now, in v19-20, Paul outlines his thesis, namely, that **the gospel of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ**. A believer, who is dead to the law and now rests on the righteousness that is theirs in Christ, slowly becomes the person they are in Christ, they begin to live for God and experience the fullness of new life in the kingdom - "the unsearchable riches of Christ." When we rest wholly ("by faith") on the righteousness we possess in Christ, we die with Christ and rise with Christ. Our old life of sin is covered by Christ's sacrificial death, and in the power of the risen and indwelling Spirit of Christ we begin to "live" as that righteous person we already are in Christ (note Paul's autobiographical approach in outlining his thesis).

At this point, Paul demonstrates his understanding of Biblical theology. God's covenant with Abraham, the promise of a people, a place and a blessing to the world, is the promise of a kingdom, the kingdom of God. Israel's error was to assume that for a person to maintain and progress their covenant compliant status (justification) it was necessary for them to obey the law of Moses, but in fact, a person's appropriation of the promised blessings of the covenant rest on God's covenant mercy (grace), namely, his faithfulness toward his promises appropriated by faith (as was the case for Abraham). The fulfillment of the

promise of a kingdom "at hand" is realized in Christ, in whose life the believer stands, namely, by dying with Christ and rising with Christ. So, a believer, having been judged covenant compliant on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ, now freely shares in the promised blessings of kingdom membership (eg., a new heart within, Jer.31:33), all of which rests on God's covenant mercy facilitated in the faithfulness of Christ and appropriated through faith, and not works of the law.

γάρ "for" - FOR. Here more reason than cause, teasing out v18.

διὰ + gen. "**through [the law]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF. Instrumental, expressing means. Referring to the intention and function of the law to expose our loss before God and thus drive us to him for mercy, 3:19-25. Possibly causal, "because of the law", although instrumental is more likely.

ἐγώ "**I [died]**" - The personal pronoun takes an emphatic position in the sentence. Paul continues the personal defence of his theological position, although the situation he describes is obviously inclusive of all believing Jews.

ἀπεθάνον [**ἀποθνήσκω**] aor. "**I died [to the law]**" - Used figuratively of ending contact with something and thus being rescued or released from its dominion and control. The possible meanings offered below indicate the difficulty we face in trying to resolve Paul's intended sense. All options reflect Biblical truth, although with qualifications, eg., with option (e), it should be noted that even the most legalist Jew would reject the notion that obedience to the law gains salvation. God's election of Israel is wholly of his grace; keeping in with that grace is another matter. As for option (d), the law always remains a guide to the Christian life. Option (a) has the most going for it, given Paul's argument in 3:19-24, ie. "for by the law I was condemned to death":

a) Released from the condemnation of the law by identification with Christ who, by his acceptance of the punishment due our sin, exhausted its penalty, cf. Tannehill. "The law released me from its servitude by condemning Christ, making itself guilty, and so losing the right to condemn", Bligh.

b) Released from the curse of the law in the sense of Israel's exile; cf. 3:10-14. The new perspective approach. With this argument, Paul doesn't devalue the Law/Torah, rather he makes the distinction that for the covenant people of Israel, their disobedience of the Torah has enacted the curse of exile, thus the Jews are lost before God, lost to the blessings promised to Abraham. When Christ, the messiah of Israel took upon himself the curse of the law, the covenant was renewed and the curse lifted. Those children of Abraham who take up the faith of Abraham and rely on Jesus the messiah are released from the curse of the law and so share in the promised blessing of life.

c) Released from the law's purpose to expose sin. "The law condemned me [in order to lead me to Christ for mercy] so that I might live for God." The law enlivens sin and thus condemnation, that we might access mercy. "The law showed him his need of redemption and referred him to faith", Zahn / Bruce.

d) Released from the control of the law. "Freedom from the jurisdiction of the Mosaic law for the living of our lives", Longenecker. "In obedience to the law I set the law aside", Bligh. Replaced by a life lived "in Christ", Bruce. "My very attempt to obey the law compelled me in the end to live a life in which the law has for me become a dead letter", Barclay;

e) Released from "the law as a valid instrument through which one is put right with God", TH. "Died to the law as a way of salvation and turned to Christ", Hunter.

νομῷ [οἷ] dat. "**to the law**" - TO LAW. Dative of reference, "I died in relation to / with respect to the Mosaic law", or sphere, or even interest, disadvantage.

ἵνα + subj. "**that [I might live]**" - Usually translated as introducing a purpose clause; "in order that .." Ridderbos opts for a consecutive clause (result) and this does seem more likely, so, we die to the one and as a result we live to the other. Moule notes that there is a rational link between "died to law / sin / world" and "live to God". This link is developed in v20. It seems likely then, taking v19 and 20 together, that Paul is saying something like "in the law we are condemned, but in Christ we live." There is a rational link between the two ideas, but it is not actually final/telic, or causal.

ζῆσω [ζῶ] subj. "**I might live**" - "Live" in what sense? Certainly, live in the sense of "living for God", so ethical, but also referring to the spiritual state of "new life in Christ", even life in the sense of "eternal life". Betz suggests that both ideas are contained in Paul's "live" - expressing "soteriology as well as ethics". In Paul's later letters he describes this gift of life in the terms of "the unsearchable riches of Christ", Eph.3:8, cf. Eph.1:18, 2:7, Phil.4:19, Col.1:27. "That we might live a God-consecrated life", Ridderbos.

θεῷ [οἷ] dat. "**for God**" - TO GOD. Dative of interest, advantage.

v20

"It is no longer I who live, but rather Christ lives in me, and the life I now live in the flesh I live in faith, that is to say in the faith (thus "faithfulness") of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up to death for me", Martyn.

συνεσταυρωμαι [συσταυρω] perf. pas. "**I have been crucified with [Christ]**" - The prefix **συν** giving the sense of "in association with / in company with." The perfect tense indicating a completed past event with ongoing ramifications. As noted above, the "I" serves to personalize the debate, but is

inclusive of believing Jews, and by extension, ingrafted Gentile believers (not so Sanders, Dunn...!). It does seem likely that the phrase exegetes "I died to the law", as if a parallel statement, so see above for possible interpretations. "We share Christ's death to the old order under the law."

Χριστῷ dat. "**Christ**" - Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix verb "to be crucified with."

δε "- " - but/and. Transitional. Used three times in the opening section of this verse probably indicating steps in the argument rather than as an adversative "but".

ζω [**ζῶω**] pres. "**I [no longer] live**" - Again we have the problem of what "life" is intended; is it "alive", NJB, or is an ethical sense intended, referring to the manner in which we live? Probably all aspects of the new life in Christ is intended. Ethics is certainly included, so Paul's life was once controlled by the law, now by the indwelling compelling of the Spirit of Christ.

εν + dat. "**[Christ lives] in [me]**" - Local, expressing space/sphere, incorporative union.

ὁ acc. rel. pro. "**the life [I live]**" - [AND] THAT WHICH [NOW I LIVE]. Accusative of content / introducing a relative clause object of the verb "to live." Probably Lightfoot is to be followed; Paul is speaking of the particular life a believer lives in their day-to-day life through the power of the indwelling Spirit, a life that is lived by a reliance on the transforming power of Christ. "This life I now live (driven by the indwelling compelling of the Spirit of Christ), though still in the flesh," cf. Bligh.

εν + dat. "**in [the body]**" - IN [FLESH]. Expressing space, metaphorical.

εν + dat. "**[I live] by [faith]**" - [I LIVE] IN [FAITH]. Here usually regarded as instrumental, as NIV, but local seems better; "in the faithfulness [of Christ]"

τη fem. dat. article. "- " - that [of the son of god, the one having loved me]. The article serves as an adjectivizer introducing a relative clause limiting "faith / faithfulness"; "I live ("the new life" that is God's putting all things right) in my identification with (local dative) the faithfulness [of Christ]" that of the Son of God"

του υἱου [**ος**] gen. "**in the Son**" - OF THE SON. The NIV takes the genitive as verbal, objective, but if "that *faithfulness* of the Son of God", then either subjective, or possessive, as above.

του θεου [**ος**] gen. "**of God**" - The genitive is adjectival, relational. "Son of God" serves as a title of Christ, so "I rest on Christ's faithfulness, the Son of God, who"

του αγαπησαντος [αγαπω] aor. part. "who loved [me]" - THE ONE HAVING LOVED. The participle, as with "having given himself", is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Son of God", as NIV.

ὑπερ + gen. "for [me]" - [AND HAVING GIVEN HIMSELF OVER] ON BEHALF OF [ME]. The preposition here takes the sense representation / advantage, "on behalf of", possibly substitution, "in place of."

v21

iv) *The law was never intended to facilitate the new life of a person set right with God. If that were the case, Christ died for nothing, v21.*

Paul now rounds off his argument by categorically stating that his gospel, with its limited role for the law, does not set aside the "grace of God" - here "grace" is used of God's kindness in giving his people the blessing of covenant law. The simple reason being that the law was never intended as the mechanism for maintaining or advancing covenant standing, nor accessing the totality of the covenant promises. Such is attained by faith, a faith like Abraham's, faith in the promised mercy of God realized in the faithful obedience of Christ. To claim otherwise implies that "Christ died for nothing!"

ουκ αθετω pres. "I do not set aside" - I DO NOT SET ASIDE, REJECT, NULLIFY, DESPISE, DECLARE INVALID. For example, used of an inspector rejecting grain that is not fit for human consumption. Paul is possibly making the point that in devaluing the law he doesn't set aside the kindness ("grace") of God in his provision of the law, for the law was never given to facilitate justification. If it were, then Christ's crucifixion was pointless.

του θεου [ος] gen. "of God" - [THE GRACE] OF GOD. The genitive is probably adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source; the grace / favour *that comes from* God.

γαρ "for" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why Paul does not set aside the grace of God by devaluing covenant law.

ει + ind. "if" - IF, *as is not the case*, [I gained RIGHTEOUSNESS THROUGH LAW THEN CHRIST DIED FOR NOTHING]. The verb is assumed, "could be gained." Paul uses a 1st class form of conditional clause, where the stated condition in the protasis (the "if" clause) is assumed to be true for argument's sake; "if, as the case is then" Of course, it's not true, although it was thought to be true by the nomists, so the function of the conditional clause is that of a 2nd. class condition / contrary to fact. "If the totality of being set right could be maintained and advanced through obedience to the law, then ..."

δικαιοσυνη "righteousness" - Nominative subject of a verbless clause. We see again the ease with which Paul assimilates the idea of being "right before

God" and of possessing "life" before God ("live to God", "Christ who lives in me", v20), such that new life in Christ encapsulates the totality of being set right before God - the act of setting right and its product are one. Of course, this is not so for the judaizers who see the product earned by law-obedience.

δια + gen. "**through [the law]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF. Instrumental, expressing means. Obviously in the sense of "by works of the law", so "through obedience to the law."

αρα "-" - THEN. Inferential / introducing a logical conclusion; "then, as a result,"

δωρεαν adv. "**for nothing**" - FREELY = IN VAIN. Adverb of manner. Here a once only use in the NT.. of the meaning, "to no purpose / for nothing / gratuitously." "Christ might well not have died", Barclay.

3:1-5

4. Arguments in support of the proposition, 3:1-4:7

i] The first argument

Argument

From 3:1 to 4:11 Paul sets out to show, from scripture, how the gospel, of itself, apart from law-obedience, facilitates new life in Christ. In our passage for study, Paul outlines the first argument in support of his proposition: Experience shows that the renewing presence of the Spirit is a product of Christ's faithfulness, not our own, v1-5;

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-10. Paul now embarks on a series of arguments to support his proposition, namely, that **the gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ**. Paul contends that a person, who is in the right with God on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ, is freely able to appropriate the fullness of God's promised new life, and this apart from law-obedience, 3:1-4:11. The seven arguments are as follows:

#1. Given that experience itself demonstrates that the renewing presence of the Spirit is facilitated by the faithfulness of Christ, it is obvious that new life in Christ is not dependent on our faithfulness, 3:1-5.

#2. Scripture reminds us that those who inherit God's promised new life are the spiritual descendants of Abraham, and like Abraham, they are people who rely in faith on the faithfulness of God, 3:6-9.

#3. Scripture also makes it clear that it is not possible to inherit the blessing of new life, in all its fullness, through obedience to the law. Rather, the blessing is a product of Jesus' faithfulness to God's will, 3:10-14.

#4. The promise, a promise encapsulated in the covenant with Abraham and now realized in the gift of new life in Christ, is independent of the gift of the law, 3:15-18.

#5. The function of the Mosaic law was not to promote new life in Christ, but rather, to promote death until everything is put right by Christ, 3:19-24.

#6. The realization of the promised blessing of a worldwide people united before God, apart from the law, further proves that new life in Christ rests wholly on what Christ has done for us and not on what we do, 3:25-29.

#7. For those in Christ, the law has completed its appointed purpose of confinement, such that in Christ we now have the full and free enjoyment of sonship in God, and this with all its associated blessings, 4:1-7.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The first argument in support of the proposition:*

Proposition:

The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ.

Supporting argument:

#1. New life in Christ is not dependent on our faithfulness, 3:1-5;

A befuddled congregation, v1;

The gift of the Spirit, v2-5;

By works or faith? v3;

Works for nothing, v4-5.

iv] Interpretation:

#1. The first argument: Although the judaizers / nomists agree that a person is justified (judged right / set right before God) on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ, they hold that their ongoing participation in the Christian life (life under the covenant, in the kingdom of God), with all its associated blessings, is by "works of the law", as if law-obedience can restrain sin and progress holiness for blessing. Paul, on the other hand, contends that the blessings of the Christian life are a natural product of a person's standing in Christ. So now, in v1-5, Paul refers his readers to their Christian experience - the renewing power of the Holy Spirit (a new heart within, Jer.31:33). It was through their belief in the gospel of the crucified Christ that they received God's promised blessing (the promised blessings of the Abrahamic covenant) - life in the now through the wonder-working power of the Spirit, daily renewing them, building a new heart within. Given this fact, what has possessed them to abandon this mechanism of renewal for the subjection of the law?

Full Justification: We have noted in 2:16, and will see again in 3:6, that the judaizers seem to agree with the proposition that a person's justification rests on the grace of God, so obviously, the problem lies with how they apply the doctrine in the Christian life. The judaizers seem to have a limited view of justification, namely, it only achieves our forgiveness. When it comes to a full participation in the promised covenant blessings, the judaizers see law-obedience as an essential supplement to

the benefits of the atonement. For Paul, the totality of kingdom blessings are ours in Christ apart from works of the law.

v] Homiletics: *New life in the Spirit*
Body: See "Structure" above, v1-5.

Text - 3:1

Arguments in support of the proposition:

#1. *Given that experience itself demonstrates that the renewing presence of the Spirit is facilitated by the faithfulness of Christ, it is obvious that new life in Christ is not dependent on our faithfulness, v1-5.*

Paul begins with a rhetorical question, "who hypnotized you Galatians", who took away your capacity to think?

Ω "-" - OH. Interjection.

εβασκανεν [βασκαινω] aor. "[who] has bewitched" - Used in sorcery, "cast an evil eye on." "Who has hypnotized you", Hunter.

κατα + acc. "before" - Often expressing a standard, "according to the eyes", here probably spatial, "before", as NIV. Possibly with "eye" serving to form an adverbial construction, "vividly / clearly / visibly".

οἱς dat. pro. "your [very eyes]" - TO WHOM [JESUS CHRIST WAS, ACCORDING TO EYES]. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage / possession, "for whom", of the verb "to put forward / placard / portray." The Galatians have been drawn aside by the "evil eye" (sorcery) of the judaizers and this because they have taken their eye off the crucified Lord. "You have had a clear picture of Jesus Christ crucified, right in front of your eyes", NJB.

προεγραφη [προγραφω] aor. pas. "clearly portrayed as" - WAS PUT FORWARD, PORTRAYED, PLACARDED. Obviously referring to the preaching of the gospel to the Galatians by Paul and his missionary team. "Was so graphically presented as", Berkeley.

εσταυρωμενος [σταυρω] perf. pas. part. "crucified" - HAVING BEEN CRUCIFIED. The participle serves as an object complement asserting a fact about the object "Jesus Christ"; "Jesus Christ the crucified", Moffatt. The perfect emphasizing the ongoing effects of this past event. The phrase "Christ crucified", a truth that was set before the Galatians, summarizes the apostolic gospel. It was placarded before them, so how could they ignore its facts?

v2

In his second question, a question repeated in v5, Paul asks, "by what means did you Galatians receive the promised gift of the Holy Spirit?" Paul asks them to think for a moment about the reception of the Holy Spirit; did they receive the Spirit on the basis of their law-obedience, or their faith-response to the gospel?

μονον adv. "**one thing**" - [THIS] ONLY [I WANT TO LEARN FROM YOU]. "I ask you only this", ESV = "answer me this single question."

μαθειν [μανθανω] aor. inf. "**to learn**" - TO BE INFORMED, FIND SOMETHING OUT. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of **θελω**, "I would like". Possibly used in the Old Testament sense of learning about the will of God, but more likely in a general sense of learning about something.

αφ [απο] + gen. "**from [you]**" - Expressing source/origin.

ελαβετε [λαμβανω] "**did you receive [the Spirit]**" - "Receive" is limiting so "take hold of" is better, even emphasizing the agency of God, "the Spirit bestowed upon you", Cassirer. Certainly, in part, referring to "the inception of Christian life", Martyn, so Dunn, Garlington, Barnes (regeneration/conversion), Betz ("ecstatic experience" of), Bruce, George ("receiving by faith the promise of the Spirit"), Fung ("began their Christian lives") ... although not just conversion, but "progress in the faith", Dumbrell, "the wonderful new spiritual life that had come to the Galatians", Hunter = the fruits of the Spirit, 5:22-23 (ethical?), that are a product of being "drenched" in the Spirit, 1Cor.12:13, in fulfillment of prophecy, cf. Acts 2, and the covenant promise of a new heart within, Jer.31:33. The outpouring of the Spirit, "the abundant supply of the Spirit", Guthrie, v5, was theirs by responding to the gospel in faith, not law-obedience. Interestingly, Martyn suggests that Paul raises the issue of the Spirit at this point because the judaizers were claiming that "law-obedient exegesis of scripture is the means by which one can be assured of a steady supply of the Spirit and of his wonder-working power" (the only person able to confirm a theory like this is Dr. Who!!). Martyn is surely right on the "steady supply of the Spirit". So, Paul is rightly amazed. Having experienced the "steady supply of the Spirit" through faith, the Galatians have now adopted a heresy that it is through obedience. So, "receive the Spirit" is best understood as "did you experience the renewing power of the Holy Spirit?"

εξ + gen. "**by**" - OUT OF, FROM. Here **εκ** possibly takes the not-so-common sense of cause/reason where the idea of origin is expanded somewhat, so possibly: cause, "because of"; reason, "by reason of"; result, "as a result of", possibly means / basis, "by means of", Wuest. Cassirer opts for result, "as a result of works done", Barclay result/cause. In v5 the NIV opts for the causal sense, "because of". "Did you receive the Spirit because you observed the law, or because you?" Of course, the idea of origin does work by itself; "from works of the law", Berkeley, or better, "on the basis of law", Longenecker.

νομου [ος] gen. "**[observing] the law**" - [WORKS] OF LAW. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetic / of definition, specifying the works in mind, namely those associated with the law. For "works of the law" see 2:16. Note the new perspective angle, eg. "In a nutshell, they received the Spirit not in the old era of

the "flesh" (= "works of the law"), but in the new, eschatological age by "the hearing of faith", Garlington - another example of a focus on ecclesiology rather than soteriology. "Observance of God's law", Martyn.

ἢ "or" - Disjunctive.

εξ + gen. "by" - See above.

πιστεως [ις εως] gen. "**believing [what you heard]**" - [HEARING] OF FAITH. The difficulty lies in whether we take the word with its active, or passive sense, and whether it is an objective, or subjective genitive. It seems likely that it is active, "believing", although a passive sense cannot be ruled out, but there is endless debate as to whether it is subjective, "is in faith / comes of faith / accompanied by faith", or objective, "leads to faith", eg. "the proclamation that has the power to elicit faith", Martyn. Yet, it seems more likely that it is a descriptive genitive which limits by qualifying the head noun "hearing", idiomatic, "a hearing *which involves* faith / belief", ie., a faith / trust / believing type of hearing, the type that relies on God's promises. This term then, lit. "hearing of faith", expresses the same idea as "we believed in Christ Jesus", 2:16, and describes a faith-response to the gospel. This should not be confused with lit. "justified ... by means of faith of (NIV, "in") Christ", 2:16, or with lit. "by / out of faith", eg. 3:7, both of which phrases refer to God's / Christ's faith / faithfulness, upon which we place our faith. The one who responds to the gospel in faith is the one who receives the regenerative indwelling compelling presence of the Holy Spirit. See Ridderbos, or Fung for an extended discussion on the Gk. "Did you experience from works of the law or from a hearing *which involves* faith."

ακουσ [η] "**what you heard**" - HEARING. Most often in the NT taken in the passive sense of "tidings or news", as opposed to the active sense of "the act of hearing", and so the word often becomes a technical designation for what is preached, ie., the gospel; "the gospel message", REB. But see above.

v3

Paul's third question, supported by another in v4, asks, "Are you Galatians so stupid, that having commenced your Christian walk with the gift of the indwelling Spirit of Christ, you now rest on law-obedience to access what is freely yours in Christ?"

οὕτως adv. "**so**" - IN THIS WAY, SO. Here adverbial, of degree, "so foolish."

ανοητοι adj. "**foolish**" - SENSELESS [YOU ARE]. Predicate adjective.

"Surely you can't be so idiotic as to think that a person begins", Phillips.

αναρξαμενοι [αναρχομαι] aor. part. "**after beginning**" - HAVING BEGUN. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV. Describing the beginning of a believer's Christian life in the hearing and acceptance of the gospel

and the reception of the Holy Spirit, although the ongoing application and completion of that beginning is what is in Paul's mind.

πνευματι [α ατος] dat. **"with / by means of the Spirit"** - IN/BY SPIRIT. Is the dative instrumental, or local (Bligh suggests adverbial), "by", or "with/in (the sphere of)?" This dative is balanced by the dative of "flesh" ("by human effort"), so the NIV has the first as local and the second as instrumental. Surely both are local, eg., Burton, "begun with Spirit ... finishing with flesh", so Moffatt, NAB ... ("in ... in", NJB), or instrumental, eg., "did you begin by the Spirit, but are now approaching perfection by fleshly means?", Williams, so Barnes, NASB An instrumental sense seems best, although the point is typically condensed. The Galatian nomists began their Christian journey by putting their trust in the faithfulness of Christ and as a consequence were judged right before God and so received the blessing of the new covenant, namely, the gift of the Holy Spirit and his indwelling compelling love = a new heart within. Having begun their Christian walk by means of the Spirit = "live by [the] Spirit", they now foolishly seek to progress their Christian life "by [the] flesh" = by obedience to the law.

επιτελεισθε [επιτελεω] pres. mid. **"are you [now] trying to attain your goal"** - [NOW] ARE YOU BEING PERFECTING / COMPLETING, FINISHING (mid = yourselves). The middle "bring [yourselves] to perfection" is better than the passive "being made perfect / being perfected", NASB, NEB ..., or "ending/completing" = "attain your goal", NIV. Surely this reflects the judaizers' sanctification by obedience position, although in opposing this position, Paul is not proposing a Keswick sanctification position, a veiled perfectionism, even if there is much of the "let go and live" about it. Sanctification, as a product of justification, is a state of holiness, which, through a reliance on the renewing power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ, we strive to apply in our daily life (be what we are); albeit, always imperfectly. "Are you trying to make yourselves perfect?"

σαρκι [σαρξ κος] dat. **"by human effort / by means of the flesh?"** - BY FLESH? The dative is instrumental, expressing means. Paul is surely referring to "works of the law" = "the strict observance of the law of Moses" to maintain standing before God and progress the Christian life. Of course, commentators tend toward the more specific issues of "circumcision and holy days", Barnes, while new perspective commentators argue that "flesh" = "the era of the flesh, that is, the old covenant / old creation as superintended by the law of Moses", Garlington.

v4

επαθετε [πασχω] aor. **"have you suffered"** - DID YOU EXPERIENCE / EXPERIENCE EVIL, SUFFER [SO MUCH IN VAIN]. Paul may be referring to some

specific suffering experienced by the Galatians, even just suffering in general, but it seems more likely that he is using the word here in the sense of "experience", referring to the Galatians' experience of all that is theirs through the ministry of the indwelling Spirit, including the "signs, wonders and mighty works", cf. v5, so Fung, Garlington, Martyn, Betz, Dumbrell; "is all you have experienced to come to nothing", REB.

εἰκη adv. "**in vain**" - [SO MANY THINGS] IN VAIN. "To no good purpose."

εἰ γε "**if it really was [for nothing]**" - IF REALLY INDEED [IN VAIN]. The construction often introduces the protasis of a conditional clause. Here, after a main clause, serving as an afterthought, even as a qualification, "an assumption the writer believes to be true", Burton; "of course / at any rate / I take it that."

καὶ "-" - EVEN. Bligh suggest the particle here is emphatic serving to emphasize "in vain"; "have they all been useless (ie., their experience of the Spirit), if indeed one can say 'useless' in such a case?"

v5

Paul now rounds off his argument by answering the question he posed in v2, so we may be better served if we translate the verse as a statement. "Therefore, God's gift to you of the continuous wonder-working renewal of the Spirit within you, is appropriated, not by obeying (because you obeyed) the law, but by believing the gospel".

οὖν "-" - THEREFORE. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion for the question posed in v2 (Bligh, "resumptive?"); "[so] would you say then that ...", NJB.

ὁ ἐπιχορηγῶν [ἐπιχορηγέω] pres. part. "**does God give**" - THE ONE SUPPLYING, GIVING ABUNDANTLY. The participle serves as a substantive.

ὑμῖν dat. pro. "**you**" - TO YOU [THE SPIRIT]. Dative of indirect object.

ἐνεργῶν [ἐνεργέω] pres. part. "**work [miracles]**" - [AND] WORKING, PERFORMING [POWERFUL ACTS]. The participle serves as a substantive. The present tense is durative; "constantly working miracles", Wuest; "effects wonderworking power among you".

ἐν ὑμῖν "**among you**" - The preposition is local, distributive, "among you." Possibly "in you", Bligh, which would imply that the "works of power / mighty works" concern the renewal of our inner being, "the inward renewal of the Spirit", Burton, rather than miracles, eg., healings, exorcisms, ie., miraculous manifestations of the Spirit. So, instead of an expression of the eschatological powers of the age to come that, in the early church, accompanied conversion, it is more likely that Paul is referring to the gift and fruits of the Spirit, "the signs of God's continuous activity", Dumbrell, of his "sanctifying work of inner transformation [in you]", George.

εξ + gen. "**because**" - FROM [WORKS OF LAW OR BY HEARING OF FAITH]? See v2 above.

3:6-9

4. Arguments in support of the proposition, 3:1-4:7

ii] The second argument

Argument

From 3:1 to 4:11 Paul sets out to show, from scripture, how the gospel, of itself, apart from law-obedience, facilitates new life in Christ. In our passage for study, Paul outlines the second argument in support of his proposition: Those who inherit God's promised new life are the spiritual children of Abraham, and like Abraham, they are people who rely in faith on the faithfulness of God, v6-9.

Issues

i] Context: See 3:1-5.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The second argument in support of the proposition:*

Proposition:

The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ.

Supporting arguments:

#2. Those who inherit God's promised new life

are the spiritual descendants of Abraham, 3:6-9;

The case of Abraham, v6-9;

Text, v6;

Who are the true children of Abraham? v7-9.

iv] Interpretation:

#2. The second argument: In v1-5 Paul has contended that the consequent blessings that flow from having been justified (set / judged right with God), here with particular reference to the gift of the Spirit, stem from God's grace (covenant mercy) facilitated in the faithfulness of Christ (the atonement), which grace is appropriated by faith in Christ rather than law-obedience. Paul now supports this contention by quoting Genesis 15:6, reminding his readers of Abraham, a man who rested on the faithfulness of God and thus stood right before God, v6. Paul then goes on to exegete the verse. It was not Abraham's willingness to leave Haran for the promised land, nor his circumcision, nor his willingness to sacrifice his son that gained him standing before God, rather, it was God's faithfulness (grace / covenant mercy) which Abraham appropriated through faith. The true children of Abraham are the children of "faith", not law, v7. It is they who

are justified, v8, and who receive the promised blessings of the covenant, v9.

Abraham - an exemplar of Faith or Law? Garlington, Martyn, George, Bets, ... in fact, most commentators suggest that this passage reveals something of the line of argumentation used by the judaizers. There seems much to commend this idea, although we are left in the land of theory more than fact. Did the judaizers argue that Abraham served as the perfect example of a man of faith who progressed his life in faithful obedience, such that he was the father of obedience, the father of circumcision, eg., his willing offering of Isaac....? Then, from v7, did they argue that they, the children of the law, are properly the children of Abraham. So, is Paul establishing that Abraham is the father of "faith", and his children, the children of "faith", as a counter argument? Abraham, the man of faith, and his "true" children, the children of faith, certainly get a run in Galatians, as if central to Paul's argument against his opponents. As far as Paul is concerned, Abraham's life confirms that an ongoing and fruitful participation in the covenant, a genuine and worthy membership of the kingdom of God with all its associated blessings for now and forever, are dependent on the faithfulness of Christ appropriated through faith, and not works of the law.

The new perspective approach to what is a very difficult passage, is, as always, "left-of-field"; Abraham is properly part of the new inclusive covenant that has come to fruition in Christ and the Spirit, leaving behind the old and outmoded exclusive covenant of Judaism. Gentile inclusion certainly gets a run in this passage.

v] Homiletics: *Who are the children of Abraham?*

Exposition: v7-9. See notes above.

Text - 3:6

Arguments in support of the proposition:

#2. *Scripture reminds us that those who inherit God's promised new life are the spiritual descendants of Abraham, and like Abraham, they are people who rely on the faithfulness of God, v6-9.*

Paul now asks his readers to consider the example of Abraham. Abraham's true descendants are, like him, children of faith; they rely on the faithfulness of God and not works of the law. To settle this issue Paul quotes Genesis 15:6. Abraham put his trust in God's promises, and this was "credited" (counted) to him "as righteousness".

καθως "consider / so also [Abraham]" - INSOMUCH AS, JUST AS. The comparative here introduces a concrete example. It seems likely that it picks up on what is said in v5. So, possibly the paragraph ends with v9 and not v5, - Barclay, Bruce, ... v6; Moffatt, v7; Cassirer, Knox, .. v14. Possibly even standing for "thus is it written", Garlington. "Consider the case of Abraham", Cassirer. With his "just as" Paul seems to be comparing the Galatians' gift of the Spirit with Abraham's gift of righteousness.

Αβρααμ "Abraham" - Nominative subject of the verb "to believe." Presumably Abraham gets a run here because he is used by the nomists as the exemplary father of obedience. "Abraham was perfect in all his deeds with the Lord, and well-pleasing in righteousness all the days of his life", Jubilees 23:10; "he kept the law of the Most High", Sir.44:20. Yet, Paul reminds his readers that Abraham is actually the father of faith. God's favour toward him stemmed from his reliance on a promise-keeping God, not his obedience.

επιστευσεν [πιστεω] "believed in" - BELIEVED. God set/judged Abraham righteous (justified) on the basis of his faith. Faith is not a meritorious work, nor does it equal obedience in God's sight, it is just that God, in his gracious kindness, counts a person right before him on the basis of their reliance on his promises; "trust in God's work, without consideration of what is attainable by human strength", Ridderbos. Note also, for Paul, the faith that justifies is not just an act of commitment at conversion (another possible approach adopted by the judaizers), rather, faith is "an ongoing trust in the Word of God", Barnes.

τω θεου dat. "God" - . Dative of direct object after the verb "to believe"; "he had faith in God", Moffatt.

ελογισθη [λογιζομαι] aor. pas. "it was credited" - IT WAS ACCOUNTED, RECKONED. Divine passive. God chose to consider/regard Abraham as a covenant-keeping person. It has been traditionally understood that 1st century Judaism had come to understand faith as a deed that could be "accounted" as a meritorious work which earned entry to heaven, but recent investigations into 2nd temple Judaism show that this is unlikely. Abraham's faith was not depreciated, but rather viewed as a genuine dependence on God validated by his meritorious deeds. Abraham's works / deeds were viewed as the mechanism for maintaining covenant standing. It is for this reason that Paul quotes Gen.15:6 where his "hearing of faith" stands alone in securing his "accounted / reckoned righteousness" before God, long before "works of law" / meritorious deeds come into play (eg. the willing offering of Isaac, Gen.22). Given their 2nd temple nomist perspective, the judaizers obviously aligned justification with conversion (an error rampant in Christian circles today, ie., we begin by faith, but must go on in obedience - "trust and obey"). Of course, Abraham was already a child of God having responded to God's word in faith long before this moment in Genesis

chapter 15. For Paul, justification "cannot be reduced to an event which takes place for the individual at the beginning of the Christian life", Seifrid.

αυτω "to him" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage; "he [God] chose to regard him [Abraham]".

εις "as" - TO, INTO. Adverbial use of the preposition. "Chose to regard him to be right", that is, in respect/reference to his person.

δικαιοσυνην [**η**] "righteousness" - "Fully right" = covenant compliant, right before God; "Upright".

v7

Paul's law-bound opponents have implied that God's "blessing" of new life, evidenced in the gift of the Holy Spirit, comes only to those who, through circumcision and obedience to the law, align themselves with the patriarch Abraham. As far as Paul is concerned, this path leads to God's "curse". The children of Abraham are the children of faith, and it is they who are blessed.

γινωσκετε [**γινωσκω**] aor. imp./ind. "**understand**" - KNOW. Possibly imperative, as NIV, so Betz, Bruce, Fung, Garlington, Burton., but indicative seems better, so Longenecker, Martyn, Barnes. Martyn sees it as an "epistolary disclosure formula" where Paul is drawing a truth from the quote; "so then, you are bound to see that", Barclay.

αρα "then" - THEREFORE. Drawing an inference from the quotation (possibly v5); "therefore". As noted above, the inference/conclusion is unclear. See below.

οτι "that" - Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they should know.

οι "those who" - THE ONES. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase **εκ πιστεως**, "from faith", into a substantive, "the ones from faith" = "those whose justification is derived from the faithfulness of Christ" (a statement that is both restrictive and emphatic). The preposition **εκ** most likely expresses origin, "those whose identity is derived from faith", Martyn, or "on the basis of", Zerwick. Garlington and others suggest that "from" faith is a designation of those who, as Martyn has it, derive their identity from faith, as opposed to the judaizers who derive their identity from circumcision, i.e., the law. = "those from the circumcision party." There is a good possibility, therefore, that this is a technical term coined by Paul.

πιστεως [**ις εως**] gen. "**believe**" - [FROM] FAITH. The primary question we face is whose faith is Paul referring to? It is usually understood as the "faith" of the believer, but there is much to support the idea that Paul has in mind "the faith of Christ" - Christ's faithfulness, cf., 2:16. As noted in 3:11, the faith-response of the believer is a necessary complement to the "faith of Christ". The person

whose identity, as a justified person, is derived from faith, is a person who has applied both "the faith that is elicited by the message of Christ's death on [their] behalf AND the faith of Christ enacted in his death", Martyn. So, what then is the point of emphasizing that "those from faith are Abraham's children"? As noted above, Paul is answering the question, "who are the children of Abraham?" Ridderbos, so also Fung. So, Paul may be arguing that "faith, not circumcision, was Abraham's means of entry into a covenant relationship and is thus the means of entry into the New Covenant relationship. Those who by grace believe in Jesus as Messiah and Lord are members of the New Covenant", Dumbrell. As already noted, behind this arguments is the assumption that the judaizers claim Abraham as the father of law, both in his circumcision, Gen.17, and particularly in his preparedness to sacrifice Isaac, Gen.22. Against this view, Paul argues that Abraham is more properly the father of faith, Gen.15:6, and therefore the father of "the faith party", Cole, rather than "the law party".

Yet, as noted above, Paul may simply be supporting his contention that the blessings of the kingdom are ours on the basis of what Christ has done for us ("faith of Christ"), as evidenced in the gift of the Spirit, v1-5, and as evidenced in the fulfillment of the covenant promises given to Abraham, namely, the blessing of the nations, v6-9.

ἐκ "-" - **from [faith]**. Expressing origin again; .

οὗτοι "-" - **THESE ONES**. This resumptive pronoun is also emphatic; "these ones, that is, those from faith rather than from works of the law, are the sons of Abraham."

υἱοι "**children**" - [ARE] SONS. Predicate nominative. The non-sexist "children" is better than the literal "sons" - "sons and daughters." Is it "are the children", or "are like the children"?

Ἀβρααμ "**of Abraham**" - Classified as a genitive, adjectival, relational.

v8

"Given that Abraham's covenant standing was based on faith [God's faith/faithfulness and his own faith/trust], Abraham's true children are those who take their stand upon faith, v7, and scripture tells us that those children include Gentiles, those whose covenant standing, and thus blessing, like Abraham's, is faith-based (not law-based)."

ἡ γραφή [η] "**the scripture**" - THE WRITING. Probably referring to the quote to follow, Gen.12:2.

προειδουσα [προειδον] aor. part. "**foresaw**" - HAVING SEEN AHEAD OF TIME. The participle is adverbial, causal. "A figure of speech", Burton, expressing "divine foresight." A personification of God's Spirit speaking through the scriptures, so Bligh. God is fully aware of the inclusive nature of the time of

fulfillment proclaimed in the gospel, and reveals the truth of the coming day of Gentile blessing to Abraham. "And the scriptures, seeing what is now happening", Martyn.

ὅτι **"that"** - Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what Abraham saw. Martyn translates it as appositional, "namely that"

ἐκ πίστεως **"[would justify the Gentiles] by faith"** - FROM FAITH. Usually taken to express means / basis, "by means of faith", Zerwick, but better "on the ground of their faith", Bruce. As already noted the "faith" is God's faith, his faithfulness to his promises, appropriated through faith, cf., v7 and 2:16. "On the basis of faith", Martyn.

δικαιοὶ [δικαιῶ] **"would justify"** - [GOD] WOULD JUSTIFY [THE NATIONS]. Futuristic present, Longenecker, Burton; "would bring into a right relationship", Barclay. For the meaning of the verb "to justify", see 2:16. None-the-less, aspect is probably more important with the present tense expressing durative action, "it is God's abiding policy", Bruce. cf. 2:16.

προεγγεμισατο [προεαγγιζομαι] aor. **"announced the gospel in advance"** - COMMUNICATED THE NEWS BEFOREHAND. In the sense that the covenant promises to Abraham foreshadowed the inclusive nature of the gospel, the kingdom at hand.

τῷ Ἀβρααμ dat. **"to Abraham"** - Dative of indirect object.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Here introducing a direct quote that supports Paul's assertion that faith-based Gentiles are properly Abraham's children.

τα ἔθνη **"nations"** - THE NATIONS. "Gentiles" is intended, Burton.

εὐελογηθησονται [εὐελογεω] fut. pas. **"will be blessed"** - The Heb. verb is reflective, "bless themselves", i.e., the nations will bless themselves through their association with Israel. Paul's change is fairly radical and would have been contested by the judaizers, none the less the inclusive nature of the kingdom is better reflected in Paul's *interpretive gloss*. It can be argued that this text, Gen.12:3, is central to the argument posed by the judaizers and is only used by Paul for this reason. It can also be argued that Paul would be happier if the text had "justified" instead of "blessed", but then for Paul, the blessing of new life is the substance of justification. It is likely that the blessing of the Gentiles is central to Paul's own argument, even if he doesn't use the text again in this letter. Blessing in the Christian life is the issue here, blessings rightly appropriated by faith-based Gentiles, and this against the judaizers who may well accept that covenant acceptance rests on faith, but that the ongoing blessings of the covenant rest on obedience.

ἐν + dat. **"through [you]"** - IN, WITH [YOU ALL]. Here possibly expressing space/sphere, "in you shall all the nations be blessed", ESV, instrumental, expressing means, "through / by means of", as NIV, or more basal, "on the

ground of", "on the basis of what he is, or has done", Burton. So, the prepositional phrase is somewhat ambiguous. For Paul, the sense is obviously "by virtue of Abraham's faith", but for the judaizers it was probably "by virtue of Abraham's obedience". Does Paul use this quote because it is used by the judaizers?

v9

"Therefore, it is the children of faith, along with the man of faith, who receive the blessings of the covenant."

ὥστε "so" - SO THAT. Often used to introduce a purpose clause, but here obviously a consecutive clause expressing result; "with the result that"

οἱ "those who [have faith]" - THE ONES [FROM FAITH]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase ἐκ πίστεως into a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "are blessed"; "The men of faith", Betz, possibly exegetes "all the nations" = "all the Gentiles [with a faith like Abraham's]." "Those who are marked by belief [in God]", Bruce, so "believers". Probably best expressed as "the ones whose right-standing before God is derived from the faithfulness of God realized in Christ", cf. v7.

εὐλογούνται [εὐλογεω] pres. pas. "are blessed" - Again the present tense expresses durative aspect and this with a divine passive. Again, many commentators suggest that Paul would have been happier with "justified" instead of "blessed", possibly using "blessed" because it was the language of his opponents. Possibly it was their terminology, but for Paul, justification and its product, the blessing of God, cannot be separated.

συν + dat. "along with" - WITH. Expressing association; "with / by means of", Bruce. Of course, it is the children of Abraham that are blessed along with Abraham.

πίστῳ adj. "[the man] of faith" - FAITHFUL, TRUSTWORTHY [ABRAHAM]. Here though, "believing"; "the believing man", Bruce = "Abraham the believer", Betz.

3:10-14

4. Arguments in support of the proposition, 3:1-4:7

iii] The third argument

Argument

From 3:1 to 4:11 Paul sets out to show, from scripture, how the gospel, of itself, apart from law-obedience, facilitates new life in Christ. In our passage for study, Paul outlines the third argument in support of his proposition: It is simply not possible to inherit the blessing of new life, in all its fullness, through obedience to the law. The blessing of new life is a product of Jesus' faithfulness to God's will, not our own, v10-14.

Issues

i] Context: See 3:1-5.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The third argument in support of the proposition:*

Proposition:

The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ.

Supporting argument:

#3. It is not possible to inherit the blessing of new life through obedience to the law, 3:10-14.

Christ supersedes the Law, v10-14;

The curse of the Law ends life, v10-12;

New life in the Spirit is found in Christ, v13-14.

iv] Interpretation:

#3. The third argument: In his third argument, 3:10-14, Paul establishes from scripture that the promised blessing of life is not a product of law-obedience. All that law-obedience does is inculcate the curse of the law, v10. The promised new life is not facilitated by a faithful attention to the law, rather, it rests on the faithfulness of Christ, Hab.2:4, v11, and this because the commandments must be "done" to find life in them, Lev.18:5, v12. The simple fact is that the promised Abrahamic blessings, blessings now realized in this present moment through the gift of the Holy Spirit and experienced by Gentile believers as well as Jewish believers, rests wholly on Christ's atonement, v13-14.

Is Justification about Reconciliation, or something more? This passage is central to the reformed argument that a person is reconciled to

God wholly on the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ appropriated through faith. Yet, Paul's argument is not about reconciliation, given that his opponents agree with him on how a person is reconciled to God. All parties in this debate agree on how a person becomes a Christian, but disagree on how they go forward in the Christian life. Paul's argument is that a person's faith in Christ's faithfulness ("faith of Christ" = Christ's willing commitment to the promises and commands of God the Father, even unto death = faith / faithfulness of Christ) facilitates the full appropriation of the promised Abrahamic blessing of new life, not their faithful obedience to the law.

Note that new perspective commentators struggle with this passage because Paul certainly doesn't define the law in terms of an identifier of Jewish exclusivism. Wright's argument that "the curse of the law" is the exile, leaves us here with Christ undertaking the exile for us, but then, what about our sin?

v] Homiletics: *Delivered and blessed*

In our reading today there are four important statement on how Christ, through his death, has delivered us from the curse of the law, and has obtained for us the totality of God's promised blessings:

- Christ submitted to the curse, pronounced by the law of God, on those who do not render perfect obedience. Although Jesus was actually the obedient son of God, he suffered as if he were a disobedient son.

- Christ's submission to the curse was "for us" (for our sake). He suffered the consequence of the curse on our behalf - instead of us. As Luther put it, "forsaken for me".

- By means of his submission, Christ has "redeemed" those under the condemnation of the law's curse. By fulfilling the law's demands on our behalf, both keeping it and submitting to its punitive punishment ("curse"), we are set free, liberated, from its punitive claims over us.

- The ultimate purpose of Christ's redemptive work is so that the promised "blessing", once offered to Abraham, might now extend to all the world, v14. This blessing is encapsulated in one word, "life". Our right-standing before God, by grace through faith, carries with it the fullness of God's blessings, even to the indwelling of his being.

Thus we sing, "Amazing grace", for in Christ Jesus there is now no condemnation, just life eternal.

Text - 3:10

Arguments in support of the proposition:

#3. *Scripture also makes it clear that it is not possible to inherit the blessing of new life, in all its fullness, through obedience to the law. Rather, the blessing is a product of Jesus' faithfulness to God's will, v10-14.*

Paul now quotes three Old Testament passages (Deut.22:26a, Hab.2:4b, Lev.18:5b) in support of his proposition that a person who is set right before God on the basis of Jesus' faithfulness, appropriated through faith, freely receives the blessing of new life in Christ, and this apart from obedience to the law. Law-obedience for blessing serves only to evoke God's curse (expose sin and thus prompt condemnation). It is the righteous by faith who live.

γαρ "- / for" - FOR. More reason than cause; introducing a counter argument to v7-9 / a logical connective / a stitching device; "everyone, however, who is involved in trying to keep the law", Phillips; "on the other hand", NEB.

ὅσοι pro. "**all who**" - AS MANY AS. Nominative subject of the verb to-be; "All those who".

ἐξ + gen. "**rely on**" - FROM. Possibly with the sense "on the basis of", so "rely on / depend on", but a more technical sense is probably intended, as of a "member of a certain class", Zerwick. A similar construction is used by Paul with reference to "those from circumcision", meaning, "those who are members of the circumcision party", as with "those from faith", i.e., members of the faith party, or as Martyn has it, "those whose identity is derived from faith" (their faith in Christ and Christ's faith/faithfulness). So here, the law party, "those whose identity is derived from observance of the law", Martyn.

νομου [ος] gen. "**[observing] the law / [works] of the law**" - [WORKS] OF LAW. The anarthrous genitive "of law" is adjectival, expegetic / of definition, limiting by specifying the "works", law type works/deeds, "obedience demanded by the law of Moses." Probably a descriptor of nomism; "performance will win (better "maintain/improve") acceptance (approval) before God", Bruce.

ὑπο "**[are] under**" - Here expressing subordination; "under".

καταραν [α] "**a curse**" - The divine curse prompted by covenant noncompliance. New perspective commentators argue that the curse only applies to an intentional, defiant noncompliance, although this seems unlikely. It is true that the sacrificial system only really covered inadvertent sin, but the perspective of the scriptures is that all Israel is under the curse (people and nation) and that God will have to supply a sacrifice worthy enough to turn aside the divine wrath (note how Burton does not like the link between the curse and divine judgment). The noun is anarthrous, giving the sense "curse opposed to blessing", Hendriksen.

ὅτι "[as it is written]" - [FOR IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN] THAT. Here introducing a dependent statement, quotation.

επικαταρατος adj. "cursed" - CURSED *is*. Predicate adjective. Under the wrath of God for sin.

πας "[is] everyone" - ALL. As with "everything" (found in the LXX), the "everyone" is not found in the MT. Paul is generalizing and so extending the legal requirements of the law, something that Jesus was always doing. Paul's opponents reflect 2nd temple Judaism and as such they know that covenant inclusion is not gained by obedience (legalism), but is certainly maintained by obedience (nomism). Of course, perfection is impossible, so mercy and forgiveness is not foreign to a judaizer. Yet, Paul is not going to let them get away so easily. For "works of law" to work to restrain sin and progress holiness requires perfect obedience - "everyone" and "everything". Without perfection, the tool of law-obedience serves only to expose the human condition of sin and inculcate the curse of the law, namely divine judgment.

ουκ εμμενει [εμμενω] pres. "does not continue" - [WHO] DOES NOT ABIDE, CONTINUE. The durative sense of the present tense and the verb itself, "continue", in the quote from Deut.27:26, reminds us again that the maintenance of covenant standing for blessing is the issue at hand. "Persevere in", Zerwick.

τοιο ποιησαι [ποιεω] aor. inf. "to do" - A genitive articular infinitive. Translated in the NIV as a complementary infinitive, completing the sense of "continue", but it could well introduce a purpose clause, "in order that", or a result clause, "with the result that"; "cursed is everyone who is not steadfast in observing all the things written in the book of the law, so as to do them", Martyn. Possibly serving as a type of Latin modal ablative, "by doing them", Bligh. Possibly, "cursed is every who does not adhere to, and practise them", Cassirer.

τοις γεγραμμενοις [γραφο] dat. perf. pas. part. "[everything] written" - [BY/IN ALL] THE THINGS HAVING BEEN WRITTEN. The participle can be classified as adjectival, attributive, limiting the substantive adjective "all = everything." The dative may be taken as instrumental, "does not abide by all the things written in the Book of the Law", ESV, or local, sphere, "does not abide in all the things written ..."

εν + dat. "in [the Book of the Law]" - IN [THE SCROLL OF THE LAW]. Local, expressing space. The genitive του νομου, "of the law", is adjectival, idiomatic / content, "the book *which contains* the law." The whole law is obviously intended, not just the new perspective "boundary markers" of Jewish exclusivism. "Book of the law" is a little confusing since Paul is referring to the totality of God's law recorded in the scriptures so "everyone who doesn't obey everything in the law is under a curse", CEV.

v11

"The person who is right with God (articular adj. = the set/judged right before God type of person) is a person who is grounded on the faithfulness of God. Such a person will experience God's promised new life". Habakkuk 2:4. The traditional interpretation of this quote is obviously well known to Paul. The "just" person, the person who is right (in the right with God and thus in a right relationship with God) is someone like Abraham. Such a person is "right" because they rely on God's faithfulness, they trust his promises, even in the face of a Babylonian invasion where everything seems lost. Such a person "will live", they will experience God's putting things right, they will experience all the eschatological blessings of the realized / inaugurated kingdom of God. The means of being set right before God, and thus of experiencing Gods setting things right, is faith in the faithfulness of God.

Again, the obvious problem we face with this text is the meaning of "faith", given that the LXX has "my faith" = God's faithfulness. Paul has dropped the "my", but surely not to deny that God's faithfulness (realized in the faithfulness of Christ) is the ground upon which a person is right before God, but to allow the person's faith/trust to be included in the equation. If this approach is correct, we are best to reject the NIV translation and opt for "the righteous by faith will live"; "the righteous [those right before God] by faith [on the ground of God's faithfulness appropriated through faith] will live [experience God's setting everything right]". By the time Paul gets to write Romans, this verse has become his key text from scripture in support of his understanding of the gospel, cf., Rom.1:16-17. This verse certainly encapsulates the argument that Paul is running in Galatians, as it does in Romans, namely, that new life in Christ is not facilitated by obedience to the law, but rather, it is the product of being set right with God on the basis of God's faithfulness realized in Christ.

ὅτι "-" - [BUT/AND] THAT. Here introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what "[is] evident"; "it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law."

δηλον adj. "**clearly**" - IT IS EVIDENT. Serving as a predicate adjective.

δικαιουται [**δικαιω**] pres. pas. "**is justified**" - [NO ONE] IS BEING JUSTIFIED. For the meaning of "justified" see 2:16. The present tense, being durative, with the [divine] passive, gives the sense "is being set right". In reformed circles this "setting right" is usually expressed in forensic terms, so "count / treat as right", Barrett, "judged in the right", Dumbrell, but what God declares right, is right, so "is set right."

παρα + dat. "**before**" - WITH [GOD]. Expressing sphere, "in the sight of, before"; "with God" = "in the sight of God", AV - of "a participant whose viewpoint is relevant to an event", LN.

εν νομῳ "**by the law**" - IN LAW. Instrumental, as NIV. Obviously short for "by [means of] works of the law", Bruce.

ὅτι "**because**" - THAT. Here causal, as NIV. "Because of the fact stated in the scriptures that"

ὁ δίκαιος [ος] "**the righteous**" - Obviously "the righteous before God", those right before God.

ζῆσεται [ζω] fut. "**will live**" - A difficult term often explained either in an ethical sense, or an eternal sense. Yet, as the promised life of the covenant, the life of the kingdom, it has all the now/not yet qualities of the kingdom. It is the eschatological life now realized by those who have discovered that "the kingdom of God is at hand." So, "will live", is just as much ethical (possessing a new heart within) in the *now* as it is possessing eternity in the *not yet*. More particularly, it is clear that Paul sees "will live" in much the same terms of "being set right"; both refer to the same reality - new life in Christ.

ἐκ "**by [faith]**" - OUT OF, FROM. Source / origin leaning toward cause / basis, "because of", "by reason of", "as a result of", "by means of"/ "on the basis of". The ground of this "life" is not works of the law, but the faithfulness of Christ appropriated through faith. See ἐκ 2:16.

πίστεως [ις εως] "**faith**" - As already noted, particularly with reference to 2:16, usually translated "faith in Jesus Christ", the word does not necessarily mean "to believe", but can mean, among other things, "trustworthiness", so the sense is probably "Jesus Christ's faithfulness [to God]", even "God's faithfulness revealed in Jesus Christ", so Barth, Hebert. Taking the word to mean "faithfulness [of God]" here does not undermine the necessary response of our faith / trust / belief in God / God's faithfulness revealed in Christ. In fact, both ideas may be present. "Faithfulness", Howard.

v12

By quoting Lev.18:5, Paul "shows how one is not justified before God (by law)", Bruce. Again, Paul exegetes the verse before quoting it. Given that the verse seemingly counters Habakkuk 2:4, it is likely that it was used as a rebuttal text against Paul's thesis drawn from Habakkuk 2:4. So, Paul jumps in first, using the verse to argue that law-obedience ("law") does not rest on / find its origin in God's faithfulness ("faith") / in what God does for us in the fulfillment of his promises, but by implication, it rests on our own effort, the doing of it, and of course, it must be done perfectly to possess life, cf., Rom.10:5. Of course, there is debate over whether it was, certainly for an Old Testament saint, possible to

obey the law and thus "live". For Paul, the law enacts the curse and this because it cannot be done. Jesus drives this truth home on numerous occasions, cf., Luke 10:25-37, "do this and you will live", v28, but then who can love like a Good Samaritan?

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, introducing the next step in the argument, although Betz opts for adjunctive; "also".

εκ "**based on [faith]**" - [THE LAW IS NOT OF] FROM. As already noted, best understood as "on the basis of", but "from" is a possibility. The law is "not grounded in", Zerwick, "does not lean on / does not find its strength in [faith] as a way of redemption", Ridderbos.

πιστεως [ις εως] "**faith**" - Usually understood here as "trust", but again "faithfulness", as of God's faithfulness in fulfilling his promises and of our of faith in the faithfulness of God.

αλλα "**on the contrary**" - BUT. Adversative, as NIV.

ο ποιησας [ποιεω] aor. part. "**the man who does**" - THE ONE HAVING DONE, PRACTISED. Participle serves as a substantive and the aorist expresses punctiliar / completed action.

αυτα "**these things**" - Direct object of the participle "having done." The commandments, precepts, of the Mosaic law.

ζησεται [ζωω] fut. mid. "**will live**" - SHALL LIVE. The middle voice is used by convention with a future active verb. For an Old Testament saint "live" simply means to live a good, healthy, happy and long life, but for a New Testament saint we "live" in Christ, the source of life eternal, the fullness of life.

εν + dat. "**by [them]**" - IN [THEM]. Possibly expressing space/sphere, "in the doing of them", or better, instrumental, expressing means, as NIV.

v13

Paul now explains how a person is set right before God (justified) on the basis of Christ's faithfulness, 2:16, given that law-obedience only serves to inculcate the curse of the law (it draws out our sinfulness and places us under God's condemnation). In his faithful obedience to the will of God, Christ took the curse upon himself, redeeming those under the curse.

εξηγορασεν [εξαγοραζω] aor. "**redeemed**" - [CHRIST] BOUGHT BACK, REDEEMED, RANSOM / DELIVERED. A technical term used for buying the freedom of slaves, so of Christ buying the freedom of those confined by, and facing execution under, the curse of the law. The aorist is punctiliar, describing the nature of Christ's once and for all act on the cross. The prefix is perfective, expressing the idea of completion, so "completely redeem". Redemption terminology is intended rather than that of facilitating an escape, eg., "Christ bought us freedom", REB.

ἡμᾶς "us" - Direct object of the verb "to buy back." Who are the "us"? Presumably Jewish Christians are in Paul's mind, as in 2:15, although Gentiles are similarly under the curse of the law. In our case, the revelation of nature, rather than the Torah, is our executioner, Rom.1:20.

ἐκ + gen. "from" - Here expressing separation; "away from."

της καταρας [α] gen. "the curse" - Genitive after ἐκ, "from". Presumably "the curse that the law brings". Some suggest that it is the law itself, but it is more likely the divine punishment, outlined in the covenant, destined for those who disobey the law, eg., the blessings and cursings outlined in Deuteronomy.

του νομου [ος] gen. "of the law" - The genitive may be treated as subjective, or idiomatic / source; "the curse *that issues from* the law."

γενομενος [γινωμαι] aor. part. "by becoming" - HAVING BECOME. The participle is probably adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, "by means of", as NIV, although temporal is possible, "when he became a curse for us", even possibly causal, "because" ; "Christ has bought us free from the curse of the law inasmuch as he became a curse for us", Berkeley. Ridderbos opts for both temporal and causal. The curse on those who fail to obey the law entails divine wrath. Christ, on our behalf, expends that wrath on himself, and since he is the one just man, the grave cannot contain him. Those in Christ similarly cannot be contained. Although not defined here, Christ's death is most likely propitiatory, "a curse offering", Betz, although the sense may be that Christ takes the place of the sinner.

ὑπερ + gen. "for [us]" - [A CURSE] INSTEAD OF / FOR THE SAKE OF, ON BEHALF OF [US]. Here expressing representation, or advantage / benefit for, so "for us / for our sake", or substitution, "in our stead", Zerwick.

ὅτι "for [it is written]" - THAT. Here causal; "because".

επικαταρατος adj. "Cursed *is* [every one]" - Verbal / predicate adjective. Deut.21:23. Both LXX and MT have "An accursed of God is ..." Note, Paul again exegetes the verse before quoting it. The point of the quote is that the form of Jesus' death indicates that it was the product of the divine curse, a curse he did not deserve and therefore a curse taken for others.

ὁ κρεμαμενος [κρεμαννυμι] pres. mid. part. "who is hung" - [ALL] THE ONES HAVING HUNG. The participle may be classified as adjectival, attributive, limiting the substantive adjective "all = everyone."

επι + gen. "on" - Spatial; "on, upon."

ξυλου [ον] "a tree / a pole" - A TREE, WOOD, POST. Obviously the cross is in Paul's mind.

v14

Finally, the punch-line of Paul's argument. A person who is set right before God is a person who lives, i.e., a person who is redeemed is a person who inherits the promised blessing of "life" (the kingdom of God), a promise for both Jew and Gentile, a promise which, in the present moment, entails the gift of Christ's indwelling, compelling, Spirit.

"**He redeemed us**" - Added for meaning by the NIV. "This happened so that"

ἵνα + subj. "**in order that**" - that. Possibly introducing a purpose clause, "in order that", "and the purpose of it all was that Abraham", Cassirer, so Ridderbos, Fung, Bligh, Bruce, Martyn, Garlington, Betz, Dumbrell, Longenecker, Guthrie, yet a consecutive clause expressing result seems more likely, "with the result that ...", "thus the Gentiles are given the happiness promised through Abraham", Junkins, "so that the blessings of Abraham might come ... so that", NJB, cf. NAB, Barclay, Williams, Barnes. Note that there are two *hina* clauses in the sentence. The second could be "subordinate in logical and temporal terms to the first", Dumbrell, but it is more likely that both are coordinate with each other such that the verse "states the results of Christ's death in a two-fold form", Guthrie; "this happened with the result that / so that / such that" and with the result that / so that"

ἡ εὐλογία [α] "**the blessing**" - "The promise to Abraham is one of blessing", Guthrie, and in the context of Galatians, the blessing is "life", life in all its dimensions. As far as the here and now is concerned, it is a life lived in the Spirit. It could be argued, particularly from v6-9, that the blessing is justification, but it is more likely that it is the "will live" of Habakkuk 2:4, cf. v11, i.e., life in the kingdom of God, the promise of a kingdom encapsulating God's covenant with Abraham, a blessing for the whole world, not just Jews, but also Gentiles. Although, for Paul, the blessing entails the substance of our justification.

του Αβρααμ gen. "**given to Abraham**" - OF ABRAHAM. The genitive is adjectival, usually taken as verbal, objective, but descriptive, idiomatic, is possible; "the blessing which was promised to Abraham", TH.

γενηται [γίνομαι] aor. subj. "**might come**" - "Might come to rest upon the Gentiles", Cassirer.

εις "**to [the Gentiles]**" - TO, INTO [THE NATIONS]. Spatial / goal. Possibly of the blessing (inheritance) coming to the Gentiles, so Turner, or simply just taking a local sense, that "salvation goes out from the Jews to the Gentiles", Bligh.

εν + dat. "**through [Christ Jesus]**" - IN [CHRIST JESUS]. The NIV opts for an instrumental / agency sense, but cause is possible, "because of", as is a local sense expressing incorporative union; "in *union with* Christ Jesus".

ἵνα + subj. "**so that**" - THAT. The NIV takes the first *hina* clause as final, expressing purpose, and the second as consecutive, expressing consequence, see above.

διὰ + gen. "**by [faith]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [FAITH]. Instrumental; through the faithfulness of Jesus' death on our behalf, cf., 2:16, "the faith of Christ".

λαβωμεν [λαμβάνω] aor. subj. "**we might receive**" - Note the 1st person plural; "so that all of us, Jews and Gentiles, might receive"

την επαγγελιαν [α] "**the promise**" - THE PROMISE. Accusative direct object of the verb "to receive." Either "a promise", or "that which is promised", ie., "the promised blessing", Bligh.

του πνευματος [α ατος] gen. "**of the Spirit**" - The genitive is adjectival exegetical / of definition, limiting by specifying the "promise / gift"; it is the promise which consists of the gift of the Spirit; "the promised Spirit", NJB, NEB, Moffatt; the Spirit is the substance of the promise, certainly in the here and now.

3:15-18

4. Arguments in support of the proposition, 3:1-4:7

iv] The promise is independent of the gift of the law

Argument

In this passage, Paul argues that the promised blessings that are part of God's agreement ("covenant") with Abraham, blessings even now experienced by those who rest in faith on the faithfulness of Christ (his death on our behalf), depend wholly on God's promise. The law of Moses, given some four hundred and thirty years later, does not detail supplementary requirements necessary for a believer's access to the promised blessings. The promise stands in its own right, apart from the law.

Issues

i] Context: See 3:1-5.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The fourth argument in support of the proposition:*

Proposition:

The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ.

Supporting argument:

#4. The promise is independent of the gift of the law, 3:15-18;

The irrevocable nature of the covenant, v15-16;

The seniority of the covenant, v17-18.

iv] Interpretation:

#4. The fourth argument: In this his fourth argument, Paul makes the point that the promise, a promise encapsulated in the covenant with Abraham and now realized in the gift of new life in Christ, is independent of the Mosaic covenant such that "the law does not have the power to specify and thus to alter the promise", Martyn. The giving of the law four hundred and thirty years after the establishment of the Abrahamic covenant, does not supplement, nor replace, God's agreement with Abraham.

The Logic of Paul's Argument: Luther observes that Paul's argument "is based on the analogy of a man's will", an argument that references "common human practice", Betz. The analogy that a human legal agreement is irrevocable, serves to establish the point that a divine agreement cannot be anything less. Paul's argument here is sometimes

treated as less than substantial, but it is actually quite weighty. God's covenant with Abraham entails a promise, the substance of the promised "blessing" is "life", a life lived in the fullness of a new relationship with God, the kingdom of God, "eternal life", "Christ in me". This promise is realized in "the seed", in Christ, through whose "faith/faithfulness" the promise is fully appropriated on our behalf. Just as a human testamentary agreement cannot be annulled, or added to, so God's agreement with Abraham cannot be annulled, or added to, and certainly not by the giving of the Mosaic law many years later. The promise is independent of the law, thus, the inheritance is ours in Christ apart from the law. Of course, Paul's argument serves to counter the argument of the judaizers who, although accepting the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises in the faithfulness of Christ, none-the-less saw the ongoing appropriation of covenant blessings in the Christian life as facilitated by a faithful application of God's law. For the judaizers, the Mosaic covenant seemingly supplemented the Abrahamic covenant. For Paul, the Abrahamic covenant stands in its own right such that the blessings of the Christian life are ours in Christ, independent of the law.

v] Homiletics: *Jesus is the full deal*

"In the end there's just you and Jesus", Luxford Matumbo.

In my early days at theological college, I can't remember Luxford ever saying very much. He was an African student in a noisy testosterone driven Australian theological college, so he didn't get much of a chance in the push and shove of it all. Yet, to this day I can remember his one and only contribution. I mean, what more is there to say?

Here we are, inheritors of God's promise to Abraham, a promise that comes with no strings attached. In the end, it's the promise of life, life in all its fullness, life with God, "eternal life". That life is fully ours in Jesus. When we place our fading self in his gentle arms, all the promised blessings of eternity are ours with no strings attached.

Body: a) v15-16, b) v17-18.

Text - 3:15

Arguments in support of the proposition:

4. *The promise, a promise encapsulated in the covenant with Abraham and now realized in the gift of new life in Christ, is independent of the gift of the law, 3:15-18.*

i] The Irrevocable nature of the covenant, v15-16. Given that a human legal agreement is irrevocable, then obviously a divine agreement cannot be anything less, v15.

αδελφοι [ος] "brothers" - Nominative used as a vocative. A term that appears in Paul's letters and not found elsewhere with his particular meaning. Obviously a technical term, similar to the socialist "comrade".

κατα + acc. "[let me take] an example from [everyday life]" - [I SPEAK] AS/ACCORDING TO [A MAN]. Expressing a standard; "in accordance with." Paul uses this phrase to indicate that what follows is an analogy; "I will use an everyday example to explain what I mean", CEV.

ὅμως "just as so it is in this case" - NEVERTHELESS. Adversative. Here possibly the earlier, less common meaning of "also / likewise", establishing a comparison, cf., 1Cor.14:7-9, ie., as God's covenant with Abraham cannot be annulled, or added to likewise / in like manner / "in the same way" (Zerwick) a human will cannot be annulled or added to. None-the-less, the more common meaning expressing contrast, "nevertheless", is also possible, although it would seem that the word has been misplaced; "though it be a man's testament, nevertheless no one annuls it once it is proved", Bruce.

αθετει [αθετω] pres. "can set aside" - [A COVENANT HAVING BEEN CONFIRMED OF MAN NO ONE] ANNULS, SETS ASIDE, INVALIDATES, NULLIFIES. "Render ineffective", Bligh.

επιδιατασσεται [επιδιατασσομαι] pres. "add to" - [OR] ADDS TO *it*. The present tense is probably gnomic, expressing a universal truth. "Remake a settlement", Bligh, but better, "add a codicil", Zerwick, cf. Betz.

ανθρωπου [ος] gen. "[a] human [covenant]" - A COVENANT, AGREEMENT [OF MAN]. The genitive "of men" is adjectival, attributive, limiting "covenant". Paul is possibly using the word in the more general sense of a legal will - "the last will and testament by which a man disposes of his property in favour of heirs", Bligh, so also Fung. Yet, given that the word carries so much theological baggage, and here falls in a passage which concerns God's covenant with Abraham, it is hard to argue that Paul would be using the word in its secular sense of a will or testament, so Burton. Still, a general sense is more likely and now accepted by most modern commentators, either of a legal contract, "a settlement made by a man", MM, "an agreement made for the disposal of property ... cannot be cancelled by anyone", Guthrie, so also Ridderbos, or a will / testamentary disposition, "nobody annuls or adds a codicil to a testament of a man, once it has been ratified", Betz, so also Bruce...

κεκυρωμενην [κυρωω] perf. pas. part. "that has been duly established" - HAVING BEEN CONFIRMED, LEGALLY RATIFIED, VERIFIED, VALIDATED. The participle serves as an adjective, attributive, limiting "covenant", as NIV. "Ratified", NRSV.

v16

As a human testamentary disposition cannot be altered or superseded, so it is with the testament made between God and Abraham. This verse is sometimes treated as "a parenthetical elaboration of verse 15", TH. It does seem though that the first half of the verse develops the second half of the comparison commenced in v15. Clearly, the second half of the verse is a parenthesis where Paul underlines the singularity of "seed". "(Note in passing that the text does not have the plural 'seeds' but uses the singular 'seed', meaning Christ)", cf., Phillips.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating the next step in the argument and presumably serving to relate the point made of a normal testamentary disposition to that made between God and Abraham. "That is how it is with the promises God made to Abraham", CEV.

αι επαγγελιαι [α] "**the promises**" - Nominative subject of the verb "to speak." The use of the plural here is interesting, given that Paul usually has "promise" singular. The promise was a package of promises, land, people and a blessing to the world = the kingdom = life. The plural may also reflect the fact that the promise is repeated on a number of occasions, so Bligh. To avoid confusion, we are probably best served by using the singular. The "promise" is that part of the covenant agreement which is the focus of Paul's argument at the moment - the promised blessing/s, "life". "The promise of God was settled on Abraham", Bruce.

ερρεθησαν [ειπον] aor. pas. "**were spoken**" - WERE SPOKEN [TO ABRAHAM]. "The promise God gave to Abraham", as with "the covenant God made with Abraham."

τω σπερματι [α ατος] dat. "**to [his] seed**" - [AND] TO THE SEED. As with "Abraham", dative of indirect object. Although Paul makes an issue of the singular and plural he would have known that the singular of "seed" properly takes a collective meaning, but, advancing his argument within rabbinical rules of debate, he points out that it can rightly be taken as singular, and its singularity finds fulfillment in Christ. The singular is important and needs to be underlined in English, namely, that the promise was ultimately intended for "one of his [Abraham's] descendants", TH, namely, Christ.

αυτου gen. pro. "**his**" - OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

ου λεγει [λεγω] pres. "**The Scripture does not say**" - IT DOES NOT SAY [AND TO THE SEEDS]. The subject is presumably "Scripture", but possibly "God" (Lightfoot, "either"), even the promise itself; "it does not say", Cassirer, "the promise does not address plural descendants but a singular descendent."

ὡς + gen. "**meaning [many people]**" - AS CONCERNING [MANY, BUT] AS CONCERNING [ONE]. Here expressing a characteristic quality; "the promise does not refer to 'seeds' as about many, but 'seed' as about one."

ἐπι + gen. "**to**" - Reference / respect, "about / concerning", seems the intended sense, although this is an unusual sense for the preposition; "It does not say, 'And to offsprings', referring to many, but referring to one, 'And to your offspring', who is Christ", ESV. BDAG suggests perspective.

ἀλλ [ἀλλὰ] "**but**" - Adversative, as NIV.

ὅς masc. pro. "**who [is Christ]**" - [AND TO THE SEED OF YOU] WHO [IS CHRIST]. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. The antecedent "seed" is neuter so it should be "the one seed which is Christ", but obviously the pronoun has been attracted to the gender of its complement, namely, "Christ".

v17

ii) The seniority of the covenant, v17-18. Paul now explains the point he is making, namely, that the Abrahamic covenant stands in its own right and has not been replaced, or supplemented, by the Mosaic covenant (the giving of the law), v17-18. Of course, this means that the judaizers have misunderstood the function of the law, as detailed in the Mosaic covenant. Paul will develop this issue in his next argument, 3:19-25.

τοῦτο δε λεγω "**what I mean is this:**" - "Now what I am contending is this", Cassirer.

ὁ νομος [ος] "**the law**" - THE LAW. Nominative subject of the verb "to annul." The law of Moses, Torah.

γεγονως [γινομαι] perf. part. "**introduced**" - HAVING COME INTO BEING [AFTER FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS]. The participle, forming the rather long participial phrase, "having come into being after four hundred and thirty years", is adjectival, modifying "the law". The unwieldy nature of the phrase is possibly derogatory, a little poke in the eye for the law-party. "The law which has come into force", Zerwick.

οὐκ ακυροι [ακυρω] pres. "**does not set aside**" - DOES NOT ANNUL, CANCEL, MAKE INVALID. "The law does not invalidate the covenant", Martyn.

διαθηκην [η] "**the covenant**" - A TESTAMENT, LEGAL AGREEMENT. Accusative direct object of the verb "to annul." Being anarthrous, without an article, possibly indicates that Paul is drawing a general truth about divine agreements - once made, they stick.

προκεκυρωμενην [προκυρω] perf. pas. part. "**previously established**" - HAVING BEEN PREVIOUSLY CONFIRMED, RATIFIED. The perfect expressing the ongoing status of the covenant while the participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "covenant"; "a covenant which has already been made by God."

υπο + gen. "**by [God]**" - BY, FROM [THE GOD]. Expressing agency, as NIV. Variant addition, an "interpretative gloss", Metzger, **εις Χριστον**, "to / into Christ"; "the covenant, that was confirmed by God in Christ."

εις το καταργησαι [καταργεω] aor. inf. "**and thus do away with**" - TO = SO AS TO ABOLISH, MAKE OF NO EFFECT, NULLIFY [THE PROMISE]. This preposition with the articular infinitive often expresses purpose, "in order that", and sometimes even result, "with the result that / so that"; "so as to (in such a way as to) render the promise null and void", Cassirer, BDF.391.3. Bligh suggests it is neither, but serves to restate the main clause, i.e., serving as an appositional substantive clause: "the law does not invalidate the covenant; it does not frustrate the promise". Usually, **του** + the articular infinitive is used to express purpose and it is possible that **εις** + the articular infinitive is being used instead of a more general *hina* clause. "Frustrate" seems a little weak, but "nullify" is a bit too strong. Paul may well have something like "interfere" in mind; "it does not override the promise made to Abraham" (an absurd notion).

v18

To conclude his argument, Paul reinforces the point he has made in v17, namely that the covenant blessings are independent of the law. He does this with a hypothetical argument demolished by a fact of history. "For you see" (**γαρ**), if the giving of the law necessarily adds something for the appropriation of the covenant promise, then the "inheritance" (the acquisition of the promised blessings) does not truly rest on a divine promise ("an unconditional grant of God", Ridderbos). "Yet" (but **δε**), as Paul's readers knew well "the inheritance was something that God gave to Abraham" (Martyn) and this being the case, the latter-arriving law neither replaces, nor contributes to the acquisition of that inheritance.

γαρ "**for**" - More reason than cause; establishing a hypothetical argument. Possibly a general "and indeed", but better "the real reason for Paul's conclusion in v17", Longenecker; "you see, if [then], but", NJB.

ει "**if**" - IF, *as is not the case*, [THE INHERITANCE *is* BY LAW, *then* IT IS NO LONGER BY PROMISE]. Introducing a conditional clause, 2nd class, contrary-to-fact, although **αν** in the apodosis is missing, as it is in 25% of examples, and the verb is unstated, eg. "**if** the inheritance came by the law, then it would no longer be", Cassirer. See below for "came by".

ἡ κληρονομία [α] "**inheritance**" - The promised covenant blessings which, of course, for Paul and his opponents are, by now, spiritualized. "Life", which for Paul is "Christ in me", encapsulates the Abrahamic covenant promises of a people, a land and a blessing to the world. In the end it is "all the benefits of God's work of salvation", Betz.

εκ "**depends on [law]**" - OUT OF FROM [LAW]. As noted, there is no verb and so the preposition is left to express the action. This preposition, followed by a genitive, is likely to express source / origin, the idea that the inheritance comes out of law, is sourced from, finds its origin in law, is based upon the law. Cassirer and others, as noted above, opts for an instrumental sense, "comes by the law", and this can easily move to express cause / basis, "the reason for", Ridderbos, "is based on the law", Bruce, Longenecker, "rests on the law", Goodspeed, "depends on observing the law", Knox. It is unlikely that the judaizers would argue that law replaces ("annuls") grace (they would likely view the law as a codicil to the covenant, a necessary contribution to its proper realization, whereas Paul argues that the grace of God operative in the Abrahamic covenant is independent of law. "If our inheritance is conditioned by law, then it is a meaningless promise", Junkins.

ουκετι "[then it] **no longer**" - Not temporal, but logical, so Lightfoot, but a temporal sense can be argued; "then it does not depend fully on a promise / grace"; "then it makes God's promise / grace as though it were nothing", TH.

εξ [εκ] + gen. "**depends on [the promise]**" - OUT OF, FROM [PROMISE]. See above.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, here indicating a step to a counter point, as NIV. "But in point of fact ...", Barclay.

κεχαρισται [χαριζομαι] perf. mid. "**[God] in his grace gave**" - [GOD HAS BESTOWED, GRANTED *it* [TO ABRAHAM BY PROMISE]. The word is a derivative of "grace" and has a technical usage in law, eg. "deed something by will", Ridderbos. The perfect may express the ongoing consequences of God's grace to Abraham, so Bruce, but as Turner notes, the perfect in a narrative is aoristic, so "was graciously given", Barclay.

ιτ - "The inheritance".

τω **Αβρααμ** "**to Abraham**" - Dative of indirect object. Emphatic position in the clause.

δια "**through**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF. Taking an instrumental sense, expressing means.

παγγελιας [α] "**a promise**" - The promise, God's promise to bless, his covenant mercy, his grace (realized in the faithfulness of Christ), is the means by which the inheritance is attained. This fact cannot be altered by the giving of the law since God's word, his promise, stands eternally.

3:19-24

4. Arguments in support of the proposition, 3:1-4:7

v] The function of the Mosaic law is to promote death until everything is put right by Christ

Argument

In this passage, Paul sets out to explain the divine purpose of the Old Testament law. In arguing for the priority of faith against those believers who saw law-obedience as a necessary requirement for the blessing of new life in Christ, Paul points out that the Mosaic law was given as a temporary measure to address Israel's rebellion against God; it was given "to condemn, enclose and punish", Timothy George.

Issues

i] Context: See 3:1-5.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The fifth argument in support of the proposition:*

Proposition:

The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ.

Supporting argument:

#5. The function of the Mosaic law is to promote death until everything is put right by Christ, 3:19-24;

The law is inferior to grace, v19-20:

Given to expose the true nature of Israel's sin;

It was a temporary interim dispensation;

It was a secondary revelation;

The function of the law, v21-22:

It was set to fail, v21;

It condemns to save, v22;

Summary, v23-24.

iv] Interpretation:

#5. The fifth argument: In 3:19-24 Paul outlines his fifth argument in support of his proposition that a person, who is in the right with God on the basis of their faith in the faithfulness of Christ, is freely able to appropriate the fullness of God's promised new life apart from law-obedience. Here Paul sets out to explain the role of the Mosaic law in relation to the Abrahamic covenant and in so doing counters the notion that the Mosaic covenant, specifically Law, supplements the Abrahamic

covenant, such that the promised blessings of the covenant ("life") rest on both promise / grace and law. Paul's argument is that the Mosaic law does not facilitate the blessing of new life in Christ, rather it is nothing more than an interim measure devised to support the promise.

Again, Paul's use of "law" here specifically refers to the Torah, the law of Moses. There is debate as to whether this passage is a polemic against the law, or a positive explanation of the law. Some commentators think the passage is a digression, so Betz, Martyn, but it is surely another argument in favour of the letter's proposition. So, the passage most likely serves as an explanation of the law's temporary function in relation to the promise, namely, to hold Israel to the curse until the coming of Christ. Paul's argument in this passage is designed to further counter the argument of those nomist believers who have adopted the foolish notion that the function of the Torah is to facilitate the blessings of the covenant.

The function of the Law: As has already been noted, divine law has two main functions:

- The primary function of the Law for Israel, as is the function of God's law today, is to expose / accentuate sin and thus drive the children of God to rest in faith on God's faithfulness for the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, cf. Rom.3:20, 5:20.
- The Law also carried a secondary function, again a function found in God's law today, namely, to define covenant obligations, which obligations serve to guide the life of the children of God and thus give shape to the fruit of faith.
- It is often argued that the Law has a third function, namely, to restrain sin, but rather than restrain sin, it exposes sin for what it is, and even makes it more sinful.

The important point to note is that Mosaic law was never intended as a vehicle to facilitate covenant blessings. The blessings of covenant membership, as with a person's covenant acceptance, has always rested on a divine promise (on grace) appropriated through faith, a faith like Abraham's. The law but serves to emphasize this fact.

In what sense is the Law temporary? When Paul tackles the function of the Mosaic law in our passage for study, he states that the Law is a temporary dispensation. It seems likely that the law is temporary in both a salvation-history temporal sense, and in a logical sense. In a temporal sense, the Mosaic Law holds Israel under the curse of its sin so strengthening the fact that the foundational life of the nation is found in the promise / grace of God to Abraham appropriated through faith, but this

only until the coming of the messiah, Christ. "the temporal framework for the law is a major theme of his argument for the superiority of the promise", Hansen. In a logical sense, the Law holds humanity to the curse of its sin so accentuating the necessity for divine grace, but this only until found in Christ. In simple terms, the law is abrogated when it is no longer needed to hold a person to their sin and this because they have appropriated the grace of God in Christ. What is not terminated is the ongoing "divine principles of the law", Dumbrell, a law that continues to be "holy and just and good", Rom.7:12. Divine law, and such rightly includes Old Testament moral law, continues to guide godly living, cf. Matt.5:17-20..

A further note on the heresy of the Judaizers: With regard the heresy peddled by the members of the circumcision party, the reader will understand that the issue is open to intense debate, and this because Paul does not detail his opponents' argument. Traditionally it was held that the heresy is legalism - the use of the law to gain God's approval. Certainly 5:4 supports this view, but is countered by 2:15-16. Paul's understanding of being set right before God (justified) is not just limited to forgiveness, as seems to be the case for the judaizers. So, when Paul says of his opponents that they are trying to be "justified by the law", he has in mind something more than a person's initial approval before God. For Paul, a person who is set right before God, inherently possesses God's promised blessings, and permanently so, whereas the judaizers see the law as a necessary partner with promise / grace in the business of accessing those blessings. So, it is likely that the problem Paul addresses is "nomism", namely, the use of the law to restrain sin and progress holiness for the full appropriation of the promised blessings of the covenant - new life in Christ.

It should be noted that although new perspective commentators hold that the judaizers were nomists, their nomism is usually understood in the sense of a continued reliance on Jewish particularism, circumcision etc., at the expense of Gentile inclusion.

v] Homiletics: *The function of God's Law*

Humanity faces a major problem - often denied today; it's called original sin. Sin cast us from the Garden of Eden and undermined any hope of sharing in God's blessings. When the details of the law were revealed to Moses, it did little more than evoke a curse and condemn. Like a strict governess, the law exposed the failings of God's historic people, held the people to their sin, and in so doing, forced them to rely on God's mercy. In the arrival of Jesus, this temporary role for the law ceased.

The problem we now face as believers, is how we are to handle the law in our day-to-day living for Jesus. The Christian church has always oscillated between two extremes - no law and all law.

On the one hand, Marcian, an early Christian heretic, taught that Christ was the end of the law and that therefore, the law was no longer applicable in the Christian life. Martin Luther tended to hold a similar view. Harvey, a prominent theologian, argues that "by Christ the law was discredited". This idea is called antinomianism - the law has no place in the Christian life.

The other extreme centres on another early Christian heretic, Pelagius. Pelagianism promotes the idea that righteousness can be obtained by meritorious works. Although most believers affirm that eternal life comes only through the merit of Christ, there is always the tendency to see good works as deserving of merit, of keeping us in with God by earning *brownie-points*.

So, what is the purpose of the law?

As notes above, p112-113

Text - 3:19

Arguments in support of the proposition:

#5. *The function of the Mosaic law was not to promote new life in Christ, but rather, to promote death until everything is put right by Christ, v19-24.*

i] The law is inferior to grace, v19-20. The following outline is but one possible way forward where "the number of interpretations of this passage are said to mount up to 250 or 300", Lightfoot; thank you J.B. for this observation, and that was back in 1865! So, here goes for # Paul's answer to the question, v19-20, is that the law "was added for the sake of transgressions", i.e., the law was added to the promise as an interim measure to hold Israel to its sin until it was dealt with upon at coming of the promised messiah. This temporal salvation-history pattern has a logical equivalent in the life of an individual believer. The law, which once held the sinner to their sin, no longer constrains those who have appropriated the promise in Christ. In the end, the value of the law is limited, given that the promise to Abraham is permanent, whereas the law is temporary, and the promise is by direct divine revelation, whereas the law was mediated through angels (a popular view at the time, see *Pauline Midrash*, Cullan) and a human mediator, namely, Moses.

τί **"what"** - The interrogative pronoun may mean either "what" or "why". "Why then the law?" = "what is the purpose of the law?" The sentence is elliptical with "was the purpose of" added by NIV, although "why" makes the point.

Possibly "what is/signifies" = "what is the significance of the law?", Longenecker. "What then is the function of the law?", Barclay.

οὖν "then" - THEREFORE [THE LAW]? Inferential connective.

προσέτεθη [προστιθημι] aor. pas. "**it was added**" - IT WAS ADDED, PLACED. Possibly a divine passive. Either "was added by God to the previous promise to Abraham", Dumbrell, although not added in the sense of a codicil to supplement, but added to reinforce the Abrahamic covenant without affecting its independence, ie., "the Sinai Covenant occupied a complementary role within that of the covenant with Abraham", Dumbrell, cf. v15. Possibly "was instituted", following the variant τιθημι.

χαριν + gen. "**because of**" - Usually a marker of cause/reason, so "because of", as NIV, reflecting the idea that the law was added to the promise as a temporary measure to confront a situation where sin was out of control. Yet, here it probably expresses purpose / goal. The law is given "in order to produce, or provoke, transgressions", Martyn; "to define what wrong-doing is", Barclay; "to make wrongdoing a legal offense", NEB; "to underline the existence and extent of sin", Moffatt. "In order to provide some sort of remedy for transgressions", Dumbrell.

των παραβασεων [ις εως] gen. "**transgressions**" - DISOBEDIENCE, WRONGDOING. Of breaking, or deviating from a standard.

αχρις ου̅ + subj. "**until**" - UNTIL [THE SEED SHOULD COME]. This construction is used to form a temporal clause referring to the future. Usually formed by εως αν + subj. The "seed", of course, is Christ, cf., v16. In support of his argument for the priority of promise, Paul notes that the law is temporary and therefore it cannot be compared with the eternal nature of the promise. Yet, in what sense is the Mosaic law temporary?

ω̅ dat. "**to whom**" - Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage. Referring to Christ.

επηγγελται [επαγγελλομαι] perf. pas. "**the promise referred**" - IT HAS BEEN PROMISED. The perfect tense possibly expresses the permanence of the promise (ie., applicable to all through all time), enacted and ongoing, as opposed to the temporary nature of the Mosaic law, cf., Longenecker. Yet, it is more likely that the "promise" is fulfilled in "the seed", Christ, enacted and ongoing until realized in him, ie. the perfect has pluperfect force; "to whom the promise was come", Ridderbos.

ελθη [ερχομαι] aor. subj. "**had come**" - SHOULD COME. The subjunctive used for an indefinite temporal clause.

διαταγεις [διατασσω] aor. pas. part. "**the law was put into effect**" - HAVING BEEN ORDAINED, ARRANGED, ENACTED (as of enacting a law). An

attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "was added (instituted)", but adverbial, expressing manner or means, is also possible.

δι [δια] + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF. Expressing agency.

αγγελων [ος] gen. "**angels**" - ANGELS, MESSENGERS. Paul is drawing on common teaching at the time, teaching which we know little about, cf., Hebrews on the mediatorial role of angels in revelation. Stephen makes a similar point about the mediatorial role of angels in the giving of the law. Paul's point is that the promise came directly from God and is therefore superior to the law.

εν + dat. "**by / entrusted to**" - IN, BY. The instrumental sense seems best, "by" = "through the agency of".

μεσιτου [ης ου] gen. "**a mediator**" - [HAND] OF A MEDIATOR. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. As with the mediatorial role of angels, the fact that the law was given through Moses gives the promise a greater authority.

v20

ὁ μεσιτης [ης ου] "**a mediator**" - [BUT/AND] THE MEDIATOR. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. Not with the sense of "one who reconciles", but of "one who helps parties come together in an agreement".

ενος ουκ εστιν "**does not represent just one party / implies more than one party**" - IS NOT OF ONE. Silva classifies the genitive **ενος**, "one", as a genitive of association, "a mediator is not *a representative only* of one." Expressing the idea of plurality in the giving of the law, as opposed to singularity in the giving of the promise. Numerous complex interpretations have been suggested, but Paul is probably just making the point that, unlike the Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic covenant, with its "added" law, was not directly given by God to Israel, but was given through an intermediary and is therefore inferior.

δε "**but [God is one]**" - Probably indicating the next step in the argument so serving to introduce the question of v21: "God is one. Does this mean therefore?" "Given the unity of God, can we therefore assume that there is some alignment / coexistence between law and promise?"

v21

ii] The function of the law, v21-22. Paul addresses a simple question: given that God is one (v20b), does the law function alongside of / is supplementary to the promise / grace of God? No way! Unlike the promise / grace, the law can't achieve the blessings promised to Abraham. If the law had the power to facilitate the promised blessings of the covenant, then it would obviously have the power to set a person right with God, but we all know it doesn't have the power to do that and this because God makes it clear through the scriptures that sin is master

everywhere; this being case, God's promised blessings depend wholly on Christ's faithfulness (faith of Christ) for those who believe. The function of the law is quite separate from the promise, separate from grace. The Mosaic law was not given to "impart life", it was not given to facilitate the promised blessings to Abraham, now realized in Christ, rather, it was given to condemn, to expose sin, and thus the need for salvation in Christ.

κατα + gen. "**opposed to**" - [IS THE LAW] DOWN UPON, DRAWN FROM / AGAINST. The meaning of this preposition is unclear here, particularly as Paul has not favoured us with a verb. Usually understood in this verse with its hostile sense: in opposition to, in conflict with - "is the law contrary to the promises?", Cassirer. Yet, in answering the question, Paul explains that the promised blessing of life is not facilitated by works of the law, but rather by reliance on the work of Christ. So, the question is not asking whether the law is opposed to the promise, rather whether the law supplements the promise, plays a part in facilitating life, to which question Paul answers "absolutely not". Figuratively the preposition with the genitive can refer to "the ground of / basis of / standard of", even express the idea of "in accord with" (+ acc.). Although less than satisfactory, the sense "in accord with / stand alongside with / supplementary to" seems best.

των επαγγελιων [α] "**the promises**" - As noted in previous studies, "promise" singular is often used by Paul, but sometimes he uses the plural. The "promise" (for Abraham they are "promises" plural) is ultimately "life", but of course, "life" can be unpacked into separate promises. This approach seems better than suggesting that the plural serves to remind the reader that the promise was given on numerous occasions.

του θεου gen. "**of God?**" - The genitive is adjectival, either possessive, they are God's promises, or idiomatic / source, the promised blessings of the covenant *which derive from* God, or verbal, subjective, "the promises God *has made*". A variant reading, bracketed by Metzger.

μη γεινοιτο "**Absolutely not!**" - MAY IT NEVER BE SO. Emphatic rejection of the idea.

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause serving to explain why the law is not opposed to the promises.

ει + ind. αν + imperf. "if" - IF, *as is not the case* [A LAW WAS GIVEN BEING ABLE TO GIVE LIFE, *then* REALLY BY LAW RIGHTEOUSNESS WOULD HAVE BEEN] - Introducing a conditional clause 2nd. class, contrary to fact, where the condition is assumed not to be true.

νομος [ος] "**a law**" - Anarthrous (without an article), implying "any divine regulation, let alone the law of Moses".

ὁ δυναμενος [δυναμαι] pres. pas. part. "**that could**" - BEING ABLE. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "law"; "a law which is able".

ζωοποιησαι [ζωοποιεω] aor. inf. "**impart life**" - TO GIVE LIFE, MAKE ALIVE. The infinitive is complementary, completing the verbal sense of the participle "being able." For "life", the substance of the Abrahamic promise, see 3:11 and below. Some suggest that "life" here means "eternal life". It is eternal life, but not just an eschatological eternal life, a life in the hereafter, but life in all its fullness in the here and now and always. Also, some (eg. Bultmann) argue that this life is a product of the Spirit's ministry, enlivening, eg., releasing the believer from the power of sin. New life in Christ means all this and much much more. "Unlike the promises, the law cannot impart life", Dumbrell; "the law is not a quickening power as is the promise", Ridderbos.

ἡ δικαιοσυνη "**then righteousness**" - Nominative subject of the verb to-be. The person who is right, judged / set right with God, is a person who will experience God's promised new life - right with God = life with God. It is this link that the judaizers have broken. If the fullness of new life in Christ rests on keeping the law, then (given the link between being right with God and possessing life in God, Habakkuk 2:4, cf. 3:11) being judged / set right with God (justified) would also rest on law-obedience. The next verse explains how such a proposition is not tenable. The judaizers themselves know only too well that a person is not justified by works of the law, cf. 2:15-16.

ην [εἰμι] imperf. "**would [certainly] have come**" - WOULD HAVE BEEN.

οντως adv. "**certainly**" - REALLY, ACTUALLY, IN FACT. Adverb of manner.

εκ "**by [law]**" - OUT OF, FROM. Variant εν "in". Rather than an instrumental sense, "through / by means of", the ablative origin / source / "on the basis of", seems best; "righteousness would have come from keeping the law", Fung.

v22

At this point we are confronted with a problem as to whether Paul relates law and promise temporally, or logically, cf., 3:19, 24, 4:1-4. With regard to promise, law has a temporary function superseded at the fulfillment of the promise in the coming of Christ. From this temporal (salvation-history) framework Paul seems to draw a logical principle, namely that "the scripture has imprisoned all things under the power of sin, so that", NRSV. See "until", v19.

αλλα "**but**" - Strong adversative. "But on the contrary", Bligh.

ἡ γραφη [η] "**the scripture**" - THE WRITING, SCRIPTURE. Nominative subject of the verb "to consign." Scripture = God's word to us, probably here expressing the idea, "as the scripture says, no one has ever kept any such law, therefore ..", Barclay.

συνεκλεισεν [συνκλειω] aor. "**locked up**" - CONSIGNED, MADE A PRISONER, SHUT UP. Here the imagery is of the law as a gaoler, holding us to our sinful state. "Scripture makes no exception when it says that sin is master everywhere", Barclay.

τα παντα "**everything**" - ALL THINGS. Accusative object of the verb "to consign." Neuter, rather than masculine, suggests the "universality of the proposition", Bligh. Obviously the world so "everyone", CEV.

ὑπο + acc. "**of [sin]**" - UNDER [SIN]. Subordination; "under the rule of." In the sense of "into the power of / into subjection to", Bligh. "Under the power of sin", Martyn.

ἵνα + subj. "**so that**" - THAT. Here most likely forming a consecutive/result clause, "with the result that", so NIV, but many argue for a final clause expressing purpose, "in order that", Martyn, Bruce,

ἡ επαγγελία [α] "**what was promised**" - THE PROMISE. Nominative subject of the verb "to give." "Life" and all that

εκ + gen. "**being given through**" - FROM [FAITH]. An ablative source/origin sense is best. See **εκ** in 2:16 / Excursus I; "drawn from / on the basis of".

Ἰησου Χριστου gen. "**in Jesus Christ**" - OF JESUS CHRIST. Paul is not speaking of our faith in Christ, but rather the faith of Christ, that is, "Christ's trustful obedience to God in the giving up of his own life for us", Martyn. "The faithfulness of Christ". For the function of the genitive here see 2:16 / Excursus I.

δοθη [διδωμι] aor. pas. subj. "**might be given**" - Literally "might be given from faith of Jesus Christ to the ones believing". Paul is saying that the promised blessing is sourced, as a gift, out of the faith / faithfulness of Christ (his atonement on our behalf), which gift is freely available to those who trust Christ.

τοις πιστευουσιν [πιστευω] dat. pres. part. "**to those who believe**" - TO THE ONES BELIEVING. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object. "To those who have faith (like Abraham)", Williams.

v23

iii] Summary: The law is like as a jailer, binding Israel to the law's curse, binding Israel to judgment for the nation's neglect of its covenant obligations; it is like a slave-custodian who is set in charge of the master's children, holding them under the subjugation of the law's curse, but this only with a view to the fulfilling of the Abrahamic promise in the coming of Jesus Christ (see possible meanings for **εις** below: either temporal, "until Christ came", or purpose, "to lead us to Christ", or both, "with a view to Christ's coming"). So, the subjugation of the law has now ended with the coming of the seed of Abraham, namely, Christ (ended / terminated in a salvation-history sense, and therefore in a logical sense,

such that the law is no longer required to hold a believer / child of faith to their sin. Obviously not terminated as a guide to the Christian life).

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating the next step in the argument, "now before faith came", ESV, but possibly with an adversative sense, "but before faith came", NJB.

προ του ελθειν [ερχομαι] aor. inf. "**before this faith came**" - BEFORE THE FAITH CAME. This construction, **προ** with the genitive articular infinitive, forms a temporal clause, antecedent time; "up till the time when we could find salvation on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ Jesus (Christ's atoning obedience on our behalf / the cross)." "Faith" here is most likely Christ's faithfulness, "faith of Christ", and our faith in his faithfulness on our behalf. Such is the age of faith, as opposed to the age of the law. See 2:16 / Excursus I for "faith of Christ".

εφρουρουμεθα [φρουρευ] imperf. pas. "**we were held prisoners / we were held in custody**" - WE WERE BEING KEPT. The imperfect is durative. The word may mean "enforced restraint", but also may mean "benevolent protection." A sense of oppression seems best. The verb is first person plural, "we". "We" usually means "we believing Jews" or even "we apostles", rather than "we believers" ("you" = "you believing Gentiles"). Given that Paul often frames his words within a salvation-history perspective, "we believing Jews" is the dominant sense of "we", but at the same time a more inclusive "we believers" is not far from his mind. "In the custody of the law", NEB.

υπο "**under**" - Subordination; "under the rule of."

νομον [ος] "**the law**" - LAW. The noun without the article may imply law in general, "God's law", rather than "the law", meaning "the Torah". Paul is probably still referring to the law of Moses.

συγκλειομενοι [συγκλειω] pres. mid./pas. part. "**locked up**" - BEING CONFINED, MADE A PRISONER. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing manner.

εις "**until**" - INTO. This preposition introduces a prepositional clause which may either be temporal, or final (purpose). A temporal sense seems best, but possibly with a touch of intended purpose; "in preparation for the faith which was to be unveiled", Williams.

μελλουσαν [μελλω] pres. part. "**should be**" - [THE FAITH] BEING ABOUT. The participle, with its attached infinitive, forms an adjectival participial phrase, attributive, limiting "faith", "[the] faith which is about to be revealed."

αποκαλυφθηναι [αποκαλυπτω] aor. pas. inf. "**revealed**" - TO BE REVEALED. The infinitive is complementary, completing the verbal sense of the participle "being about." In classical Greek the tense would be future when used with **μελλω**. A future sense is implied; "pending the revelation of faith", REB.

v24

ὥστε "so" - SO THAT, AND SO, ACCORDINGLY, THUS..... Possibly here functioning as a connective, or inferential, "accordingly, therefore", but better expressing result / purpose "so that / in order that", as NIV, NRSV....

παιδαγωγός "[the law was] put in charge / [our] guardian" - [THE LAW HAS BEEN OUR] CUSTODIAN. Predicate nominative. The "custodian", *paidagogos*, was a person who controlled the behaviour of a young boy up to about 16 years of age. He is a custodian and/or supervisor, but the nuance of the word will depend on how we read the following preposition "to". The custodian may be like a teacher, tutor, guardian, mentor..... or more like a jailer, a restrainer, an enforcer, a disciplinarian. The sense of holding the sinner to the "curse" and condemnation of the law is best; the law serves "to condemn, enclose and punish", George. Certainly "condemn and punish", but what about "enclose"? Does Paul have in mind the idea that the law restrains sin like a "schoolmaster", AV, "strict governess", Phillips? Of course, the law can't make sin more sinful and at the same time restrain sin, and in any case, such a function would not be temporary. As already noted, we are on safer ground if we view Paul's argument in salvation-history terms (of the law as a temporary measure, holding Israel to the consequences of sin, but set aside at the coming of the messiah; a *paidagogos* until Israel comes of age), which frame is then applied in logical terms to the life of the believer (the law oppresses a person, establishing their condition of loss, but this only until they are set right in Christ through faith). As the law was a temporary dispensation for Israel, so it is for a believer.

εἰς "to lead us to [Christ] / until [Christ] came" - INTO [CHRIST]. We may read this preposition, which forms a prepositional phrase, either temporally, or logically: As a temporal clause, "until the coming of / up to the time of" Christ, cf., NEB, "until Christ came", NRSV, so Bruce, Longenecker, Betz, Guthrie, ...; As a final (purpose) clause, the law was our *paidagogos* "in order to lead us to" Christ for forgiveness, "bringing us to Christ", Knox; "to conduct us to Christ", NEB mg., cf., NIV, Williams, Ridderbos, Cole, ... A final (purpose) sense, with temporal overtones, is also possible; "with a view to Christ's coming", Causer.

ἵνα "that" - THAT. Here introducing an adverbial clause, either final expressing purpose, or consecutive expressing result. If purpose, then the purpose of the custodianship of the law. Yet, result seems more likely, "with the result that". Christ, having come, justification is the consequent result. "The law was thus put in charge of us until Christ should come, when we should be justified through faith", REB.

δικαιωθῶμεν [δικαιωῶ] aor. pas. subj. "we might be justified" - SET RIGHT. "Set/judged right before God. See 2:16 / Excursus I for "justified".

ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΙΝ "by faith" - ON THE BASIS, OUT OF FAITH. As above, "faith" here is most likely Christ's faith / faithfulness appropriated by our faith, ie., cause / basis.

3:25-29

4. Arguments in support of the proposition, 3:1-4:7

vi] The evidence of a worldwide people united before God, apart from the law

Argument

In this letter so far, Paul has argued that the person who rests on the faithfulness of God in Christ, apart from the law, is an inheritor of God's promised blessings. In the passage before us, Paul evidences this fact by pointing out that the promised blessing of a worldwide people of God is even now being realized in Christ, and this without regard to the requirements of Old Testament law.

Issues

i] Context: See 3:1-5.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The sixth argument in support of the proposition:*

Proposition:

The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ.

Supporting argument:

#6. The evidence of a worldwide people united before God, apart from the law, 3:25-29;

Proposition:

Since the age of faith has come the "Mosaic law has no further restrictive role to play", Dumbrell, v25.

Argument, v26-29:

All who believe are sons of God;

All who believe are united to Christ;

In Christ all are one;

All in Christ are the heirs of the promises to Abraham.

This section division is unresolved, eg. 3:15-29, Guthrie, ... 3:23-29, Fung, Ridderbos, ... 3:26-29, Longenecker, Bruce, George, Barnes, Dunn, 3:25-29, Dumbrell (Ridderbos treats v25 and 26 as one sentence whereby the contrast between slavery and sonship is established).

iv] Interpretation:

#6. The sixth argument: In 3:25-29 Paul outlines his sixth argument in support of his proposition that a person, who is in the right with God on

the basis of the faithfulness of Christ, is freely able to appropriate the fullness of God's promised new life apart from law-obedience. It is obvious that the blessing of new life in Christ has nothing to do with our submission to the restrictive supervision of the Mosaic law. The Mosaic law, as a temporary measure designed to accentuate the Abrahamic covenant, is terminated for those in Christ. The promised blessing to Abraham of a worldwide people united before God is even now unfolding before our very eyes, and this, not on the basis of law obedience, but on the basis of what Christ has done for us. We are all now one in Christ apart from a nomistic lifestyle; "both Jewish and Gentile believers have been brought into a new spiritual experience as true sons of God because of their oneness in Christ", Longenecker.

Some commentators argue for a liturgical source for this passage although the arguments are less than convincing; see Betz, Longenecker.

v] Homiletics: *Once saved always saved?*

One of the old Billy Graham tracts had a drawing of the cross over a mighty chasm. The world was on one side of the gorge and heaven on the other. Even the best high jumper could not jump it. The only way to get across the chasm was via the cross of Christ. Out of fun we used to draw a little segment on the end of the cross that just touched the "heaven" side of the gorge. We then listed off all the little extras that believers come up with, the essential extras to the cross.

Let's consider for a moment some of these little extras: *eg., Anglican = Confirmation; etc.,*

For Paul's opponents in the church at Galatia, their little extra was complete submission to the Mosaic law. It was, in a sense, a form of pietism, the idea that the Christian life advances by means of a faithful submission to God's law. In our reading today, Paul proclaims the glorious consequences of grace alone, apart from works of the law. A believer, resting on the faithfulness of Christ, is united to Christ and is therefore counted as an inheritor of the promises given to Abraham, a place, a family, a blessing - "new life" in all its fullness.

There is danger in seeking an extra over what is already complete in Christ. Look to Christ and him alone!

Text - 3:25

Arguments in support of the proposition:

#6. *The realization of the promised blessing of a worldwide people united before God, apart from the law, further proves that new life in Christ rests wholly on what Christ has done for us, v25-29.*

i] Now that the age of faith has come, "Mosaic law has no further restrictive role to play", Dumbrell. With the coming of Christ, the seed of Abraham, God's covenant community is no longer held prisoner to the Mosaic law with its attached curse. On the basis of what Christ has done for us on the cross ("now that faith has come"), the promised blessings are now all ours for the asking, and this apart from the law.

δε - "now that" - BUT/AND. Transitional / continuative, identifying the next step in the argument, "now that this faith is available", possibly a touch adversative, "but now that"

της πιστεως [ις εως] gen. "faith" - OF THE FAITH. Genitive in agreement with the participle ελθουσης. The definite article again indicates that Paul is speaking about a particular faith, "this faith", possibly in a general sense, "the age of faith", although surely with particular reference to Christ's faith / faithfulness appropriated by faith. See 2:16 / Excursus I for "faith [of Christ]".

ελθουσης [ερχομαι] aor. part. "[now that faith] has come" - HAVING COME. The genitive participle with the genitive noun forms a genitive absolute construction, best treated as temporal; "once faith had come", Barclay. The custodianship / confinement of the law that was in operation has ended in the coming of faith. A temporal sense is certainly present, an age when faith "is available", Dumbrell, but a logical sense is also present where "faith" (Christ's + ours) logically ends the subjection of the law. The reference to "faith" can't be to a believer's faith in the promises of God since God's children have always lived by faith / belief / trust in God. "Faith", in the sense of Christ's faithfulness is obviously intended for it was "when" Christ fulfilled his obedience on the cross that the function of the law to παιδαγωγον, "hold", us to our sin was ουκετι, "no longer", required. For the issue of the temporary "confinement" of the law see the introductory notes to 3:19-24.

υπο acc. "under" - [WE ARE NO LONGER] UNDER. Expressing subordination; "under the supervision of".

παιδαγωγον [ος] "the supervision [of the law] / a guardian" - A DISCIPLINARIAN, GUARDIAN. See the notes on 3:24 for the function of the law in the terms of a *paidagogos*.

v26

ii] The remaining verses establish Paul's argument, v26-29. All who believe in Christ are united to Christ, become one with Christ. Distinctives of birth are no more because of a believer's new birth in Christ, and since we are one in union with Christ, then we are Abraham's seed, the children of promise. Since we believers are the children of promise, we all now share God's promised blessings, and this apart from the law. This is obvious since, at this very moment, all members of the Galatian church, both Jews and Gentiles, have found Christ, are incorporated in Christ, and are now sons of God. The Galatian believers have realized in Christ the promise of a people given to Abraham all those years ago and none of this has anything to do with law-obedience.

γαρ "- / so" - FOR. The NEB, NRSV, TEV... translate the "for", since it most often expresses cause / reason although a rare consecutive (result) sense seems more likely here, so Garlington; we are no longer under the confinement of the law because the age of faith in Christ has come, as a consequence we have become inheritors of the Abrahamic promise on the basis of what Christ has done for us ("faith of Christ"). "For the result is ...", Dumbrell.

παντες εστε "you are all" - "You" often indicates that Paul is addressing Gentiles, so here we may have "all you Gentiles", but it may well be a wider group, "all of you Galatians, both Jew and Gentile alike."

θεου [ος] gen. "[sons] of God" - The genitive is adjectival, relational. The custodianship of the law has ended and believers have come of age as God's full-grown sons and daughters and so now possess both the freedom and responsibilities that this entails. Allan argues for a link with v16, "offspring / children", with the passage explaining how the promise is fulfilled in the "offspring". "Children of God", NRSV.

δια της πιστεως εν Χριστω Ιησου "through faith in Christ Jesus" - Although the literal translation of these two prepositional phrases is followed by many translations, the NEB, TEV, NRSV... are to be preferred where both phrases are taken to modify "you are all sons of God" rather than "in Christ Jesus" modifying "through faith." The means by which (δια, instrumental) we are "sons of God" is "through / by means of the faith", ie., the faith/faithfulness of Christ appropriated through faith; See 2:16 / Excursus I for "faith of Christ". The ground upon which (εν, expressing space/sphere - incorporative union) we are accepted as God's sons is our "union with Christ Jesus." The TNIV has corrected this problem; "so in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith."

v27

All believers who are identified with Christ in his death and resurrection, are one with him, immersed in him, clothed with him.

γαρ "for" - More reason than cause here. Although not found in all translations, this conjunction plays an important role in showing that the clause further explains why "you are all sons of God."

ὅσοι pro. "all of you" - AS MANY AS, AS MANY OF YOU AS. "As many" implies not all are intended, but obviously Paul intends the "all of you Galatians" of v26.

εβαπτισθητε [βαπτισω] aor. pas. ind. "were baptized [into Christ]" - WERE IMMERSSED [INTO CHRIST]. When commentators see this word, they can't help but explain it in terms of water baptism. The word simply means immersed, and in the context it means nothing more than immersed in Christ, incorporated **εις**, "into", Christ, united with Christ, made one with Christ The instrument of immersion is faith / "faith of Christ"; see above.

ενεδυσασθε [ενδυω] aor. "having clothed yourselves with [Christ]" - PUT ON [CHRIST]. This is simply a further illustrative phrase for union with Christ. Notions of putting on Christ's character have nothing whatsoever to do with the context. It is because we are incorporated in/with Christ that we stand approved as God's sons. "You have put on Christ as a garment", NEB.

v28

Since we are all one in Christ, we are all of the same family, and so the old distinctions of birth are no more. This is a radical idea, particularly for a Jew, because a pious Jew would daily thank the Lord that he had not been born a Gentile, a slave or even a woman. Actually, the word for woman is "female", as distinct from a wife.

ενι [ενειμι] pres. "there is" - Note the strengthened form of **εν**; "in Christ there is no descent, rank, or sex", Ridderbos. "There does not exist either Jew or Greek", Martyn.

ουκ ουδε ... "neither nor" - NOT [JEW] NOR [GREEK, THERE IS] NOT [SLAVE] NOR [FREE, THERE IS] NOT [MALE AND FEMALE]. Negated comparative construction.

γαρ "for" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why there is neither Jew nor Gentile,; "because your connection with Christ makes you one", Barclay.

εις adj. mas. sing. "[you are] all one [in Christ Jesus]" - ALL [YOU ARE ONE man]. Predicate adjective. Paul is not describing a oneness that is devoid of difference, but rather devoid of distinction. Because of our union with Christ, we have become the one new man, the promised issue of Abraham, the remnant people of God, the new Israel, the distinctions of culture, race, social status, sex, are subsumed by a more substantial identity.

εν + dat. "**in [Christ]**" - Local, expressing space/sphere, incorporative union. United to Christ in the sense of "sharing of life, without complete identification", Bligh.

v29

Given that believers are identified with Christ through faith, they are all God's children and as such "are children of Abraham", 3:7-9, ie., all believers are Abraham's heirs. Believers are "heirs according to the promise", heirs of God's promises made to Abraham. Those who are united to Christ on the basis of what Christ has done on the cross, have received the promises offered to Abraham: a place, a family, a blessing = "new life", and this for eternity.

δε "- " - but/and. Transitional, indicating the next step in the argument.

ει "**if**" - IF, *as is the case*, [YOU are OF CHRIST, THEN AS A RESULT (**αρα**) YOU ARE SEED OF ABRAHAM]. Introducing a conditional clause, 1st class, where the condition is assumed to be true; "THEN the result is that you are Abraham's seed with the right to possess all the covenant promises that were made to him." The sentence engages the reader in a mental argument which has a logical conclusion: "if so and so is true, then this is also true." "If you are incorporated in Christ, then what follows is"

Χριστου [ος] gen. "**belong to Christ**" - The genitive is most likely adjectival, possessive, as NIV.

αρα "**then [you are]**" - THEN, THEREFORE. The presence of this inferential conjunction gives the conditional clause its consecutive flavor.

του Αβρααμ gen. "**Abraham's**". The genitive is adjectival, relational. If we are one of Abraham's seed, offspring, issue.... then we share in his promises; a place, a family and a blessing.

σπερμα [α ατος] "**seed**" - Predicate nominative. "Then indeed you are Abraham's offspring", Cassirer.

κατ [κατα] + acc. "**[heirs] according to [the promise]**" - [HEIRS] ACCORDING TO [PROMISE]. This preposition usually expresses a standard, "in accordance with, corresponding to", so "heirs in accordance with the promise", although Paul has used "promise" for "covenant", so "heirs in accord with the covenant agreement God has made with Abraham", which, as Martyn notes, means simply "heirs of the promise", rather than "heirs according to the promise."

4:1-7

4. Arguments in support of the proposition, 3:1-4:7

vii] **In Christ we now have the full and free enjoyment of sonship in God, and this with all its associated blessings.**

Argument

In our passage for study, Paul argues that through God's grace, believers are free from the slavery of the law for blessing, because they are now God's full-grown sons and no longer spiritual infants.

Issues

i] Context: See 3:1-5. It seems very likely that this passage is the final step in Paul's argument in support of his proposition developed in 2:15-21. In fact, this passage is virtually a summary of Paul's arguments so far. The passage has prompted numerous source theories, given its unusual language and images, but they add little to its meaning. Note the similarities with 3:23-29. The following passage, 4:8-11, is most often tied to this passage, even to a wider unit identified by Bruce as 3:26-4:11, by Fung as 2:15-5:12, by Garlington as 3:1-4:31, ..., so it may well serve as a personal statement rounding off Paul's arguments in 3:1-4:7, so Dumbrell, Longenecker, Dunn, (Note the similar expression of distress at the commencement of this argumentative section, 3:1-5). None-the-less, it is more likely that 4:8-11 serves as an introduction to the series of exhortations that run through to the postscript, 6:11-18.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The sixth argument in support of the proposition:*

Proposition:

The gospel, of itself, apart from the law, facilitates new life in Christ.

Supporting argument:

#7. In Christ we now have the full, free enjoyment of sonship in God, with all its associated blessings, 4:1-7;

Analogy, v1-2;

the age of immaturity is over.

Application, v3-7;

once minors / enslaved, v3;

redeemed through Christ, v4-5;

renewed by the Spirit, v6-7.

George divides this passage into three parts: 4:1-3, "Our past condition"; 4:4-5, "The coming of Christ"; and 4:6-7, "The Spirit within".

iv] Interpretation:

The seventh argument: In 4:1-7 Paul outlines his concluding argument in support of his proposition that a person, who is in the right with God on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ, is freely able to appropriate the fullness of God's promised new life apart from law-obedience. Summing up then, Christ, "born under the curse of the law" ... fulfills all its requirements, absorbing its curse by his death on the cross", Dumbrell. "God's purpose [in all this] was both to redeem and to adopt, not just to rescue from slavery, but to make slaves into sons", Stott. Consequently, as adopted sons in Christ, both Jews and Gentiles receive God's promised blessings, a foretaste of which is the gift of his life-giving Spirit. So (pointedly addressed to the Gentile Galatian believers infected with the notion that law-obedience facilitates God's blessings, "you", v7), a believer, as a son of God, is rightly an heir to the promised blessings of God [and this apart from law-obedience].

A further note on the temporary nature of the Law. As already noted in the studies on 3:19-29, Paul argues for the temporary nature of the law in temporal terms (a salvation-history approach), but applies it in logical terms. In salvation-history terms "the guardianship of the Mosaic law was meant to be for a time when God's people were in their spiritual minority; but now with the coming of Christ, the time set by the Father has been fulfilled", Longenecker. It follows, as a logical consequence of this truth, that for those in Christ the law has fulfilled its appointed task of confinement such that they now possess the full and free enjoyment of divine sonship. Although the logical sense is dominant, Paul's "us" (believing Jews) and "you" (believing Gentiles) indicates that Paul's thoughts, as always, are couched in a salvation-history frame.

v] Homiletics: *Christmas recovery*

A suggested sermon format for the First Sunday after Christmas

"When the time was right God sent his Son, and a woman gave birth."

I have often wondered how it is possible to design a battery powered toy to last for only one day. When you think about it, this is quite an achievement. The whistling blowing train would have actually sent us mad had it not died on Christmas afternoon - and at this point I do commiserate with those whose train has inadvertently continued its onward journey. So, the self-destructing design feature of these toys is to be greatly appreciated. Here we are then, still recovering from our "Christmas cheer", shovelling up the remnants of broken toys, and promising ourselves that next year we

won't eat as much - especially chocolate coated peanuts, consumed in great quantities before we even sit down to eat the roast turkey.

Given that Christmas day is now but a bloated memory, we may be able to ask the obvious "why" question about this babe in a manger, this child carefully packaged in a crib where he can do no harm. Our reading today lets him out of the package, out of the crib, and into our face. Like that whistle blowing train, we carry a design flaw of impermanence - we make a noisy impression for a time, but then wear and tear takes its toll and soon it is "dust to dust." But the Christmas package in the crib changed all that:

Body: See "Structure" above, v3-7.

So, as you shovel up the bits and pieces of Christmas plastic, while saving the half-spent batteries, remember that you are not like that self-destructing whistle-blowing train, "you are God's children and will be given what he has promised."

Text - 4:1

Concluding argument in support of the proposition:

#7. *For those in Christ, the law has completed its appointed purpose of confinement, such that in Christ we now have the full and free enjoyment of sonship in God, and this with all its associated blessings, v1-7.*

i] Paul paints an analogy of a son growing up in home where he is under the control of a guardian / administrator until he is of age, v1-2. During such time he is treated little different to a servant. Scott argues that this is an illusion to Israel's Egyptian enslavement, but it best illustrates the guardianship of the law until the coming of Christ, until Israel's coming of age (in temporal terms), which frame applies to a believer's coming of age in Christ and of their outgrowing the subjection of the law (in logical terms).

δε "what [I am saying]" - BUT/AND. Transitional; used here to indicate the next step in the argument; "my point is this", NRSV, Dumbrell.

εφ' ὅσον χρόνον "as long as" - [I SAY] FOR AS LONG AS, FOR AS LONG A TIME AS. Idiomatic temporal expression.

ὁ κληρονομος "the heir" - Nominative subject of the verb to-be. A child who has come into the inheritance of their father "will receive his father's property", TEV.

νηπιος adj. "child / underage" - [IS] AN INFANT, BABE. Predicate adjective. The word can refer to anyone in their minority, therefore also, "child / youth." "A minor", NEB.

ουδεν διαφερει [διαφερω] + gen. "he is no different from [a slave]" - HE NOTHING DIFFERS FROM [A SLAVE]. Followed by a genitive of direct object,

δουλου, "slave". Here, "no different from" and so therefore "no better than a slave, even though the whole estate will be his by inheritance when he comes of age."

ὢν [εἰμι] pres. part. "**although [he owns]**" - BEING [LORD]. The participle is adverbial, probably concessive as NIV. "Even though everything their parents own will someday be theirs", CEV.

παντων gen. adj. "**the whole estate**" - OF ALL. The genitive is adjectival, of subordination; "lord over all."

v2

While the heir is in their minority they are under supervision, as if they were a servant, until freed at a time set by their father.

αλλα "-" - BUT. Adversative / contrastive; "but he is under guardians and managers", ESV.

ὑπο + acc. "**under**" - [IS] UNDER. Expressing subordination; "under".

επιτροπους [ος] "**guardians**" - GUARDIANS. Unlike a guardian appointed by a father (a different Greek word), this guardian is appointed under law, although both perform the same function. "Men who take care of him and manage his affairs", TEV.

οικονομους [ος] "**trustees**" - [AND] STEWARDS, TUTORS, GUARDIANS, TRUSTEES. Rather than suggesting the minor has a second guardian, Paul is probably describing the function of the guardian. The word was sometimes used of an administrator of slaves and this might have prompted Paul to use the word to describe the guardianship. Possibly "teacher", CEV, but better "trustees".

αχρι + gen. "**until**" - UNTIL [THE TIME PREVIOUSLY APPOINTED]. Temporal construction. We would probably say, "until he is of age"; "until the time which his father has chosen for him to receive his inheritance", Phillips.

του πατρος [ηρ ρος] gen. "**by his Father**" - OF THE FATHER. Usually taken as a verbal genitive, subjective, ie., "until the appointed time/date set by the father", Zerwick.

v3

ii] Paul applies the analogy, v3-7. As a child must submit to the authority of their guardian until they reach their majority, so "we" had to submit to the subjection of the law. "We", spiritual heirs of God's blessings, were once similarly under supervision. By "we" Paul probably means "we Jews", although what he says applies to Gentile believers who are now also heirs with Jewish believers. As for the supervisor, "the basic principles of the world", Paul is referring to the law, and in particular, the Mosaic law. For Paul, the law is an instrument of spiritual bondage, cf., v5.

οὕτως adv. "so" - SO, THUS, IN THIS WAY, IN LIKE MANNER. Comparative / correlative, linking what proceeds with what follows. Virtually a **καθαπερ** **οὕτως** construction - "just as so *with us*"

και "also" - AND = ALSO [WE]. Here adjunctive; "so also *with us*."

ότε "when" - WHEN, WHILE. Temporal conjunction introducing a temporal clause.

ἡμεεις pro. 1 pl. "**we [were]**" - Emphatic by use. It is generally understood that here Paul's use of "we" includes both Jews and Gentiles, ie., he is being inclusive. This is probably the case, but we do need to remember that Paul often distinguishes between "we Jews" and "you Gentiles". Those who argue that "we" = "we believing Jews" hold that Paul is illustrating the guardianship of the law over the people of Israel, their release from its administration into the full responsibilities and blessings of sonship, a sonship that Gentiles also share through Christ, and this apart from the law. In the end, Paul's use of "we" ultimately includes "you".

νηπιου adj. "**children / underage**" - INFANTS, CHILDISH. Predicate adjective used as a substantive.

ἡμεθα δεδουλωμενοι [δουλω] perf. pas. part. "**we were in slavery**" - WE HAVE BEEN ENSLAVED. The perfect participle with the imperfect of the verb "to be" forms a periphrastic pluperfect construction. Possibly expressing a continuous state of slavery. Blich suggests it is an afterthought, "we were under the elemental powers of the universe - in a state of slavery."

υπο + acc. "**under**" - Expressing subordination.

του κοσμου [ος] "**[the basic principles] of the world / [the elemental spiritual forces] of the world**" - [THE RUDIMENTARY ELEMENTS, MATERIAL] OF THE WORLD. The genitive is adjectival, epeexegetic / of definition, limiting by specifying the elements in mind. "Elements that make up a series", Longenecker. Of these possible meanings, the fourth seems likely:

- "material world", as of Israel's contamination by the surrounding nations and thus the loss of the nation's uniqueness, and held to this reality by the law, so Dumbrell, Longenecker, Sanders;
- "the elemental spirits of the world", referring to evil satanic forces, or lesser spiritual beings, Betz, Wright, or more generally "primal and cosmic forces however conceptualized", Dunn;
- "the celestial elements of the universe", referring to the elements of the cosmos - earth, air, fire, water;
- "the rudiments of the world" RV, referring to the elementary teachings, truths, regulations, rules...., "the prescriptions and ordinances to which religious men outside of Christ surrender to", Ridderbos; including

the Mosaic law, Bruce; "the rudiments of the service of God", Belleville; or particularly the law of Moses, the Torah, Hayes, Martyn, Fung, Barnes. "This is why Paul can make the equally startling assertion that the Torah is no better than pagan religion", Garlington, cf. 4:8-11.

v4

But then "Christ came and changed everything", Hunter. The time for ending the heir's minority came about when God sent his Son. Jesus took upon himself the human condition of flesh ("born of a woman"), as well as the condition of subjection ("born under law"), but did so without sinning, cf. 2Cor.5:21.

δε **"but"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a counter position, "but".

ότε **"when"** - Introducing a temporal clause.

του χρονου [ος] gen. **"the set time"** - [CAME THE FULLNESS] OF TIME. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative.

το πληρωμα [α ατος] **"fully"** - THE FULLNESS. That which fills or completes, so in the coming of Christ, the Old Testament era comes to an end, is completed. Christ's birth introduces a new era. It is this point that prompts the selection of 4:4-7 as the epistle for Christmas 1. "But when the time was right", CEV.

εξαπεστειλεν [εξαποστελλω] aor. **"sent"** - [GOD] SENT FORTH. To send forth as an authoritative representative. The Father's sending the Son implies the pre-existence of the Son, but does not prove it. It does though imply that Jesus was the Son of God prior to his sending and not because of his sending. "God sent his Son into the world."

γενομενον [γινομαι] aor. mid. part. **"born"** - [THE SON OF HIM] HAVING BECOME. The accusative participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the accusative "son", "who was woman-born". "Becoming" and therefore possibly "born", although "made", AV, in the sense of "became a human person", may be Paul's intention. It is not actually "beget", rather Paul is saying that Jesus comes to us as a human person bound under the responsibilities of the law. This statement does not support the virgin birth, but probably does reference it, so Dumbrell; "born as any child is born", Barclay.

εκ **"of [a woman]"** - FROM [A WOMAN]. Expressing source / origin, or standing in for a partitive genitive, "of a woman."

υπο + acc. **"[born] under [law]"** - [HAVING BECOME] UNDER [LAW]. Expressing subordination. Possibly in the sense of being subject to the Torah and thus obedient to it, "his Son obeyed the law", CEV, or in the more general sense of someone who lived in a society bound by law, "brought up under the Jewish law", Barclay, or even "born as a Jew", Martyn, but probably in the sense of

"under the Sinai covenant and its curse", the requirements of which Christ fulfills in his obedience.

v5

At great cost Christ comes and sets free those in bondage to the law, bestowing "not merely sonship, but the privileges of sonship - the full status of sonship", Guthrie. The purpose of the Son's coming, of his taking upon himself our human condition under the curse of the law, was the redemption of those under the subjection of the law (the obedient Son took upon himself the curse that hung over the disobedient sons) that we might "receive the adoption of sons" and thus the full blessings of sonship.

ἵνα + subj. "**to [redeem] ... that [we might receive]**" - THAT [HE MIGHT REDEEM THE ONES UNDER THE LAW] THAT [WE MIGHT RECEIVE THE SONSHIP]. Both *hina* clauses may be final expressing purpose, "in order that", or the first final, and the second consecutive expressing result, "in order to redeem ... so that we might receive." It is possible that the second takes the place of an epexegetic / appositional infinitival clause and so serves to explain the sense of the first *hina* clause; "in order to set free those subject to the law, namely, that he might receive us as his adopted sons."

ἐξαγορασῆ [ἐξαγοραζῶ] aor. subj. "**to redeem**" - MAY BUY BACK, REDEEM. Possibly with the stress on release, "so he could set us free from the law", CEV, but more likely "from the curse of the law", Dumbrell, Ridderbos, cf. 3:13-14, or more generally, "that he might redeem those held under the power of the law", Martyn.

ὑπο + acc. "**under [the law]**" - Expressing subordination.

ἵνα + subj. "**that [we might receive]**" - Introducing a final clause expressing purpose, but see above.

τὴν υἰοθεσίαν [α] "**the full rights of sons**" - SONSHIP. Accusative direct object of the verb "to receive." Receive the status of sons, "receive the adoption as sons", NASB. In the ancient world adoption bestows full family rights on the adopted person, thus the blessings of sonship for all who believe.

v6

The gift of the Spirit is usually treated "as confirming the relationship", i.e., confirming sonship, so Dumbrell; or the "fruit and evidence of the truth that God has received them as sons", Ridderbos, i.e., product of, as well as evidence of; or "the adoption and the gift of the Spirit are concomitant", Guthrie, "simultaneous ... the receiving of the Spirit is the sequel to their instatement as sons", Bruce (both resting on "faith"). Yet, it seems best to understand that "the Spirit was a gift consequent and subsequent upon their being made sons", Dunn, a product of sonship, the blessing above all blessings of sonship, of being right with God,

which blessing is ours in the faithfulness of Christ, appropriated through faith, and not works of the law. cf., Gal.4:5-7, Rom.8:15-17. As Dunn notes, the receipt of the Spirit is the beginning of a believer's experience of sonship, of being right with God. Paul will explain how new life in the Spirit proceeds in 5:13-6:10.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating the next step in the argument; "and because you are sons", Barnes.

ὅτι "**because**" - Probably causal, "because / since", but possibly introducing an exegetical noun clause, "that" = "to prove that (to show that) you are sons", NEB, making the point that the Spirit is an evidence of sonship. Yet, most of the older translations take **ὅτι** as introducing a causal clause explaining forward - the Spirit is sent because you are sons. "In that you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son ...", Dunn.

εστε [εἰμι] "**you are [sons]**" - Obviously "you Gentiles", although some argue for "you, both Jews and Gentiles."

ῥίοι [ος] "**sons**" - Predicate nominative. "God's sons by adoption", Dumbrell.

εξαπεστειλεν [εξαποστειλω] aor. "**sent**" - [GOD] SENT. Sent forth as an authoritative representative. Although aorist, its sense here, with regard the Holy Spirit, must be collective. Successive sendings are intended.

του ῥιου [ος] gen. "**[the Spirit] of [his] Son**" - [THE SPIRIT] OF THE SON [OF HIM]. A theologically tricky phrase and only used here in the New Testament. The Western church holds that the Spirit "proceeds from the Father and the Son", while the Eastern church holds that the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone. Paul is probably not thinking about "proceeding" here, so not a genitive of source/origin; "the Spirit from the Son." Paul may be toying with the idea expressed in Romans 8:15, "the Spirit of sonship", or as Murray paraphrases it, "the Spirit who imparts the assurance of sonship and enables believers to call God their Father", which sense would be an adjectival genitive, attributive, limiting "Spirit". Of course, possibly just possessive.

καρδιας [α] "**heart**" - [INTO] THE HEARTS [OF HIM]. Best understood as the seat of reason, the inner person, rather than the seat of feelings. The stomach is the seat of feelings. Thus, the Spirit indwells the believer; "God sends the Spirit of his Son to us and he takes root in our inner being."

κραζων [κραζω] part. "**who calls out**" - CRYING OUT, CALLING OUT, CRYING. The participle is adjectival probably limiting "Spirit", as NIV. Grundmann argues that the "crying" here is not that of the Spirit, but rather the ecstatic outcry of a believer overcome by the presence of the indwelling Christ and who, in this state, calls out to the Lord in prayer.

αββα "**Abba**" - ABBA [FATHER]. Aramaic for Father. An example of Jesus' own words in Aramaic carried over into the Greek. The Greek translation "father" is supplied. Given the presence of the Spirit in the believer's life, we are able to "utter the cry of deepest familial intimacy in prayer and worship, addressing God as Father", Dumbrell.

v7

"No longer slaves, we are sons and heirs, by God's own act given free access (apart from the law) to all the riches he destines for us", Hunter. The Galatians must remember that they are now sons of God and therefore, heirs of the full blessings of sonship. To put themselves under the law again, as the children of Abraham are under the law, is to revert to spiritual infancy. It involves trying to attain what is already attained by a gift of God's grace.

ὥστε "**so**" - SO THAT, IN ORDER THAT, THUS. Serving to introduce a consecutive clause expressing result; "it becomes apparent (therefore)", Ridderbos.

εἶ [εἰμι] "**you**" - [NO LONGER] ARE YOU [A SLAVE]. A move to the singular is emphatic, "ye" (singular) underlined.

ἀλλὰ "**but**" - Strong adversative. "You are no longer a slave but a son".

υἱός "**a son**" - A SON. Predicate nominative. In the sense of an adoptive son of God, given this status in an act of divine grace through Christ.

εἰ "**since**" - [AND] IF, *as is the case*, [A SON, *then* ALSO AN HEIR THROUGH GOD]. Introducing a 1st. class conditional clause where the condition is assumed to be true.

διὰ + gen. "[**God has made you**]" - THROUGH [GOD]. Expressing agency. Some suggest "by God's own act", but "through God", RSV, is best in the sense of: through the gracious act of God the believer is no longer a slave but a son, a son and heir, and therefore the believer does not need to submit to the law to gain the blessings of sonship. "By the will of God", Zerwick.

κληρονομός [ος] "**an heir**" - Predicate nominative. "Heir of God", Fung, Betz, or "heir of the promise made to Abraham", Cranfield, Martyn, Dunn. "Sons and heirs, members of Abraham's family of believers", Dumbrell, and thus by right, inheritors of the promised Abrahamic blessings - "life".

4:8-11

5. Exhortations, 4:8-6:10

Introduction: You are slipping back into slavery, 4:8-11

Argument

Paul has concluded his major doctrinal argument and he now turns to exhort his readers in their Christian walk. Before doing this he makes a personal observation and expresses his fears for their salvation. Sadly, many of the Galatian believers have adopted the idea that the performance of religious duty somehow appropriates God's blessings. As far as Paul is concerned, law-obedience for blessing is nothing more than a spiritual slavery that leads to damnation.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11. Paul's exhortations to the Galatians up to 5:12 focused on the dangers associated with nomism - law-obedience for the purpose of appropriating the fullness of new life in Christ. From 5:13 to 6:10, Paul focuses on the danger of libertarianism, reminding us that the Christian life is "at once free and holy", Allan.

This passage is usually tied to 4:1-7, even to a wider unit identified by Bruce as 3:26-4:11, by Fung as 2:15-5:12, by Garlington as 3:1-4:31, so it may well serve as a personal statement rounding off Paul's doctrinal arguments in 3:1-4:7, so Dumbrell, Longenecker, Dunn, (Note the similar expression of distress in 3:1-5). None-the-less it serves well as an introduction to the exhortations that run through to the postscript, 6:11-18. Longenecker argues that the first exhortation is "against the judaizing threat", 4:12-5:12, although Garlington thinks this section ends at 4:31, with the next exhortation being "Freedom in the Spirit", 5:1- 5:24/6:10). Numerous arrangements have been suggested, indicating that we need an open mind on the matter. These notes suggest 6 exhortations, 4:12-6:10, introduced by a personal statement, "Paul's concern for the Galatians", Longenecker, 4:8-11.

The six exhortations present as follows:

Strengthen the bonds between us, 4:12-20

Stand firm and do not submit again to the slavery of the law, 4:21-5:1

Do not cut yourself off from Christ by submitting to the Mosaic law,
5:2-12

Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for sin, but let your lives be
guided by the Spirit, 5:13-18

Be led by the Spirit and not by the flesh, 5:19-25

Care for one another, 5:26-6:10

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *Paul's introduction to his exhortations:*

Rhetorical question:

Why do you desire to be slaves again?

Argument:

Prior to their conversion, the Galatians were enslaved to the dictates of paganism, v8.

Having been set free in Christ, v9a,

they are now seeking to be enslaved again, this time by the Law, v9b,

to the dictates of religious observance, Jewish festivals etc, v10.

Given this fact Paul wonders whether his ministry has been for nothing, v11.

iv] Interpretation:

This introductory exhortation, "slipping back into slavery", Barnes, "no turning back", Bruce, "Relapse", Hunter, serves to set the ground for the following exhortations. These exhortations are prompted by the fact that many of the Galatian brothers have turned "back again to weak and beggarly elemental spirits", namely, law-obedience for blessing (the heresy of sanctification by obedience), thus facing Paul with the terrible possibility that his ministry in Galatia "may have been wasted."

v] Homiletics: *Knowledge is easily forgotten*

The year 2009 will be remembered by the letters GFC: "global financial crisis." Economists will argue for years over who was responsible, and the conclusions will reflect either their socialist, or capitalist, leanings. Was the problem caused by an unregulated free market, or was it caused by government interference in the free market?

Fredrich Hayek, some years ago, made this comment about economics, a comment that applies to the GFC, as it does to the Christian life: "knowledge once gained and spread is often not disproved, but simply lost, or forgotten." The knowledge of God is like a grain of wheat sown among weeds; it springs to life, but can easily be choked, choked by the cares of the world.

The Galatians had discovered the living God; they had heard the good news about Jesus Christ, they had believed and were now indwelt with the renewing presence of the Spirit of Christ. Everything was theirs freely in

Christ - new life in Christ, eternity. Yet, their knowledge of the unencumbered grace of God had slipped from their memory.

Body: See "Structure" above

We will give Fredrich the final word, even though he is talking about economics, because what he says applies equally to Biblical truth: "You can never establish a truth once and for all, but have to convince every generation anew."

Text - 4:8

A return to slavery, v8-11. The Galatians, when they didn't know God, were enslaved to the "beggarly principles of the world" (the totality of paganism, its law, cult,), v8, but now, having been set free to know the living God in Christ, they have returned to that slavery, the same beggarly principles of the world, this time in their submission to the law of Moses, v9. Note how Paul equates the slavery of paganism with the slavery of the law. Obviously the bondage is the same, but the jailers are different. This time "not under duress, but by choice they subject themselves to all sorts of legalistic stipulations", Ridderbos.

αλλα "-" - BUT. Often argued as a link to v7, and so functioning as an adversative. Yet, it is more likely that it introduces the μεν δε construction and so helps establish the contrast found in v1-2.

μεν δε "-" - With δε (v9) establishing an adversative comparative construction, "on the one hand (v7), but on the other hand (v8)". On the one hand once slaves to paganism, on the other hand now slaves to the law of Moses.

τοτε adv. "formerly" - THEN. Introducing a temporal clause. For the Galatians, "the period before conversion ... their pagan past", Betz. So, this verse, and verse 9, seems to reinforce the view that, in this letter, Paul is primarily addressing Gentile believers, believers who have adopted the heresy of Jewish nomism. Yet, the state of "not knowing God" was not just a pagan problem, but a problem facing Israel as well. Thus, Paul may well be addressing all the Galatian believers, Jews and Gentiles, although one would assume that his focus is on Gentile believers.

ουκ ειδοντες [οιδα] perf. part. "when you did not know" - NOT KNOWING [GOD]. The participle is probably adverbial, temporal as NIV, although Blich suggests causal; "formerly, because you did not know God, you accepted as gods, creatures who are not gods, and you served them as slaves." "Know" better than "acknowledge", NEB. The verbal aspect of the perfect tense here is backgrounding that of the aorist "you were slaves", but a simple past tense in English best expresses the action of both, as NIV. "Formerly", "in the past", TEV,

this was the state of the Galatian believers; they were not in a relationship with the one living God. "Before you believed in Jesus", TH.

εδουλευσατε [δουλευω] aor. "**you were slaves**" - YOU SERVED AS SLAVES. In bondage, but to what/who? See below.

τοις ουσιν [ειμι] dat. pres. part. "**to those who**" - TO THE ONES BEING. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of direct object after the verb "to serve as a slave to." Paul probably understands these "ones", these "powers", in similar terms as "the elements / fundamental principles / elemental spirits /... of the world", 4:3, cf. v9. As already noted, possible meanings for this phrase in 4:3 include the following, with the last being the most likely intended meaning:

- "material world", as of Israel's contamination by the surrounding nations and thus the loss of the nation's uniqueness, and held to this reality by the law, so Dumbrell, Longenecker, Sanders;
- "the elemental spirits of the world", referring to evil satanic forces, or lesser spiritual beings, Betz, Wright, or more generally "primal and cosmic forces however conceptualized", Dunn;
- "the celestial elements of the universe", referring to the elements of the cosmos - earth, air, fire, water;
- "the rudiments of the world" RV, referring to the elementary teachings, truths, regulations, rules.... For a Jew, such "powers" are "the rudiments of the service of God", Belleville, or particularly, the law of Moses, the Torah, Hayes, Martyn, Fung, Barnes, Bruce. For a pagan, such "powers" are "the prescriptions and ordinances to which religious men outside of Christ surrender to", Ridderbos. So, the nomist believers in Galatia, whether Jew or Gentile, were in bondage to the prescriptions and ordinances of religion", and now they are heading back there, back to the Mosaic law. "You were slaves to the restrictive regulations of religion."

φυσει [ις εως] "**by nature**" - BY NATURE [NOT BEING GODS]. The dative "nature" is probably local, "in nature" = "in reality", or reference / respect, "with respect to / by." "Powers that are really not", TH. "Those (gods) that become so by human positing", Betz. In any case, "powers" which do not exist, "counterfeit deities", Bruce; "which in reality do not exist", NEB.

v9

The Galatian believers "have come to know God" through the preached word, or as Paul puts it, "known by God". Now he wants to know why it is that the Galatian believers have turned back to the rudimentary principles of morality and the restrictive regulations of religion. "Do you wish to be a slave of darkness all over again?"

νυν δε **"but now"** - BUT/AND NOW. Adversative, introducing the second part of the **μεν δε** construction.

γινοντες [γινωσκω] aor. part. **"that you know [God]"** - HAVING KNOWN [GOD]. The participle is probably adverbial, causal as in v8, "because, since", or possibly temporal, "while now you have come to recognize God", Cassirer, or even concessive, "although" As above, "recognize / acknowledge" is a bit soft on the commitment / union side, since this "knowing" is usually in the terms of a husband knowing his wife. The verb is probably inceptive / ingressive, "you have come to know", NRSV.

μαλλον adv. **"rather"** - RATHER, MORE. "Or rather .."

γνωσθεντες [γινωσκω] aor. pas. part. **"are known [by God]"** - HAVING BEEN KNOWN. The participle is adverbial, causal or concessive, as above. This is a very interesting qualification, something more than a rhetorical flare, or a pedantic correction. In Galatians, Paul emphasizes what God has done for us in Christ. Our relationship with the living God, now and into the future, rests on his initiative, not ours. He is the one who reaches out to us, we but take his hand. Of course, those holding a reformed position go a step further; the qualification "has the same sense as being called (effectually) and chosen", Fung.

υπο + gen. **"by [God]"** - Expressing agency.

πως "how is it" - HOW. Identifying an "inconsistency", Bligh, cf. 2:14.

επιστρεφετε [επιστρεφω] pres. **"you are turning back"** - DO YOU RETURN AGAIN, TURN BACK, TURN AROUND. Is this present tense conative, "trying to turn back"?

επι + acc. **"to"** - Spatial, direction toward; "to".

τα ασθενη και πτωχα στοιχεια **"those weak and miserable principles"** - the weak and impoverished basic principles. Paul is obviously referring back to verse 3. See "to those who", v8. The first adjective expresses ineffectiveness, "powerless", NAB, and the second inadequacy, "worthless", NAB. The noun "principles", possibly better "elemental powers", can be variously interpreted, see v8, but it probably means something like "the rudiments of religion"; "the elementary rules and lessons imposed by the powers", Bligh. So, the "principles" are the regulations themselves rather than say demonic forces (so Bruce). These "counterfeit deities ... not only regulated the Jewish way of life under the law; they regulated the pagan way of life in the service of gods that are no gods", Bruce. It is, of course, the law of Moses that the Galatians have enslaved themselves to; "Under the Torah equals under the elements (principles) of the world", Betz, such that the move of the Galatian believers to progress their sanctification, and thus their appropriation of the promised covenant blessings,

by returning to the Sinai covenant (the Law), is as good as returning to paganism and thus death.

δουλευειν [δουλευω] pres. inf. "**[do you wish] to be enslaved**" - [TO WHICH AGAIN YOU WANT] TO SERVE AS SLAVES. Complementary infinitive completing the sense of "wish".

οἷς dat. pro. "**by them**" - TO WHICH. Dative of direct object after the verb "to serve as a slave to." In the Gk. text the relative pronoun is used to commence a new sentence.

παλιν ανωθεν adv. "**all over again**" - AGAIN ANEW. Mutually reinforcing adverbs; "once more." "Strongly expressing the completeness of their reversion", Guthrie.

v10

That many of the Galatian believers have returned to the Mosaic law is evidenced by the fact that they are performing "the Jewish special observances (Sabbaths, new moon festivals, appointed and annual feasts, perhaps also new year, jubilees and sabbatical years)", Dumbrell. Paul has obviously received news "to the effect that the Galatians [are] actually adopting the Jewish calendar", Bruce. Other suggestions are less convincing, eg., that Paul's list here reflects the Galatians' return to "the veneration of cosmic elements", Martyn.

παρατηρεισθε [παρατηρω] pres. mid. "**you are observing**" - YOU ARE WATCHING, OBSERVING. The present tense is durative expressing ongoing action, ie., expressing the current practice of the Galatian nomists. Possible variant (P46) **παρατηρουντες** links the verse to the question in v9, "how is it that you are turning back by observing days?", cf. Betz. Bligh argues that v10 is best translated as a question, "do you want to observe?" The middle voice may imply that they are "calculating their arrival", Bruce.

ημερας "days" - DAYS [AND MONTHS AND SEASONS AND YEARS]. As noted above we have here a reference to holy / sacred celebrations listed in the Jewish calendar, cf., Col.2:16. In Romans 14:5 Paul seems happy to adopt a live-let-live approach to the Jewish calendar (Jewish celebrations were adopted into the Christian church, eg. Passover, Pentecost), so why not here? Obviously a principle is involved here, namely, the erroneous use of the Mosaic law for the appropriation of the promised blessings to Abraham. Where such error does not exist, then such practice becomes a non-issue.

v11

Paul's distress may have been for the loss of the Galatian believers' Christian freedom, but it is more likely that it was for the undermining of their salvation. Their reliance on law-obedience to restrain sin and progress holiness for the

blessings of the Christian life could easily infect the basis of their salvation, which is by grace through faith and not works of the law. So, Paul fears that his evangelistic work among them has all been in vain.

φοβουμαι [φοβεω] pres. pas. "**I fear for**" - "I am in full dread on your behalf", Cassirer.

υμας pro. acc. "**you**" - Accusative of respect. Paul identifies the object of his fear.

μη "**that**" - LEST. The negation **μη**, when used with verbs of fearing, serves to introduce the feared outcome. The position in the Gk. is emphatic.

πως "**somehow**" - Indefinite adverb, "somehow"; "lest by any means."

κεκοπιακα [κοπιαω] perf. ind. "**I have [wasted] my efforts**" - I HAVE LABOURED, TOILED WITH EFFORT [IN VAIN]. The perfect tense expressing Paul's fears that this situation may be permanent. Given the indefinite **πως**, "somehow", a subjunctive mood might have been expected, "I may have wasted my efforts", but Paul's use of the indicative indicates that he fears he has indeed wasted his time. "All the toil I spent on you has gone for nothing", Barclay.

εις + acc. "**on [you]**" - TO, INTO [YOU]. Here expressing advantage; "for you."

4:12-20

5. Exhortations, 4:8-6:10

i] Strengthen the bonds between us, 4:12-20

Argument

Paul has concluded his doctrinal argument and so he now sets about exhorting his readers. This, his first exhortation, serves as a personal appeal to the Galatians. Paul asks the Galatian believers to re-establish the personal respect and trust that once existed between them and their founding apostle.

Issues

i] Context: See 4:8-11.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: #1 *Strengthen the bonds between us:*

Exhortation:

"I beg you, become as I am", v12.

Explanation:

The strength of the relationship that Paul has had with the Galatians, v13-16;

The intentions of the judaizers to promote another gospel, v17-18;

Paul's tender desire that Christ again be the centre of their Christian life, v19-20.

iv] Interpretation:

The first exhortation: In this passage, we have the first of a series of exhortations that run through to 6:10 ("the request section of the letter", Dumbrell). This "personal appeal", Garlington, Dunn, ... seeks to re-establish the personal relationship that existed between Paul and the Galatians, cf., Bruce, Barnes..... Given the Galatians' defection, due to the influence of the members of the circumcision party, Paul pleads with his readers to establish again the strong personal trust and respect that once existed between them and their founding apostle. "Paul's concern for the truth of the gospel is bound up with his own apostolic vocation", George, and so it is essential that his relationship with the Galatian believers be restored.

v] Homiletics: *Saying good-bye*

Relationships are very tenuous things. At times we develop very strong and intimate friendships which seem constant, as well as permanent.

We then face a change in our circumstances. This may involve moving to another suburb, taking on a different job. The friendship then grows cold and may, or may not, be reignited when we meet again. The change we face can be quite substantial and result in a definite growing apart. We are constantly changing the way we think and the way we feel. Both external circumstances and maturation serve to change us, hopefully for the better. This type of change often serves to move us to realign our friendships.

The realigning of relationships can produce both positive and negative results. In Paul's case, he was quite offended by the way the Galatians had so easily moved from him toward his opponents. Yet, this hurt was nothing to compare with the danger now facing the Galatians themselves. Their very understanding of the grace of God was under threat. Shifts in relationships are extremely hurtful and the collateral damage sometimes quite extensive.

Body: a) v13-16; b) v19-20

If we initiate a change to a long-standing relationship, we do need to apply the old adage, "we must be careful how we say good-bye."

Text - 4:12

Exhortation 1; "become as I am", v12-20: i] The central exhortation of this passage is contained in this verse and is usually understood as "they are to free themselves from any subjection to law", Dumbrell. Although the issue of law-obedience is not far from Paul's mind, his appeal is in more personal terms, a kind of "let us stand together / reaffirm / re-establish again, mutual trust and respect." What we have here is "an argument of the heart", Schlier; in simple terms "a personal appeal to friendship" and thus "loyalty", Betz, and this for the purpose of establishing again Paul's apostolic guardianship over the Galatian believers. "Make common cause with me, I beg you, as I have made common cause with you", Cassirer.

δεομαι pres. "**I plead**" - I BEG, BESEECH. The word has an intensive sense, "strongly plead." This phrase is found at the end of the Gk. sentence serving to underline the exhortation.

ὑμων gen. pro. "**with you**" - OF YOU. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to beg, plead."

γινεσθε [γινομαι] pres. imp. "**become**" - BE. The first use of an imperative in this letter. Possibly a call to imitate the life-pattern of their teacher, 1Thes.1:6, Phil.4:9, 1Cor.4:16-17 - "follow my example". Possibly encouraging the Galatians to adopt Paul's approach to the law, such that they remain (present tense, "be", rather than "become") free from the law as a mechanism for appropriating divine blessings. Yet, it seems better to treat Paul's words as a

general encouragement toward mutual identification; "put yourself in my place as indeed I put myself in yours", Barclay ("too bland" says Dunn), but better, "make common cause with me, I beg you, as I have made common cause with you", Cassirer.

ὡς "like" - AS, LIKE *I am*. Comparative; expressing reciprocity in friendship, so Betz.

ὅτι "for" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Paul pleads with his readers, "because"

καὶ ὡς ὑμεῖς "I became like you" - I ALSO *became* LIKE YOU. "I have become as you are", or "I am as you are", Betz. Usually "*as you were* when I first came, not seeking salvation through observance to the Law", Zerwick. Of course, Gentiles, as well as Jews, were right into religious observance and regulations for the appropriation of divine blessings, which of course is the very methodology that Paul rejects. So, Paul certainly didn't become like them in that sense. He is probably speaking in the general terms of human identification, of friendship and thus mutual trust. None-the-less, the majority of commentators argue that something less general is intended, namely, that Paul became like them in the sense of a "Gentile sinner" as far as the legalistic requirements of the Mosaic law are concerned, cf.. 1Cor.9:22. This approach may help make sense of the next clause, "you have done me no wrong" - Paul was not in any way offended, nor spiritually damaged, by fitting in with the Galatian Gentiles. "I do beg you to follow me here, my brothers. I am a man like yourselves", Phillips.

ἠδικησατε [αδικεω] aor. "**you have done / you did [me no] wrong**" - [NOTHING] YOU INJURED, HARMED [ME]. A rather difficult interjection that has prompted numerous interpretations. Probably again in a very general sense, "I have nothing against you personally", Phillips. So, Paul is telling his readers he is not speaking to them "out of a sense of personal resentment", Bruce; he is not taking their behaviour as a personal affront. As above, Paul may be referring to his not having been wronged by the Galatians in the past when he became like them (aor. as a punctiliar past), in the sense of adjusting his "Jewishness" to fit in with them = became a "Gentile sinner". He may also be expressing the view that the Galatians had not wronged him in the past, but that they are certainly wronging him now, with the implied imperative, "don't change the relationship now by your acceptance of the Mosaic Law", Dumbrell. In this sense Paul compares the then and now, a time when there was an absence of animosity toward him, unlike the present when the Judaizers stir up troubles between him and the Galatians. "I hold no grudge against you, that would prevent me from accepting you again, as my brothers", Junkins.

v13

ii] The strength of the relationship that Paul has had with the Galatians, v13-16. Paul's personal appeal continues in v13-14 by making "a great accommodation to the Galatians", Luther, reminding them of their warm acceptance of his ministry under difficult circumstances - a sign of the trust and acceptance that once existed between Paul and the Galatians.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Usually treated as an adversative, "you did me no wrong but rather, as you know", although functioning as a transitional connective indicating a step in the argument.

οιδατε [οιδα] perf. "**as you know**" - YOU HAVE KNOWN. "You remember", TEV, although in the sense of "you have known all along", TH.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they know; "you know that"

δια + acc. "**[it was] because of**" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF. Causal. Paul is possibly reminding the Galatians of his handicap while he was preaching to them, so Phillips, but it is more likely that, due to his illness ("because of"), he was forced to come to Galatia and so used the visit to preach to them.

της σαρκος [ξ κος] gen. "**of an illness**" - [WEAKNESS, SICKNESS, DISEASE, ILLNESS] OF THE FLESH, BODY. The genitive is adjectival, attributed, "sick body", or possibly idiomatic / source. Numerous illnesses have been proposed: ophthalmia, cf. v15, 6:11; epilepsy; malaria. Is this Paul's "thorn in the flesh", cf. 2Cor12:7-9? "Some painful, repulsive and recurring illness is suggested", Allan.

το προτερον "**[that I] first [preached the gospel]**" - [PREACHED] AT FIRST, THE FIRST TIME. The article **το** serves as a nominalizer turning the adverb **προτερον**, "formerly", into an accusative noun, object of the verb "to preach"; "on that first occasion." Possibly identifying the first of two visits, "on the first of my two visits", NEB margin, but better "it was bodily illness, as you will remember, that originally led to my bringing you the gospel", REB. The verb **ευαγγελιζομαι**, "I proclaim", is most often used of communicating the gospel.

υμιν dat. pro. "**to you**" - Dative of indirect object.

v14

Paul reminds the Galatians of the trust and respect that existed between them and their apostle when he first visited them due to an illness that he was suffering. He was obviously heading elsewhere (possibly Ephesus), but needed to take a break to recuperate. During this visit, Paul preached the gospel to them. Even though his illness (unknown - possibly eye trouble, cf. v15) was a trial to them, they welcomed him. They welcomed Paul as if he were divine, ie., they highly esteemed him.

και "and" - AND. Coordinative; "and as for the state I found myself in", Cassirer.

εν τη σαρκι "even though [my] illness" - [THE TRIAL OF YOU] IN THE FLESH [OF ME]. This prepositional phrase is often treated as adverbial: concessive, "and though my condition ...", ESV, as NIV. Possibly expressing reference / respect, "you did not recoil from me with regard the state I was in", or causal, "because of my state of health", cf. Zerwick.

τον πειρασμον [ος] "was a trial" - THE TEMPTATION, TEST, TRIAL. "Paul's bodily sickness was a trial to the Galatians", Bligh, and by "resisting the temptation to show scorn or revulsion at the state of his body", cf., Dunn, they demonstrated "true friendship", Betz. "You did not hold against me the physical and emotional trials that I was undergoing at the time", Junkins.

ὑμων gen. "to you" - OF YOU. Variant "to me", lit. "my temptation", is unlikely. Paul's illness was their test, i.e., the genitive is adjectival, possessive, lit. "your test, but possibly verbal, objective.

ουκ ουδε "[you did] not or ..." - [YOU] NEITHER [DESPISED] NOR [LOATHED]. A negated comparative construction.

εξουθενησατε [εξουθενεω] aor. "you did [not] treat [me] with contempt" - DESPISED, CONSIDERED AS NOTHING. The object is Paul himself, μου "me" being a genitive of direct object. "You didn't shrink from me", Phillips.

ουδε εξεπτυσσατε [εκπτυτω] aor. "[or] scorn" - [NOR] SPAT OUT = LOATHED, DISDAINED. Possibly "spit out" in the sense of "reject an argument", so "reject the gospel". "When I fell ill you did not despise me or reject my gospel", Bligh.

αλλα "instead" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not, but"

εδεξασθε [δεχομαι] aor. "you welcomed [me]" - YOU RECEIVED AS A GUEST, WELCOMED [ME]. "Welcomed", as NIV, etc.

ως "as if I were as if I were" - LIKE, AS. Comparative; "you chose to treat me as you would an angel of God - as well as you would have treated Jesus himself if he had visited you", Peterson.

θεου [ος] gen. "[an angel] of God" - [A MESSENGER, ANGEL] OF GOD [AS JESUS CHRIST]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source; "from". Possibly the Galatians welcomed Paul "as a messenger from God", but better "as if he were (as they would welcome) an angel from heaven".

v15

In v15-16 Paul asks what has happened to the trusting relationship that existed between the Galatians and their founding apostle. The Galatians' esteem

for Paul knew no bounds; they rejoiced at his presence and would have done anything for him. Yet, what has happened to this esteem now?

οὖν "[**what has happened to all**] / [**where**], **then [is]**" - [WHERE] THEREFORE. Inferential; Paul is seeking to draw a logical conclusion from the Corinthians' illogical behaviour; "what then, has become of", Cassirer.

ὑμῶν gen. "**your**" - OF YOU. The genitive may be classified as adjectival, possessive, the favour / well-being and thus privilege that was theirs due to Paul's visit with them, although it is possible that the genitive is verbal, subjective, in the sense of "self-praise" which the Galatians had pronounced on themselves consequent to Paul's visit, so Betz, etc.

ὁ μακαρισμός [ος] "**joy / blessing of me now**" - *is* THE BLESSEDNESS, HAPPINESS. Nominative subject of an assumed verb to-be. This word expresses a state of well-being / favour ("satisfaction", RSV; "goodwill", NRSV; "enthusiasm", JB; "openhearted spirit", NAB) and so Paul probably has in mind the well-being that existed in the relationship between himself and the Galatians when he was with them "then", REB, or better "in having me with you (back then)", NEB. "What has happened to the satisfaction (in our trusting relationship) you felt at that time (when I was first with you)?", Peterson.

γὰρ "-" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining the reason for the question; "because I can testify to you that if it were possible you would have"

μαρτυρῶ [μαρτυρῶ] pres. "**I can testify**" - I BEAR WITNESS, TESTIFY. "I guarantee", Phillips; "I can give you my solemn word", Cassirer.

ὑμῖν dat. pro. "-" - TO YOU. Dative of indirect object, "testify to you" / interest, advantage, "I can testify to your credit that if", cf Bligh.

ὅτι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Paul can testify.

εἰ "**if**" - IF, *as is not the case*, [*you were* POSSIBLE = ABLE THE EYES OF YOU HAVING TORN OUT *then* YOU *would* HAVE GIVEN *them* TO ME]. Introducing a conditional clause, 2nd. class, where the condition is contrary to fact, although **αν** is missing in the apodosis, an omission associated with certain words, here **δυνατον**, "possible / you could have done so", cf., BDF 360."

δυνατον adj. "**you could have done so**" - [YOU WERE] ABLE. The verb is supplied with the adjective functioning as an adverb. "If you could have benefited me thereby you would have", Lightfoot.

εξορυσξαντες [εξορυσσω] aor. part. "**you would have torn out [your eyes]**" - HAVING TORN OUT, DUG OUT [THE EYES OF YOU]. Attendant circumstance participle identifying action accompanying the main verb "have given", "have

dug out and given", but it can also be treated as adverbial, modal, expressing manner. "You would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me", Barclay. **μοι** dat. pro. "**to me**" - Dative of indirect object.

v16

This difficult sentence is handled nicely by Bligh: "Have I sacrificed your affection by speaking the plain truth to you in this letter? I hope not!" Of course, the cause of the enmity may well be the initial teaching that Paul gave the Galatians, which now, due to the prodding of those "zealous to win you over", v17, has come between the apostle and his converts. This approach fits well with v17-18. Although nearly always translated as a rhetorical question, it is more likely that this verse is a statement, following on from v15, "..... so that I have become your enemy by speaking the truth to you." "Since you, then, regarded me with such affection and now count me as your enemy, this can only have come about through my telling you the truth", Burton.

ὥστε "- " - SO THEN, THEREFORE. Usually serving to express result, sometimes purpose. Not used in the NT to introduce a question. Here introducing an "explanation", Ridderbos. That Paul is no longer trusted by the Galatians, when once they would have given their life for him, exposes his gospel ("truth") as the cause, a gospel now called into question by the judaizers. "So now", Zerwick.

γεγονα [γινομαι] perf. "**have I now become**" - I HAVE BECOME. The perfect tense, referring to a past action with ongoing results, indicates that Paul does have in mind a past enmity, not one produced by this letter. "You regard me as", Barclay.

ὑμων gen. pro. "**your**" - [AN ENEMY] OF YOU. The genitive is adjectival, relational, as NIV.

εχθρος [ος] "**enemy**" - Predicate nominative. Intended in an active sense, ie., Paul is viewed as someone with hostile intent.

αληθευων [αληθευω] pres. part. "**by telling [you] the truth**" - SPEAKING TRUTH. The present tense is durative, expressing the ongoing action of telling the truth. The participle is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, as NIV. Possibly "by being frank with you", but better "by preaching the truth of the gospel", Fung, Bruce.

ὑμιν dat. pro. "**you [the truth]**" - TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

v17

iii] The intentions of the judaizers to promote another gospel, v17-18. In this verse Paul refers to the members of the circumcision party, the judaizers, and notes how they have come between him and the Galatian believers. It is usually

argued that their actions derive from "an egotistic purpose, or for material gain", Betz. The implication of false motives on the part of Paul's opponents (a feigned friendship for the purpose of promoting their cause [friendship evangelism!!!]) is accepted by most commentators, although Paul may simply be addressing changed loyalties with its consequent undermining of the truth.

ζηλουσιν [ζηλω] pres. "**those people are zealous to win [you] over**" - THEY ARE ZEALOUS, TAKE AN INTEREST IN [YOU]. A cryptic reference to the judaizers, unstated except in the 3rd per. pl. of "they are zealous / they want ... / themselves". Paul's readers would know who he is referring to. "The people who have come into your churches with their false gospel", Martyn. The word is often used to express the language of love, so "to seek to win for oneself / love jealously", Bligh; "be enthusiastic about / cultivate a person / run after", Zerwick; "they are making a play for the confidence of the Galatians and for a favourite attitude", Ridderbos. "They are courting you", Bligh.

ου καλως "but for no good" - NOT WELL, GOOD. The adverb takes a moral sense here, "commendably, in a manner free from objection", BAGD. Possibly again with the game of love in mind, but courting with "feigned affection", Martyn. "In no honourable way", Eadie; "dishonourably", Bligh, ie., their intentions are not honourable, "not based on good intentions", Ridderbos. They are "saying they are deeply concerned about you (when they are not)", Martyn. Of course, it may be the results that are "for no good".

αλλα "-" - BUT. Adversative; "on the contrary, what they are after is to exclude you", Cassirer.

θελουσιν [θελω] pres. "**what they want is**" - THEY DESIRE, WILL, WANT.

εκκλεισαι [ελλειω] aor. inf. "**to alienate [you (from us)]**" - TO EXCLUDE, SHUT OUT, SHUT AWAY [YOU]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "they will / wish", but it may also be viewed as introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they desire. Exclude from what? Exclude / shut out the affections of, possibly Paul, as NIV; "to alienate from the apostle and his associates", Fung, cf., Bruce, etc. Of course, "from us" is assumed by the NIV. A general sense of "cut them off from other influences", Ridderbos, seems best, although cut off from the wider church, or even from Christ, are all possible. "Perhaps the Teachers (judaizers) are portraying themselves as gatekeepers, intent on the altogether positive task of guiding the Galatians through the gate of Law observance into the blessing of Abraham", Martyn. Their argument being "if you do not accept circumcision as the first move in your observance of the Law, you will be excluded from the blessed people of God", Schlier. This technical understanding of "excluded" certainly fits the overall thrust of Galatians, but may be reading too much into one word.

ἵνα + subj. "**so that**" - THAT. Here introducing a purpose clause, "in order that", or result clause, "with the result that / so that".

ζηλοῦτε [ζηλω] pres. subj. "**you may be zealous**" - YOU MAY BE ZEALOUS OF. "The word is used not only for the quest for adherents, but also of the adherents' attachment to their leaders or teachers", Bruce. By excluding other influences, the Galatians will inevitably lean toward / seek / court the judaizers; "that you will make them the object of your affections", Martyn.

αὐτοὺς acc. pro. "**for them**" - THEM. Indirect reflective pronoun. "In order that you will court them (themselves)", Bligh.

v18

Although textual variants and complex syntax clouds Paul's words, we do seem to have a qualification here. "It is a beautiful thing to be the object of such zeal. I once experienced that. But then it must be expressed in the right way, and must not cease when the person is no longer present", Ridderbos. Paul does not mind having his converts eagerly sought after by others as long as their intentions are sound, as were Paul's when he was with the Galatians.

καλὸν neut. adj. + inf. "**it is fine [to be zealous]**" - [BUT/AND *it is*] GOOD. Predicate adjective. A not uncommon construction, "it is good to" "To be courted is a good thing".

ζηλουσθαι [ζηλω] pres. pas. inf. "**[it is fine] to be zealous**" - TO BE COURTED, ZEALOUS. Passive, "to be eagerly sought/courted", is better than the NIV middle voice. The infinitive serves as the subject of the assumed verbal phrase "is good", although an articular infinitive variant exists. "To be paid court to (courted) in a good cause is a good and acceptable thing", Cassirer.

ἐν καλῷ "**[provided] the purpose is good**" - IN GOOD. The prepositional phrase is adverbial, modal, expressing manner, modifying the verbal aspect of the infinitive "to be zealous"; "It is an honour to be courted honourably", Bligh. Stylistic variant for the καλῶς of v17", Bligh.

παντοτε adv. "**and to be so always**" - ALWAYS, AT ALL TIMES.

μη μόνον "**and not just**" - [AND] NOT ONLY. "Whether I am with you or not", Junkins.

ἐν τῷ περὶναι [περὶμι] pres. inf. "**when I am**" - IN THE TO BE PRESENT [ME]. The articular infinitive with the preposition ἐν forming a temporal clause, contemporaneous time, "while / during".

πρὸς + acc. "**with [you]**" - TOWARD [YOU]. Here expressing association / accompaniment, "with / in company with", although possibly with the idea of movement to /toward so "not only when I visit you", Bligh.

v19

iv] Paul's tender desire that Christ again be the centre of their Christian life (rather than the law), v19-20. "In verse 19 the tone changes again in the tender double images in this verse of Paul as in labour pains with them, and the Galatians as requiring an extended gestation period until Christ is fully formed in them", Dumbrell. The second image of gestation is unclear. Are the Galatians gestating in the womb, or do they represent the mother doing the gestating? Both, of course, illustrate Paul's desire that the Galatians be shaped into the image of Christ and both illustrate that "his laborious efforts to make them true to Christ has to begin all over again", Allan.

τεκνα μου "**my dear children**" - CHILDREN OF ME. An affectionate address used to emphasize what follows.

οὗς masc. acc. "**for whom [I am again]**" - WHOM. An accusative of direct object. The antecedent is obviously "children". Even though technically neuter, "children" is conceived as masculine.

παλιν "**again**" - "I am in travail with you over again."

ωδινω "**I am [again] in the pains of childbirth**" - I SUFFER BIRTH PAINS OF CHILD BEARING. With the accusative of direct object, "I bring forth in pain", Bligh. "Just like a mother in childbirth", TEV.

μαχρις οὗ + subj. "**until**" - Forming a temporal clause, although purpose is possible, BDF 383/2. "Until such time as", Zerwick.

μορφωθη [μορφω] aor. pas. subj. "**is formed**" - [CHRIST] MAY BE FORMED. The word is used to describe "the process whereby the fetus develops into an infant", Fung.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [YOU]. Local, expressing sphere - incorporative union.

v20

At this point, Paul expresses his frustration with having to rely on perplexing reports concerning the situation in Galatia and his having to respond by means of long-range correspondence, correspondence which may not accurately address the situation. "Ah, if I could only talk to you face to face and adjust my tones to suit your situation", Hunter.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional; here copulative, ie., "having the force of concluding something", Betz.

ηθελον [θελω] imperf. "**how I wish**" - I WOULD WISH, DESIRE. The use of the imperfect has prompted some debate: possibly an epistolary imperfect, Moule; a conative imperfect expressing incomplete action, Turner; a suppressed conditional sentence, "[if it were God's will then] I am willing to be present now", so Bligh; imperfect *de conatu* "expressing the fact that the wish is not at present

fulfillable", Betz, but probably just a voluntative imperfect, expressing a desire or wish, Schrenk.

παρειναι [παρειμι] pres. inf. "**I could be**" - TO BE PRESENT. Along with the infinitive "to change", this infinitive introduces a dependent statement of perception / pondering, "I wish/will that I could be present and that I could change"

προς + acc. "**with [you]**" - TOWARD [YOU JUST NOW]. Here expressing association, "with". See v18, so possibly "visit with you."

αλλαξαι [αλλασσω] aor. inf. "**[my] tone**" - [AND] TO CHANGE [THE TONE OF ME]. Possibly "exchange my voice", Betz, ie., be with the Galatians in person to talk to them rather than have to address them in an impersonal letter. Possibly in the sense of "modify", NEB; "Paul does not quite understand how things stand in the Galatian churches, and is not sure whether his letter is entirely fitting" - "Adapt my tone", Bligh. Possibly Paul is excusing the terse nature of his letter; "I wish I did not need to talk to you like this", Barclay.

ὅτι "because" - Here expressing cause/reason.

απορουμαι [απορεω] pres. "**I am perplexed**" - I AM AT A LOSS, I AM AT MY WITS END. Possibly in a rhetorical sense of running out of arguments, so Betz, but better as an expression of concern; "I am puzzled, frightened, and deeply concerned about what is happening to you", Junkins.

εν + dat. "**about [you]**" - IN, ON, WITH, TO [YOU]. Here adverbial, expressing reference / respect; "in respect to you", Burton.

4:21-5:1

5. Exhortations, 4:8-6:10

ii] Stand firm and do not submit again to the slavery of the law, 4:21-5:1

Argument

In this, the second of his exhortations to the Galatian believers, Paul takes the story of Hagar and Sarah, v21-23, expounds its meaning, v24-27, applies it, v28-29, and then ends with the exhortation - "stand firm and do not submit again to the slavery of the law", v30-5:1.

Issues

i] Context: See 4:8-11. Most commentators treat this passage as the last step in the theological argument that Paul commenced in 2:15/3:1. Betz actually suggests that it is Paul's "strongest argument." These notes follow Longenecker who argues that this passage is the second of Paul's "appeals and exhortations headed by the imperative 'become like me!' of 4:12." Note the imperatives, "be glad", "break forth", "cry aloud" and particularly "cast out the slave woman and her son". These imperatives are encapsulated in 5:1, although there is some doubt as to whether or not this verse should be included in the passage ("tell me", 4:21, and "look here", 5:2, seem to open new paragraphs, so Martyn).

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *Stand firm and do not submit again to the slavery of the law:*

Exhortation, 5:1:

"Stand firm, therefore,

and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery", 5:1.

Biblical illustration, 4:21-23;

The story of Hagar and Sarah.

Exposition, 4:24-27;

The two women represent two covenants.

Application, 4:30-5:1.

"We are children, not of the slave but of the free woman."

iv] Interpretation:

The second exhortation: By the use of the Hagar-Sarah illustration, Paul makes the point that the Galatian believers are confronted with a choice of two ways forward in the Christian life; the choice is between the present Jerusalem / Mount Sinai, or Jerusalem above, ie., the choice is between flesh or promise; law or Spirit; slavery or freedom. Paul reminds the Galatian believers that they are the children of the free woman, the

children of promise / grace, v31, and that therefore they are to live out that reality, casting out the nomism of the judaizers, v30, reaffirming the freedom they possess in Christ and refusing to submit again to the slavery of law for blessing, 5:1.

It is unclear why Paul has used the Hagar-Sarah illustration. Most commentators argue that Paul is seeking to reverse the Judaizers' use of the Hagar-Sarah story, ie., Paul's "lawless" believers are the children of Hagar, while those believers who respect the law are the children of Sarah, and are thus the children who properly inherit the Abrahamic promises. From Paul's perspective, the story of Hagar and Sarah draws out the conclusion that the New Testament church is presently divided between a predominately nomist Jewish faction that rests on grace plus Law, a faction finding its support from the circumcision party in the Jerusalem church, and a Gentile / Hellenistic faction that rests on grace apart from Law, a faction coalesced around Paul and his missionary churches.

v] Homiletics: *We are children, not of a slave, but a free woman.*
Develop Grace / Law, the two covenants, v24-27.

Text - 4:21

The Hagar-Sarah Allegory, 4:21-5:1: i] The story of Hagar and Sarah, v21-23. Addressing those members of the church who now feel it necessary to place themselves under the law of Moses, Paul asks them if they really understand how the law impacts on their life.

λεγετε [λεγω] imp. "tell" - "I want to pose a question to those of you ...", TH.

μοι dat. pro. "me" - TO ME. Dative of indirect object.

οι θελοντες [θελω] pres. part. "you who want" - THE ONES DESIRING, WANTING, WILLING. The participle serves as a substantive. The present tense indicating an ongoing desiring of some church members, although Longenecker argues that Paul is addressing all members. Longenecker also argues that the members' desire to be under the law means that they have not yet fully placed themselves under the law; it is still an intention. This is unlikely, since intentions are usually followed up by action and in any case, the context surely implies that even now some members of Paul's mission churches have adopted the nomist / pietist message of the judaizers.

ειναι [ειμι] pres. inf. "to be" - The infinitive is usually classified here as complementary, but it can also be taken as introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what some members of the congregation desire, namely, to be under the law.

ὑπο + acc. "under" - Expressing subordination; in the sense "subject to", "controlled by", for the purpose of restraining sin and progressing holiness to access the promised blessings of the covenant, as realized in Christ, namely, the fullness of life in the Spirit.

νομον [ος] "the law" - LAW. As already indicated, the law Paul has in mind is open to some debate. The lack of the article indicates that "Law" in mind is the law addressed in this letter, namely the Torah, the Law of Moses, Old Testament law, extending to God's law in general.

ουκ ακουετε [ακουω] pres. "are you not aware?" - DO YOU NOT HEAR [THE LAW]? The negation ουκ implies a positive answer to the question. The second use of the word νομον, "law", is often understood to refer to the scriptures rather than to the Mosaic law, the Torah, God's laws as detailed in the scriptures. Yet, given the context of the passage, it seems more likely that both references to νομον, "law", refer to the Torah. The message of the Torah is that it enslaves and condemns us. So, there is probably a touch of irony in the question; "Tell me then, you who are so eager to be subject to the law, have you listened to what the law says?", NJB.

v22

Three facts are pinpointed in the story of Hagar and Sarah, v22-23. a) Abraham has two sons, Ishmael and Isaac; b) There are two mothers, one a slave and the other free; c) The birth of the two boys is different: Ishmael is born in the normal manner, but Isaac, although he underwent a natural conception and birth, was a child of promise. With Ishmael, Abraham relied on his own ingenuity and effort, while for Isaac, he relied on promise / God's grace.

As already indicated, it is possible that the Hagar and Sarah story would be well known to Paul's readers because it was used by the judaizers to argue that only those who submit to the Sinai covenant share in the promised Abrahamic blessings and thus Gentile believers must submit themselves to the Mosaic law if they are to share in Isaac's blessings, as opposed to being cast out with Ishmael. This case is argued by Barrett, and noted by Longenecker. If Barrett is correct, then Paul is using a debating technique which, even today, scores high points. It is best described as *heading for the high moral ground and throwing water on the slippery slope below*.

γαρ "for" - Introducing a causal clause explaining what the Law says, namely, scripture tells us that

γεγραπται [γραφο] perf. pas. "it is written" - IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN. Not referring back to "the Law" as if "the Law" means "the scriptures", "it says", TEV, but rather a formula term for a scriptural reference; "scripture tells us", Bruce; "in the scriptures we learn that ..", CEV.

ὅτι **"that"** - Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech explaining what the scripture says.

ἐκ + gen. **"by"** - [ABRAHAM HAD TWO SONS, ONE] FROM, OUT OF [AND ONE] FROM, OUT OF [THE FREE WOMAN]. Here expressing source / origin.

της παιδισκης [η] **"the slave woman"** - THE MAIDSERVANT. A shorthand description of Hagar's status in Abraham's home, given that most Jews would know the story back to front. Dumbrell notes that Paul uses "slave woman", "free woman", here, rather than their names, since he wants to establish the central theme of the illustration, namely, the worth of freedom over slavery. "A woman (Hagar), who was his wife's slave, gave birth to one of his sons (Ishmael), and his wife (Sarah) gave birth to the other (Isaac)", TH.

v23

ἀλλὰ **"-"** - BUT. Here probably not adversative, but rather "other matter for additional consideration", BDAG 445.3. A textual variant exists, "indeed", i.e., Paul agrees with the Judaizers at this point; "but the son of the slave", ESV.

ὁ **"-"** - THE ONE. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase "of the one of the maid-servant according to the flesh" into a nominal / noun phrase, subject of the verb "to be born." This construction is repeated in the second half of the adversative comparative construction.

μὲν δε **"..... but"** - *on the one hand* [THE ONE FROM THE MAIDSERVANT HAS BEEN BORN ACCORDING TO FLESH] BUT *on the other hand* [THE ONE FROM THE FREE WOMAN THROUGH PROMISE]. An adversative comparative construction.

ἐκ + gen. **"[his son] by [the slave woman]"** - OUT OF, FROM. As above, identifying source/origin of the child.

γεγεννηται [γεννωω] perf. pas. **"was born"** - HAS BEEN BORN. An allegorical perfect where an action referred to in the Old Testament is applied in the present.

κατὰ + acc. **"born in the ordinary way"** - ACCORDING TO [FLESH]. Expressing a standard; "in the ordinary course of nature", REB.

διὰ + gen. **"as the result of a [promise]"** - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [A PROMISE / THE PROMISE]. Translators tend toward "because of", "on account of", and therefore "as a result of", so NIV, but the preposition followed by a genitive usually expresses means; "through" or "by means of", "by the agency of", so "by the power of God's promise", Knox.

v24

ii] The story expounded, v24-27. Paul presents an interesting typological interpretation of this story. He doesn't suggest that the original writer intended

these conclusions, just that in light of the revelation of the mystery of the kingdom of God in salvation history, *figurative* conclusions can be drawn. The two women stand for two agreements ("covenants"). Hagar, the slave, represents the agreement between God and Israel on Mount Sinai, an agreement which promised access to the Abrahamic blessings through obedience to the law. This of course was an impossible demand, thus inculcating the curse of the law, and so reinforcing the primacy of the Abrahamic covenant based on promise / grace, appropriated through faith. As Hagar, the slave, bore children into slavery, so the law bears children into slavery. The law's message is that the law enslaves us to sin and death.

ατινα pro. "**these things**" - WHICH THINGS. Nominative subject of the periphrastic present. This longer form is used instead of the simple plural relative pronoun; an example of Pauline style. "These things" = all that has been said about the Hagar Sarah story so far.

εστιν αλληγορουμενα [αλληγορεω] pres. pas. part. "**may be taken figuratively**" - ARE ALLEGORIZED. A periphrastic present, possibly serving to emphasize duration. Paul announces that he is going to treat the Hagar-Sarah story as an allegory, spiritualizing the story and applying its truths to the life of his present readers. To do this he will use an inductive method of exposition, rather than deductive. Paul's Biblical theology will control the exposition such that it is more typology (the identification of theological correspondence) rather than allegory, even so, it is hard to know to what extent he thought his conclusions properly exegete the text. "Interpret allegorically", Longenecker.

γαρ "for" - More reason than cause, or just transitional and so left untranslated.

αυται pro. "**the [women]**" - THESE. Demonstrative pronoun, nominative subject of the verb to-be, singling out "the women."

εισιν [ειμι] pres. "**represent**" - ARE. The sense of the verb to-be here is something like "represents", or "stands for", both terms being used in the bulk of translations. "Signifies", Bruce.

διαθηκαι [η] "**covenants**" - [TWO] COVENANTS, AGREEMENTS *with God*. Predicate nominative. The two women represent two agreements between God and humanity, one represents the Sinai agreement. The primary function of the Mosaic law is to expose sin and thus enact the curse of divine judgment. By doing this, the Sinai covenant refers back to the Abrahamic covenant and the facilitation of the promise on the basis of the faithfulness of God appropriated through faith, apart from law. The law, of itself, only enslaves and thus submission to the law for God's promised blessings gives birth "to offspring destined for slavery", Cassirer.

μεν δε "-" - Adversative comparative construction; "the women represent two covenants: *on the one hand*, one from Mount Sinai v26, but on the other hand, Jerusalem (Zion)"

απο + gen. "**from**" - [ONE] FROM [MOUNT SINAI]. Expressing source / origin. γεννωσα [γεννωω] pres. part. "**bears children**" - BRINGING FORTH, BEARING [*children TO SLAVERY, WHO IS HAGAR*]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the "one from Mount Sinai". Possibly referring to Hagar, but more likely to the "one covenant" whose children end up as slaves, as do the children of Hagar.

v25

Paul makes the point that the slavery of Hagar and her children represents the slavery of Israel under the Sinai covenant encapsulated in the Law of Moses. The shorter reading, "Sinai is a mountain in Arabia and represents", REB, is not widely accepted. There are also textual variants related to the opening of the verse, either a connective, "now, but, and" or a causal "for, because."

εστιν "**stands for**" - [BUT/AND HAGAR] IS = REPRESENTS [MOUNT SINAI IN ARABIA]. The literal translation "Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia", NRSV, makes no sense, so it is likely that the verb to-be again takes a meaning like "stands for, represents", as NIV, or better, "serves as a type". "Corresponds", Bruce.

συστοιχει [συστοιχω] pres. "**corresponds**" - [AND] STANDS IN THE SAME LINE. Note the military sense of soldiers standing in the same line. "Represents", even "a figure of", so possibly "tells us something about the present Jerusalem (the children of the law, the people of the Sinai covenant)."

τη .. Ιερουσαλημ dat. "**to the [present] Jerusalem**" - TO THE [NOW = PRESENT] JERUSALEM. Dative of direct object after the verb συv prefix verb "to correspond to."

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Causal.

δουλευει [δουλεω] pres. "**she is in slavery**" - SHE IS IN BONDAGE, SLAVERY. The subject is probably Jerusalem, although Hagar is possible.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - Expressing association / accompaniment. The present earthly Jerusalem and her children, that is, all who adhere to the law as the means of facilitating the Abrahamic promise - "life" = new life in Christ.

αυτης gen. "**her [children]**" - [THE CHILDREN] OF HER. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

v26

When it comes to Sarah, she represents God's eternal agreement, the promise of life, in all its fullness, as a gift of grace appropriated through faith, a promise

even now realized in "the Jerusalem above" as believers gather with Christ in the heavenlies, Eph.1:20, 2:6.

δε "but" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point, "but".

ανω adv. "**[the Jerusalem] that is above**" - [THE JERUSALEM] ABOVE [IS FREE]. The adverb is used here as an attributive adjective. Different descriptors are possible: "the heavenly Jerusalem", Barclay; "the Jerusalem on high", Moffatt; "Jerusalem in heaven", CEV. The crucial issue is to understand what this image represents. "The community of the new covenant", Bruce, certainly fits with the heavenly assembly image of the eschatological Zion, which image is dominant in both Jewish and Christian writings. Paul steers clear of the obvious parallel, "the new Jerusalem" with the "Jerusalem to come."

ἡτις pro. "**she**" - Nominative subject of the verb to-be. The longer compound personal pronoun is again a feature of Pauline style.

ἡμων gen. pro. "**our [mother]**" - [WHO IS MOTHER] OF US. The genitive is adjectival, relational. The textual variant, "mother of us all", seeks to underline the inclusiveness of "our", the mother of all believers, but is probably not original. The simple "our" makes the point well enough.

v27

The quote, Isaiah 54:1, promises that Jerusalem, now desolate due to the Babylonian exile, will be restored and will outshine the old Jerusalem. The children of the free woman will exceed that of the slave. Ultimately, the children of faith will surpass the children of obedience.

γαρ "for" - FOR [IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN]. More reason than cause, confirming the truth of v26, namely that believers, the children of grace, the heavenly Jerusalem, are the children of promise (Sarah's children), and that even now the heavenly Jerusalem is being realized and is outshining the present Jerusalem (the children of law).

ἡ οὐ τικτουσα [τικτω] pres. part. "**you who never bore a child**" - [REJOICE, BARREN] THE ONE NOT GIVING BIRTH. The NIV treats the participle as a substantive, standing in apposition to "barren woman", but it can also be taken as adjectival, attributive, limiting "barren woman"; "O barren one who does not bear", ESV.

ἡ οὐκ ωδινουσα [ωδινω] pres. part. "**you who were never in labour**" - [BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT] THE ONE NOT SUFFERING BIRTH PAINS. The participle serves as a substantive.

ὅτι "because" - Here adverbial, introducing a causal clause.

της ερημου gen. adj. "**[the children] of the desolate woman**" - [MAY THE CHILDREN] OF THE DESOLATE, DESERTED. The adjective serves as a substantive,

while the genitive adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "the children born from the desolate woman", or adjectival, relational; "The deserted wife", REB.

ἢ **"than"** - [RATHER] THAN. Comparative.

της εχουσης [εχω] gen. pres. part. **"of her who has [a husband]"** - THE ONE HAVING [THE HUSBAND]. The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, relational.

v28

iii] The story is applied, v28-29. The Galatians are not Hagar's children, but the children of Sarah, and along with Isaac, are the inheritors of a promise that is by grace through faith and not works of the law.

δε **"now"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument, here probably logical, "So", in the sense of "so here is the point that I have been making in v21-27."

ὕμεις **"you"** - YOU. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. Variant "we" is probably not original. Paul is reinforcing the fact that believers, many of whom are now Gentiles, are the children of promise; they are Sarah's children, and are therefore the inheritors of Abraham's promised blessings. "You Gentiles."

αδελφοι [ος] **"brothers"** - Used of fellow believers.

κατα + acc. **"like [Isaac]"** - ACCORDING TO [ISAAC]. Expressing a standard, "in accordance with, corresponding to"; "but you brothers are children of promise, as Isaac was", Barclay.

επαγγελιας [α] gen. **"of promise"** - [ARE CHILDREN] OF PROMISE. Emphatic, due to the position of the word in the sentence. The genitive is probably adverbial, causal, "you were born because of this promise", CEV; consecutive, "as a result of his promise", TEV; even instrumental, "we are children born by promise", Phillips. Possibly better adjectival, attributive, limiting children; "children who owe their existence to God's Promise", Ridderbos, or idiomatic / source, "children born out of a promise."

v29

As Ishmael persecuted Isaac, so Jews, particularly Judaizers (nomist believers), will harass Christ's disciples.

αλλα "-" - BUT. Unlikely to be transitional, "and", Longenecker, probably adversative, "but", REB, etc.

ὡσπερ τοτε οὕτως νυν **"at that time it is the same now"** - AS THEN SO NOW. A temporal conditional clause where Paul draws another correspondence from the Sarah-Hagar story, namely, the harassment of the child of promise by the natural born child, ie., believers by Judaizers.

ὁ ... γεννηθεις [γεννω] aor. pas. part. "**the son born**" - THE ONE HAVING BEEN BORN. The participle serves as a substantive.

κατα + acc. "**according to [the flesh]**" - Expressing a standard, "according to, corresponding to." Note though the second use, "according to the Spirit", where the NIV, Moffatt, .. has opted for an adverbial sense, instrumental, expressing means, "by", with Barclay opting for a consecutive sense, "as a result of the action of the Spirit", and Berkeley going for a modal sense, "one born in a Spirit-working way." Martyn opts for an adverbial usage, means / agency, and does so with both uses in this verse, so "the son begotten by the power of the flesh the son begotten by the power of the Spirit."

εδιωκεν [διωκω] imperf. "**persecuted**" - WAS HARASSING, PURSUING, PERSECUTING. "Made trouble for the child", CEV.

πνευμα [α ατος] "**the Spirit**" - [THE ONE *born* ACCORDING TO] SPIRIT, [SO ALSO NOW]. Possibly just the human spirit is intended, "the spiritual son", Phillips, but more likely the Holy Spirit, even though there is no article. The language switch from "promise" to "Spirit" indicates, certainly in Paul's mind, that the agent of the promise, both the giving of it and its realization, is the Holy Spirit.

v30

iv] Concluding exhortation, 4:30-5:1. Since the Galatian believers belong to Paul's faction, they should recall their true identity, v31, expel the false teachers / Judaizers / members of the circumcision party from their midst, v30, and refuse to return to the slavery of a false gospel, 5:1, cf., Martyn 433. The quote comes from Genesis 21:10.

αλλα "**but**" - BUT [WHAT SAYS THE SCRIPTURES]? Adversative. "Yet", Phillips.

εκβαλε [βαλλω] imp. "**get rid of**" - CAST OUT [THE MAIDSERVANT]. Possibly a strong "drive out", Barclay, or a lighter "send away", TEV, even lighter still, "separate from / disengage." Either, "drive out" nomism, or "drive out" the judaizers ("be thrown out of the Christian assemblies in Galatia", Garlington, so Martyn, Dunn, etc.), possibly "exclude", Betz.

αυτης gen. pro. "**[and] her [son]**" - [AND THE SON] OF HER. The genitive is adjectival, possessive / relational.

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Causal.

της παιδισκης [η] gen. "**the slave woman's [son]**" - [NEVER WILL THE SON] OF THE MAIDSERVANT, SLAVE WOMAN [INHERIT]. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

ου ... μη "**never**" - Emphatic negation, here with a future tense rather than a subjunctive.

κληρονομησει [κληρονομεω] fut. "**will [never] share in the inheritance**" - The children of promise should disengage from the natural born children because the natural born will never receive what God has promised.

μετα + gen. "**with [the free woman's son]**" - WITH [THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

v31

Leaving aside the analogy, the sense is: "Who then are Abraham's true children and heirs of the promise made to Abraham and his descendants? Those who, by faith, rest on God's promise of life." "Whatever you do, never surrender the freedom Christ has won for you", Hunter.

διο "**therefore**" - therefore [brothers]. Introducing a logical conclusion to 4:21-30 (so Lightfoot, although Bruce suggests 2:14 on), a conclusion which probably includes this verse and the next and introduced by the text in v30. "So then", TEV.

εσμεν [ειμι] "**we [are not children]**" - Paul now includes himself in the children of the free woman; "we".

παιδισκης [η] gen. "**of the slave woman**" - OF A MAIDSERVANT. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

αλλα "**but**" - Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, as NIV.

της ελευθερας gen. adj. "**of the free woman**" - The adjective serves as a substantive, while the genitive is adjectival, relational.

5:1

"Christ has set us free so that we should put our freedom to its proper use. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be caught once again in the yoke of slavery", Cassirer.

τη ελευθερια dat. "**for the freedom**" - TO, BY, WITH, FOR THE / THIS FREEDOM. Dative of destination. Up till recent times this dative was usually treated as instrumental, "with freedom Christ has set us free", Bruce. Bruce argues that the freedom is "the freedom" of the gospel of liberty, so, "by the liberating power of the gospel Christ has liberated us." On the other hand, some modern commentators have taken the dative as one of interest, advantage, expressing goal, destiny or purpose, so "for freedom ..", as NIV. cf., Moule IB, or dative "of place whither", Smyth, so "to bring us into the realm of freedom", Martyn. However we read the dative, the point of the exhortation is clear enough; "whatever you do, never surrender the freedom Christ has won for you!", Hunter. The Galatian believers are to "protect and preserve their liberty given by faith from the danger of falling back into the slavery of the law", Dumbrell.

ηλευθερωσεν [ελευθερω] aor. "set [us] free" - [CHRIST] FREED, RELEASED. "The freedom that Christ has won for us", Phillips.

η̐μας pro. "us" - Direct object of the verb "to set free." Again, Paul includes himself.

στηκετε [στηκω] imp. "stand firm" - [THEREFORE] STAND FAST [AND NOT AGAIN BE HELD BY A YOKE OF SLAVERY]. In the sense of "stand your ground"; "hold onto your freedom", CEV.

ου̐ν "then" - THEREFORE. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion from the proposition that Christ has set us free for freedom.

μη̐ ενεχεσθε [ενεχω] + dat. pas. imp. "do not let be burdened [again] by" - DO NOT BE ENSNARED, ENTANGLED / BE SUBJECT TO, BE BURDENED BY. "Don't let yourselves be caught again in the shackles of slavery", Phillips.

ζυγω [ος] dat. "a yoke" - Dative of direct object after the εν prefix verb "to be held by." Martyn suggests that the yoke is "the universal state of human affairs" and that if the Galatian believers return to law-obedience to progress the Abrahamic promises they will find themselves back "again" where they came from, enslaved to the "beggarly rudiments" (basic principles of the world), 4:9. Paul happily equates the "rudiments" of pagan ethics with the Torah, such that the end of a Jew under the law, or a pagan under his cult, is the same end, slavery and death. It is clear from Paul's argument in Galatians that a believer is liberated from submission to the law as a means of progressing their Christian life in order to access God's promised blessings. In Christ we are set free to experience the fullness of God's promised blessing of life, and this apart from the law.

δουλειας [α] gen. "of slavery" - The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "yoke"; "enslaving yoke."

5:2-12

5. Exhortations, 4:8-6:10

iii] Do not cut yourself off from Christ by submitting to the Mosaic law, 5:2-12

Argument

In this passage, which serves as an appeal to the Galatian believers, Paul reminds his readers that if they try to use law-obedience to appropriate the blessings of the Christian life, they will cut themselves off from Christ.

Issues

i] Context: See 4:8-11.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: #3. *Do not cut Christ off by submitting to the Mosaic law:*

Exhortation:

With respect to a reliance on law-obedience,

"wake up before it is too late", Barnes, v7-12.

Explanation:

a negative warning in regard to nomism, v2-4;

restatement of Paul's central proposition (2:15-21), v5-6;

warning, v7-12:

by means of questions, remarks, a proverb and appeal..

iv] Interpretation:

The third exhortation: In this, the third of his exhortations to the Galatian believers, Paul encourages his readers to resist the temptation that they should submit themselves to the Mosaic law as the means of appropriating the fullness of God's promised new life in Christ. To choose this course of action will serve only to cut them off from Christ and the gift of new life found in him through the renewing work of the Spirit. As for those who are promoting this heresy, namely, the members of the circumcision party, they "will pay the penalty"; their infection must be resisted.

Paul's argument in relation to the new perspective on Paul: Paul's specific mention of circumcision draws us into the debate over the new perspective on Paul. It is possible to argue that Paul is warning the Galatian believers against, as it were, converting to Judaism, of placing themselves under the Mosaic covenant which, although once a viable means of relating

to God, has now been replaced by the new covenant and is therefore dead, and this because the Mosaic atonement system that once effectively covered sin has been made obsolete through the work of Christ. Yet, against this new perspective line, these notes take the view that both the Torah and the Mosaic atonement system (covering inadvertent sin only), served primarily to expose sin and thus the necessity to rest on promise (grace). The Mosaic covenant is but a negative restatement of the Abrahamic covenant, such that the divine promise of life has always rested on the faithfulness of God appropriated through faith, now fulfilled in the faithfulness of Christ (the atonement). So, Paul's direction to the Galatian believers that they not submit to circumcision is not driven by a fear that they are moving to a dead system, but rather that they are flirting with the infective yeast of nomism, a heresy dominant in second temple Judaism and adopted by the members of the circumcision party. The totality of God's promised blessings (full justification) rests with the faithfulness of Christ and does not require a supplementary submission to the law. To supplement grace with law is to undermine grace, and thus undermine the basis of a person's justification / recognition of being in the right with God - *Christ supplemented is Christ supplanted*.

v] Form:

Treating this passage as an exhortation seems appropriate, although, even at this point, there are still some commentators, eg. Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia*, who argue that it is part of the central theological discourse of the letter.

vi] Homiletics: *Perseverance*



In my first catechist position at St George's Paddington, in Sydney, Australia, I found myself embroiled in a debate over *The Perseverance of the Saints*. The leader of the youth fellowship, a Church Army officer, knew that as a Moore College student I would follow the standard Calvinist line of "once saved always saved". It was my first Sunday afternoon at the church and I soon found myself in deep water. I knew a few of the verses supporting the sovereignty of God in salvation, but this was their area of expertise, and they knew many more verses supporting the notion that a believer can lose their salvation. In this

debate, it seems the victors were those who could produce the greatest number of verses in support of their case.

One of the most fearful thoughts that can confront a believer is encapsulated in the words, "depart from me." Could we find ourselves locked out of the wedding feast like the foolish virgins? Well we might sing, "give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning, burning, burning." Our fear stems from not being good enough for God, not acceptable enough. What if our lamp grows dim, will we be left behind? What if we fail to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling"?

Lack of assurance in the Christian life is a powerful debilitator. It forces us into a life of pious obedience, as if by living a better life we can prove ourselves worthy of God's love. Then, in the face of constant failure, we can do little but deny our guilt and bury it in a life of righteous indignation - the art of speck removal. In the end our assurance, our confidence in our eternal salvation, is further undermined.

In our reading today, Paul openly suggests that our salvation can be undermined, even nullified. Clearly, "once saved always saved" is far too simplistic. A person's eternal salvation can be eroded, but not by the usual "I'm not good enough" routine. In fact, it's the "trying to be good enough" that's the problem.

Body: See notes.

So, here lies our confidence, our assurance, our perseverance. By trusting Jesus for our salvation, we are reckoned good enough for God - eternally assured of a place of honour in the presence of God.

Text - 5:2

Exhortation 3. Do not cut yourself off from Christ by submitting to the Mosaic law, v2-12: i] Paul encourages his Galatian readers to step back from the law-obedience-for-blessing heresy, v2-4. The first reason why the Galatian believers should not be circumcised is that by doing so, they would cut themselves off from the fullness of new life (the promised Abrahamic blessings) in Christ.

ιδε [ειδον] imp. "**Mark my words**" - BEHOLD. Interjection; "Look here!"

εγω pro. "**I**" - I [PAUL]. Emphatic, underling what follows. As of bearing witness, offering up an "affidavit", Dunn.

υμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - [SAY] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

οτι "**that**" - Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Paul wants to say.

εαν + subj. "if" - IF, *as may be the case*, [YOU ARE CIRCUMCISED, *then* CHRIST WILL PROFIT YOU NOTHING]. Introducing a 3rd. class conditional clause where the condition has the possibility of coming true.

περιτεμνησθε [περιτεμνω] pres. pas./mid. subj. "**you let yourselves be circumcised**" - YOU ARE CIRCUMCISED / GET YOURSELVES CIRCUMCISED. It can be argued that since the conditional clause refers to the future, then "the Galatians' circumcision was still pending", Longenecker. Yet, a verb, taking the future tense in the apodosis implies a logical consequence, not a temporal one. A subjunctive verb, taking a present tense in the protasis, is a formal construction, with the present tense expressing aspect (durative action). Either way, the issue here is not just circumcision, since circumcision serves as a technical reference for the totality of Jewish cultic law, cf., Betz.

ωφελησει [ωφελεω] fut. "[Christ] **will be of [no] value [to you at all]**" - WILL PROFIT, VALUE, ADVANTAGE, BENEFIT, BE OF USE TO. In what sense circumcision is of no value is open to debate (see above for the new perspective line, i.e., "going the whole way to become proselytes", by adopting the symbol of "Jewish ideological and nationalistic imperialism", Dunn). It seems likely that Paul uses circumcision in a representative way, encapsulating submission to the Mosaic law as a whole, but for what purpose? It is usually argued that such submission is for the purpose of justification / salvation and thus "Christ will be of no benefit" at the last judgment, or possibly "not benefit" when it comes to "the powers that enslave", Martyn, cf., Allan, Betz, George, Dunn, Ridderbos, Stott, Barnes, Guthrie, Bruce. These notes on Galatians take the line that the judaizers' submission to the law of Moses is for the purpose of progressing the Christian life, a methodology for which "Christ will be of no benefit." "What he (Paul) strenuously opposes is the imposition of circumcision and a nomistic lifestyle on Gentile believers as being necessary for living out their Christian faith in a proper fashion, for that takes us right back to the basic issue of righteousness (both forensic and ethical) as being based on either 'works of the law' or faith in 'the faithfulness of Jesus Christ'. For Gentiles [all believers?] to revert to the prescriptions of the Jewish Law as a necessary form of Christian lifestyle is, in effect, to make Christianity legalistic rather than Christocentric, and so not have Christ's guidance in one's life", Longenecker. Of course, the benefit is surely greater than just "guidance". The Galatian believers are using the Mosaic law to restrain sin and progress holiness for the full appropriation of God's promised blessings, the immediate consequences of which entails the loss of those blessings, even the loss of their eternal salvation - "a Christ supplemented is a Christ supplanted", Hendriksen.

ουδεν "**no [value to you] at all**" - NOTHING. Accusative of respect.

v3

Paul now gives the second reason for not getting circumcised, namely, the burden of the law's impossible demands (with its curse for noncompliance). As noted in v2, circumcision serves as the defining act of submission to the law of Moses for blessing.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, introducing the next step in the argument.

παλιν **"again"** - AGAIN. Not found in all manuscripts. Indicating that v3 reinforces v2.

μαρτυρομαι [μαρτυρω] pres. **"I declare"** - I WITNESS, TESTIFY. Emphatic, demanding attention; "I affirm solemnly", Zerwick; "you can have my solemn word once again", Cassirer.

παντι dat. adj. **"to every [man]"** - Dative of direct object. The generalization here indicates that Paul's words apply to those who have been circumcised, as well as those who are contemplating circumcision. "Man" is probably inclusive, "any man or woman", although, as with baptism, circumcision would be a family act initiated by the male head of the home.

περιτεμνομενω [περιτεμνω] pres. pas./mid. part. **"who lets himself be circumcised"** - BEING CIRCUMCISED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "man", although Blich suggests that the anarthrous construction "to every man being circumcised" carries conditional force, "if a person lets themselves be circumcised then they are obliged to fulfill the whole law". Passive = "allow yourselves to be circumcised"; Middle = "get yourselves circumcised".

οτι **"that"** - Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Paul testifies.

οφειλετης [ης ου] **"he is obligated"** - [HE IS] A DEBTOR, A PERSON MORALLY OBLIGATED TO PAY OFF A DEBT. Predicate nominative. "You must obey the whole law", CEV.

ποιησαι [ποιεω] aor. inf. **"to obey"** - TO DO. The aorist is obviously gnomic, expressing a universal truth. The infinitive is expegetic, clarifying the noun "a debtor", he is a debtor to obey ("to the demands of" may have been where Paul was originally heading) the whole law.

ολον adj. **"the whole [law]"** - [TO DO THE] WHOLE [LAW]. Accusative object of the infinitive "to do / obey." Presumably Paul is making the point that the maintenance of covenant standing, and thus the appropriation of the promised Abrahamic blessings, by means of obedience to covenant regulations, requires complete obedience of all regulations, Deut.28:58-59. Paul is by no means alone in this understanding of the inter-dependence of Biblical law, cf., Jam.2:10. Of course, the members of the circumcision party, having adopted the nomism of second temple Judaism, would not have held such a ridged view of the law's

demands. Note how Jesus exposes the hypocrisy of the Pharisees with their highly developed reductionism, happily affirming doable "gnat" law, while ignoring the weightier matters of the law, matters of justice. "He is committing himself to every line and word of Old Testament Law (surely the totality of God's law inc. NT?)", Junkins.

v4

The third reason for not getting circumcised / submitting to the law of Moses to maintain justification (the state of being set right with God, along with all the blessings that such entails) is that it alienates a believer from Christ and thus from grace / promise / God's covenant mercy. Bligh points out that linking prepositions would have been better grammatically for this verse, but by leaving them out, Paul establishes a "more dramatic and emphatic" sentence.

οἵτινες rel. pro. "**you who**" - [YOU WERE ESTRANGED FROM CHRIST], WHOEVER, EVERYONE WHO. Paul typically uses a complex pronoun for a simple "you who".

δικαιοσθε [δικαιω] pres. pas. "**are trying to be justified**" - ARE BEING JUSTIFIED, SET RIGHT [BY GOD]. Usually treated as a conative / tendential present (a contemplated, or attempted action), as NIV (the verbal action "trying" = "effort to attain to", is potentially misleading when perception / attitude may be intended), given that the indicative "are being justified [by law]" is expressing an action that Paul regards as impossible. Bligh argues that this use of the present tense is not well attested and that Paul is either being ironical, "you who *imagine* you are being justified by the law", or the clause is reflective, "you who *reckon yourselves* justified by your observance of the law".

How is Paul using the verb "justified" here? The usual ethical / forensic options are suggested, but Paul's big-picture view rules out an either / or. As already argued in these notes, the nomist believers did accept that their justification rested on the atoning work of Christ, 2:15-16, but it is likely that their understanding of justification was limited to forgiveness and did not include the totality of God's promised new life. For the nomists, this new life, being the substance of the Abrahamic promise, required law-obedience. Paul, on the other hand, saw justification, as part of God's putting all things right, realized in union with Christ such that the totality of the promised life already belongs to those who rest on the faithfulness of Christ. Even now we reside with Christ in the heavenly places and share with him the immeasurable riches of God's grace, Eph.2:4-10. So, Paul's reference to justification by works of the law, does not concern the gaining of covenant acceptance, but rather the maintenance of covenant standing by obedience to the law, and this for the acquisition of God's promised new life (the substance of the promised Abrahamic blessings). As

already noted in these studies on Galatians, the issue is not about getting saved (forgiveness), but about staying saved (holiness). See "justified" in 2:16 / Excursus I. "You who think you can maintain your justification by obedience to the law"

εν + dat. "**by [law]**" - IN, ON = BY [LAW, YOU FELL FROM GRACE]. Either instrumental, "by the law", or locative, "in the sphere of the law". It is more than likely that this prepositional phrase is short for "on the basis of the works of the law", so Burton.

κατηργηθητε [καταργεω] aor. pas. "**have been alienated**" - YOU WERE MADE INACTIVE, INVALID = ESTRANGED (with the prep. "from" gives the sense "estranged, separated, loosed from"). The aorist is dramatic / gnomic and does not state whether the action has, or is, being fulfilled, but rather the inevitability of its completion. This serves to draw the action into the present for dramatic effect. The nomist believers would naturally think that their attention to law will progress their walk with Christ, but again the principle applies, "a Christ supplemented is a Christ supplanted", Hendriksen. "You will inevitably be alienated from Christ."

απο + gen. "**from [Christ]**" - Expressing separation; "away from."

εξεπεσατε [εκπιπτω] aor. "**you have fallen**" - YOU FELL FROM, LOST GRIP OF / BANISHED, EXPELLED. The aorist is again dramatic. "You have removed yourselves from the sphere of grace", Barclay, or "you are banished from his grace", Bligh.

της χαριτος [ις ιτος] gen. "**away from grace**" - OF GRACE. The genitive here is likely to be ablative, expressing separation, "away from." God's grace / promise represents his covenant mercy; God's willingness to fulfill his covenant promises in those who do not deserve his kindness. "From the realm of grace", Martyn.

v5

ii] Having warned his readers of the negative consequences of nomism, Paul counters positively in v5-6, referring to the central truth of his proposition outlined in 2:15-21. On the basis of the faith of Christ / the faithfulness of Christ / Christ's obedient sacrifice, which we appropriate through faith, we expectantly wait for our eternal hope, namely, the full entitlements associated with our justification / our being set right with God. Such is part of God's setting all things right, the reality of which we even now experience through the Spirit, cf., 3:1-5. Circumcision / law-obedience is irrelevant to God's setting all things right; what matters is faith in Christ's faithfulness on our behalf, a faithfulness driven by God's love for us.

γαρ "but / for" - FOR [WE BY THE SPIRIT FROM FAITH EAGERLY AWAIT HOPE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS]. The TNIV cause / reason seems unlikely, better contrastive, as NIV, so Dunn, Ridderbos. Longenecker suggests an unusual usage "similar to the conjunction **ὅτι**, introducing a series of abbreviated statements of significance" ("dogmatic abbreviations", Betz), here in v5-6, summarizing Paul's proposition outlined in 2:15-21. The two positive statements in v5-6 establish "a sharp disjunction between seeking justification **εν νομῳ** (in law) and seeking it **εκ πιστεως** (from faith)", Bligh. "With us things are entirely different", Martyn.

εκ + gen. "by" - FROM, OUT OF [FAITH]. Here expressing source / origin, so "on the basis of faith", the "faith" probably being Christ's faith / faithfulness, as well as our faith in Christ's faith / faithfulness. See "derived from / on the basis of" and "faith of Christ" in 2:16 / Excursus I.

ἡμεις pro. "we" - Emphatic by position and use. Who are the "we"? Usually Paul means "we apostles", or "we believing Jews", so Longenecker, Witherington, but here he seems to include his Gentile converts, "we over against the judaizers", Fung.

απεκδεχομεθα [**απεκδεχομαι**] pres. "eagerly await" - AWAIT INTENTLY, EARNESTLY, PATIENTLY. The prefixed prepositions **απ** and **εκ** serve to intensify the action of the verb. Always used by Paul of "eschatological expectation", Bligh, "a special kind of waiting, one that is directed to the final redemptive act of God", Martyn. The placement of this verb is rather awkward in the Gk., but serves to emphasize that we don't facilitate justification, it is God who puts right, we but "expectantly wait", Peterson.

πνευματι [**α ατος**] dat. "through the Spirit" - BY SPIRIT. The dative is instrumental, expressing means. The "hope", that which we eagerly await, is facilitated "through / by means of the power of the Spirit", Zerwick.

δικαιοσυνης [**η**] gen. "the righteousness" - OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. An expegetic genitive specifying the content of the "hope", "the hope of righteousness" = "the hope which is that perfected righteousness", Zerwick, although the NIV treats "hope" as an act of hoping when it is most likely "the thing hoped for", Bligh. A verbal genitive, objective, is proposed by some; "hoped for righteousness." This "righteousness" = "being justified" - the divine "recognition of covenant inclusion", Dumbrell, of being set right with God as part of God's putting all things completely right. As already noted in v4, God's setting right is bigger than forgiveness, and even bigger than a forensic last-judgment acquittal, so Bruce, Morris (God's setting right is "past, present and future", Dumbrell), and certainly bigger than ethical improvement. Being "right" in Christ entails the immeasurable riches of God's grace: forgiveness, acquittal at

the final judgment, holiness, eternity. See "justification" in 2:16 / Excursus I.

ελπιδα [ις εως] acc. "**for which we hope**" - HOPE. Accusative direct object of the verb "to await." "Hope" is best understood as "that which we hope for", modified / defined by the genitive "righteousness"; "the confident hope of", NJB.

v6

γαρ "for" - Possibly introducing Paul's second propositional truth and therefore more emphatic than causal. See v5 above. "When we are in Christ Jesus", NCV.

εν + dat. "in [Christ Jesus]" - IN, ON, BY [CHRIST JESUS]. A local sense is surely intended, incorporative union; "in relation to / united to Christ Jesus". "One together with Christ Jesus", TH.

ουτε ουτε "neither nor." - NEITHER [CIRCUMCISION IS OF CERTAIN FORCE] NOR [UNCIRCUMCISION]. Negated comparative construction. For "circumcision" read "Jewish cultic law", Betz. Usually understood as "it makes no difference whether you are circumcised or not", CEV. It is certainly possible that Paul is exposing the impotence of both circumcision, and uncircumcision; in the game of salvation neither matters, "it is totally irrelevant in the realm of the Christian life", Fung. Yet, it is possible, given that many Galatian believers are obviously proposing to be circumcised, that Paul should declare as worthless both the act and the intention; "neither circumcision nor the want of it ...", Cassirer, cf., Knox.

ισχυει [ισχυω] pres. "**has [any] value**" - IS OF FORCE, STRONG, ABLE. "Valid / effective / counting for something", Zerwick, as regard justification, or in the more general sense, "means nothing", Knox, "has any meaning", Cassirer.

τι "any [value]" - CERTAIN = ANY. Accusative of reference. Classical Gk. ουδεν.

αλλα "the only thing that counts" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "but only", Beyer.

πιστις [ις εως] "**faith**" - Nominative subject of the assumed verb "to be strong." Again, "faith" is usually understood as "commitment of oneself to Christ", but of course, as already argued, faith is best understood as Christ's faith, his perfect acceptance of the will of God, his faithfulness, the benefits of which may be appropriated in union with Christ through our faith in him. "The real power is faith", Martyn.

ενεργουμενη [ενεργεω] pres. part. mid/pas. "**expressing itself**" - WORKING, WORKING EFFECTIVELY. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "faith", "faith which is driven / energized / made effective / activated / made operative

...". The difficulty lies in identifying whether it is passive, or middle, eg., passive, "faith energized by charity"; middle, "faith working through charity", Bligh. Usually translated as middle voice (so most commentators, with some exceptions, eg. J.A. Robinson [never middle in Paul], G.S. Duncan), so, "faith finding its expression in love", Cassirer (note danger: "the operation of faith through love is not to be understood in a synergistic sense, as though faith through its expression of love cooperates in producing salvation", Ridderbos). None-the-less, if we understand "faith" in terms of Christ's faith, and "love" in terms of God's love, then passive would be best, particularly as the idea of human faith active in love at this point in the argument is rather incongruous (note the torturous explanations by Fung); "the faithfulness of Christ energized by God's love."

δια + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [LOVE]. Instrumental, expressing means.

v7

iii] To support his exhortation that his readers step back from the law-obedience-for-blessing heresy promoted by the judaizers, "Paul has some stern words to say to the Galatians. He throws everything at them - questions, pointed remarks, a proverb, appeals and a dose of sarcasm, in order to wake them up before it is too late", Barnes, v7-12. In literary terms we can define this section as a "series of comments and remarks", Longenecker. Verse 7 is in "the form of an appeal - this time to the readers' original attitude to the gospel", Fung.

ετρεχετε [**τρεχω**] imperf. "**you were running**" - YOU WERE RUNNING. The action is past durative, imaging a race meeting.

καλως adv. "**a good race**" - WELL. "You did well", AV.

ενεκοψεν [**εγκοπτω**] aor. "**cut in on [you] and kept [you] from**" - [WHO] HINDERED, BLOCKED, CUT IN ON, GOT IN THE WAY OF, THWARTED [YOU]. Paul continues using the image of a running race where someone has unexpectedly entered the race and cut off / tripped up / interfered with a fellow runner. "You were running splendidly; who has put obstacles in your way", Bligh.

μη πειθεσθαι [**πειθω**] pres. inf. pas. "**obeying**" - NOT TO BE PERSUADED [BY THE TRUTH]. The infinitive, forming an infinitival phrase, may be exegetical, as NIV; "who hindered you from obeying the truth", ESV. The infinitive could also be adverbial, clarifying / modifying the verb "hindered", possibly forming either a final clause (purpose), "in order that", or consecutive (result) clause, "with the result that / so that"; "who go in your way so that you do not follow the truth", Berkeley. "Who has put an obstacle in your way to prevent you / to come between you and your loyalty to the truth", Bruce / Cassirer.

μηδενι πειθεσθαι "-" TO BE PERSUADED BY NO ONE. A not well attested variant reading. "Who has hindered you? Obey no one (in such a way as) not to obey the truth", Bruce.

τη αληθεια dat. "**the truth**" - BY THE TRUTH. Dative of direct object after the verb *πειθω*, here as an infinitive, when it takes the meaning "to obey, follow." Possibly instrumental, expressing means; "who persuaded you not to obey (= prevented) by the truth of the gospel." The article may well have been added. This leads Burton to adopt a qualitative sense; "who has hindered you from obeying truth?" Given that the article is often used to specify and that nouns are often definite in themselves, "the truth" is obviously intended, "the truth of Paul's gospel", Dumbrell.

v8

"Whatever arguments were used to persuade you (to "submit again to a yoke of slavery") certainly did not come from the God who calls you", Barclay.

η πεισμονη [η] "**that kind of persuasion**" - the / this persuasion. Hapax legomenon, once only use in the NT. Possibly "contrived persuasiveness", Longenecker, "empty rhetoric", Epiphanius, even "flattery", Chrysostom, but probably better just "referring to the other missionaries' (judaizers) explanation of what participation in the inheritance of Abraham requires", Dunn.

ουκ εκ + gen. "**does not come from**" - *is* NOT OUT OF, FROM. Expressing source / origin.

του καλουντος [καλεω] pres. part. "**the one who calls**" - THE ONE CALLING [YOU]. The participle serves as a substantive. The CEV & NCV "the one who chose you" is somewhat bold, expressing the effective call of God / the election of individuals to salvation. "Call" may properly be translated as "invite", "first called you (ie., the call of the gospel)", but of course, our theological propensities will determine our translation. "The one calling" is obviously God, but there is the outside possibility that Paul is obliquely referring to himself. None-the-less, it is likely that the "call" is God's "call" and that it refers to his elective, creative, act of calling into being the redeemed community in Christ. This sovereign act of God, whereby the covenant promises are fulfilled in Christ, is announced in the gospel. Although we are persuaded (not forced!!) to share in God's new creation, he certainly does not persuade us to pursue law-obedience for blessing (nomism). Whatever means of persuasion had been used on the Galatians, "you may be certain that it does not have its source in God, who has sent out his call to you", Cassirer.

v9

Paul illustrates how the false teaching of the Judaizers has permeated through the church. "A proverbial saying having to do with the tendency of small matters to become large concerns and so to dominate a given situation", Longenecker, cf. 1Cor.5:6.

ζυμοι [ζυμοω] pres. **"works through"** - [A LITTLE LEAVEN] FERMENTS, LEAVENS [ALL THE LUMP]. In Jewish circles the leavening process of yeast is often viewed negatively. Is Paul referring to the Judaizers, or their teaching? Presumably he is reflecting on "the possibility that all members of the Galatian churches will succumb to the Teachers' (Judaizers') false gospel", Martyn.

v10

None-the-less, Paul is confident that this false teaching will inevitably be rejected by the Galatian believers. The leading lights of this untruth will inevitably face judgement, no matter how important they are.

εγω **"I"** - Emphatic; "I, regardless of what others may think,", TH.

πεποιθα [πειθω] perf. **"am confident"** - HAVE CONFIDENCE, AM PERSUADED, CONVINCED. An intensive perfect expressing a present state initiated by a previous action.

εις υμας **"-"** - INTO YOU. In classical Gk. the verb **πειθω**, "I am confident", would take the dative, "you", being a dative of direct object, "I am confident in you", but in NT Gk. "the use of prepositional phrases instead of simple cases increases greatly", Zerwick, cf., Bligh. Accusative of respect; "I am confident, regarding you,", Longenecker.

εν + dat. **"in [the Lord]"** - IN [LORD]. Local, expressing space / sphere, incorporative union, or cause / basis. By "Lord" Paul usually means Jesus. Paul's confidence is not that his readers are "in the Lord", although he may well be confident of this; his confidence is that his readers "will take no other view" and this because he is "united to the Lord", ie., his communion with the Lord. Possibly "united to you in (with) the Lord", Cassirer.

οτι **"that"** - Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing the content of Paul's confidence (may be classified as epexegetic).

ουδεν φρονησετε [φρονεω] fut. **"you will take no [other] view"** - YOU WILL NOT THINK, HOLD AN OPINION, SET ONE'S MIND ON. What opinion? Presumably that the false gospel is infecting their church (as yeast infects dough) and that they should respond by rejecting it. Possibly "that you will not disagree (with what I have said in v5-6a)", Bligh, or a wider "I am convinced that you will not think any other way than what you have learned from us", Junkins.

αλλο pro. **"other"** - OTHERWISE.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point; "I feel persuaded in the Lord that you will not go wrong. But he who unsettled you, will have to meet his doom", Moffatt.

ὁ παρασσων [παρασσω] pres. part. "**the one who is throwing [you] into confusion**" - THE ONE TROUBLING, DISTURBING, UPSETTING [YOU]. The participle serves as a substantive. Commentators divide on whether Paul has in mind a particular false teacher (certainly not Peter), "the person who is upsetting you", Barclay, or a more general "whoever it is who is worrying you", Phillips. We are best to take it as a generic singular, cf. 1:7, 5:12; so, "those troubling you."

βαστασει [βασταζω] fut. "**will pay**" - WILL BEAR, CARRY / SUFFER, ENDURE. The Judaizers will have to "bear" "the sentence", namely, the divine anathema.

το κριμα [α ατος] "**the penalty**" - THE JUDGMENT, CONDEMNATION / SENTENCE / PENALTY. Accusative direct object of the verb "to bear / endure."

ὅστις εαν + subj. of verb to-be. "**whoever he may be**" - The relative pronoun ὅστις (usually ὅς) + εαν = an indefinite relative pronoun; "the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is", ESV. Classical Gk. would have αν and not εαν, but in Koine Gk. both are used. As noted above, the singular number of troublemakers could leave us with "whosoever he be", but probably better to stretch the Gk. to "whoever they are." It is most likely that the judaizers belonged to the Jerusalem church and that Paul knew at least some of them and may well have met them at the Jerusalem conference, but he is politically discrete and doesn't name names.

v11

Paul now adds another independent statement to the list found in v7-12, all of which serve to support his exhortation. This one seems to identify one of the charges made against Paul by the members of the circumcision party. The charge seems to imply that Paul was willing to put aside the Mosaic law in order to win Gentile converts ("become all things to all men that by all means I may save some!!!"), but when it comes to the crunch, he promotes the law rather than devalues it.

αδελφοι [ος] "**brothers**" - A nominative used instead of a vocative; "As in my own case", Cassirer.

εγω pro. "**I**" - [BUT/AND] I [BROTHERS]. Emphatic by position. "My brothers", Phillips.

ει + ind. if - IF, *as is the case for argument's sake*, [STILL I PROCLAIM CIRCUMCISION, *then* WHY STILL AM I BEING PERSECUTED]. Introducing a

conditional clause, 1st. class, where the condition is assumed to be true, for argument's sake.

ετι adv. "**still**" - YET, STILL. Temporal adverb. Paul once proclaimed the law, but when converted he preached grace, despite what some may say.

κηρυσσω pres. "**preaching [circumcision]**" - I COMMUNICATE, PROCLAIM.

διωκομαι [διωκω] pres. pas. "**[why] am I [still] being persecuted**" - I AM BEING PERSECUTED, HUNTED DOWN.

αρα "**in that case**" - THEN, THEREFORE. This inferential particle expresses result in the terms of an inference drawn from the conditional clause; "then it appears that / then in that case"

το σκανδαλον [ον] "**the offense**" - THE STUMBLING BLOCK. Nominative subject of the verb "to nullify." That which trips up, provides an occasion for sin / causes offense. Here obviously in the sense of "gives offense, causes revulsion, arouses opposition", Longenecker. "The very thing that causes offense in the preaching of the cross", Cassirer.

του σταυρου [ος] gen. "**of the cross**" - The intended meaning of the genitive is, as usual, difficult to pin down. In this clause it is often treated as verbal, subjective, "the offense *prompted by* the cross"; "then those who believe in circumcision would no longer find the cross offensive", Barclay. Yet, better exegetical, limiting by specifying the offense. So, there is a sense where "the thing which causes offense" is limited by "the cross." Possibly the cross itself, i.e., the scandal of the cross, but more likely "the preaching of the cross", Cassirer, that is, the gospel / "the theology of the cross", Longenecker, and therefore the very proposition which is the basis of this letter to the Galatians, namely, that the person who is right with God is a person who is grounded on the faithfulness of God in Christ. Such a person will experience God's promised new life, and this apart from the law. Paul, of course, rests this proposition on Habakkuk 2:4. For nomists, both religious Jews and law-bound believers (most of whom would be converted Jews), this gospel is indeed a scandal, an offense. If Paul is still preaching circumcision / the totality of Jewish cultic law, then there is no scandal / offense.

κατηργηται [καταργεω] perf. pas. "**has been abolished**" - HAS BEEN ENTIRELY NULLIFIED, ABOLISHED, MADE OF NO EFFECT.

v12

A final sarcastic comment. As for the agitators, Paul hopes they will "take up some other cause and leave you alone", Junkins.

και "-" - AND [I WISH *that*]. Possibly emphatic; "Indeed I wish"

οἱ ἀναστατούντες [ἀναστατω] pres. part. "**those agitators**" - THE ONES AGITATING, TROUBLING, DISTURBING, UPSETTING [YOU]. The participle serves as a substantive.

οφελον "**I wish**" - Expressing an unobtainable wish, or "a wish not likely to be realized", Zerwick.

ἀποκοψονται [ἀποκοπτω] fut. mid. "**they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves**" - will cut themselves off. Possibly a gentle, "would take up some other cause and leave you alone", Junkins, or a more brutal, "would castrate themselves, let alone circumcise themselves", Barclay.

5:13-18

5. Exhortations, 4:8-6:10

iv] Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for sin, but let your lives be guided by the Spirit, 5:13-18

Argument

Although a believer must be free from the slavery of the law, they must also be free from the slavery of sinful living. Paul makes the point that when we keep in step with the Spirit, living under grace rather than law, we live in love, and love fulfills the law.

Issues

i] Context: See 4:8-11. The literary unit covering this passage is 5:13-6:10, and consists of two main paragraphs, 5:13-5:24/25, 5:25/26-6:10. Both paragraphs are controlled by a series of imperatives.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: #4. *Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for sin, but let your lives be guided by the Spirit:*

Exhortation:

"Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh", v13a.

Explanation:

Love fulfills the law, v13a-15.

Exhortation:

"Walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh", 16.

Explanation:

Our struggle with the flesh cannot be won by the law.

The passage before us is controlled by a series of imperatives: The first imperative, "do not use", must be assumed; the second, **δουλευετε**, "serve as a slave", pres. imp.; the third, **αγαπησεις**, "love", an imperatival use of the future tense, v14; the fourth, **βλεπετε**, "watch out" pres. imp., v15; and the fifth, **περιπατειτε**, "walk", pres. imp., v16.

iv] Interpretation

The fourth exhortation: In the passage before us, Paul makes the argument that when we keep in step with the Spirit, living under grace rather than law, we live in love, and love fulfills the law. Love, the quality that sums up the ethical demands of the law, is realized in the life of a

believer when they rest on the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit of Christ. When we are in Christ, the love of Christ compels us. So, Paul encourages his readers to "not let the possession of [their] freedom serve ... as an opportunity for yielding to the promptings of the lower nature", but rather that they "let [their] lives be guided by the Spirit", Cassirer. In this passage Paul gives balance to his antinomian slant by confronting the evil of libertarianism.

A further note on Paul and the Law: Paul's prime purpose in writing to the Galatians is to confront the heresy of nomism, an early form of pietism bearing many of the marks of today's sanctification-by-obedience quagmire. The Galatian heresy was promoted by members of the circumcision party, Jewish believers who taught that obedience to the Mosaic law was the means by which a believer restrained sin and progressed holiness for the full appropriation of God's promised blessings - new life in Christ. It was assumed that the law served as "the divinely-given means of aiding our inclination for good to overcome our inclination for evil", Fung. Paul argues the opposite; he says that submission to the law only prompts the sinful nature (flesh) to further rebellion. This was the prime function of the law for Israel, as it is today. The law serves to expose our sinfulness, inculcate the law's curse, bring down divine judgment, and thus drive us to God for mercy. In Christ we are set free from the curse of the law, and so for a believer to place themselves again "under the law" serves only to promote their sinful nature and thus move them into a cycle of rebellion, a cycle which will inevitably undermine their standing in Christ.

The law also served to guide the covenant life of the people of Israel, and of course, it serves that function today for those with a faith like Abraham's. To such, the law is a delight, a gift from God. Paul, of course, affirms this function of the law, arguing that it is fulfilled in the law of love realized through the indwelling compelling of the Spirit. Walking by the Spirit is the path for Christian living, a path which is apart from both nomism and anti-nomism. Once a person is set free to follow the leadings of the Spirit, rather than remain bound to the demands of the law, they find themselves no longer controlled by the powerful dynamic of the sinful nature. We are then free to honour Christ in our lives and this we do, albeit imperfectly; As Luther put it, "the old Adam retains his power until he is deposited in the grave".

v] Homiletics: *Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for sin*
See Structure above.

Text - 5:13

Exhortation 4. Do not allow your freedom to promote self-indulgence, on the contrary, be servants of one another, love one another, v13-18. The freedom a believer possess in Christ carries with it the obligation of love. Paul, having reminded his readers not to subject themselves again to the law as a means of progressing their Christian life, now reminds them that the Christian life does have moral implications, but these are realized through the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit of Christ and not by law-obedience. Not only must we be free from the slavery of the law, we must also be free from the slavery of sinful-living (the "desires of the flesh").

γαρ "-" - FOR. Here transitional, indicating a step in the argument.

ὑμεις "you" - YOU [BROTHERS]. "You brothers", not the members of the circumcision party, v12.

εκληθητε [καλεω] aor. pas. "**were called**" - WERE CALLED, SUMMONED, INVITED. "Called" carries many theological overtones which are not necessarily intended by the context. The sense "invite" should be considered, as also the theological sense of a "called out people of God", i.e., God's sovereign act is expressed in the creation of an ordained community, without specifying the individual members.

επ [επι] + dat. "**to be**" - TO / FOR. Here expressing purpose / goal; "with a view to."

επ ελευθερια [α] dat. "**free**" - FREEDOM. "No longer enslaved." Negatively expressed: freedom is not to be used as an "opportunity for the flesh" - for the "sinful nature". Positively expressed: freedom should be used as an opportunity for service to the brotherhood through love (caring compassion).

μονον μη adv. "**but do not use your [freedom]**" - ONLY NOT [*use your FREEDOM*]. Adverb - limiting. The phrase contains an ellipsis in that the noun "freedom" is obviously the object of a missing imperative verb. There are numerous possibilities eg.: "be careful that freedom does not become" Phillips; The goal of freedom is mutual service through love.

εις + acc. "**to**" - INTO = FOR. Here expressing purpose / goal, end view, "with a view to indulging the flesh", but possibly result, "resulting in indulging the flesh."

αφορμην [η] "**indulge**" - AN OCCASION, PRETEXT, EXCUSE, OPPORTUNITY... REASON. Using our freedom as an "opportunity" for the flesh seems best in the context and also fits with the military use of the word; "base of operations."

σαρκι [σαρξ σαρκος] dat. "**flesh**" - IN = FOR THE FLESH. Dative of interest, advantage; "for the flesh." "That self-regarding element in human nature which

has been corrupted at the source, with its appetites and propensities, and which if unchecked produces the 'works of the flesh', Bruce, cf., v6, ie., "human nature." Some commentators lean more toward the meaning "evil intent", "bodily desires", "physical desires", even the action itself, "works of the flesh", and this because of the context, particularly v15, seems to move in this direction.

ἀλλὰ "rather" - BUT. Strong adversative in a counterpoint construction, "not, but", as NIV.

διὰ + gen. "in [love]" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [LOVE]. The preposition, followed by the genitive, gives the sense of either "serving one another": i] "through love" (as an agent), or ii] "by means of love" (as an instrument). The love intended here is most likely the same as v6b where faith expresses itself through love - loving kindness, compassion. The definite article probably serves to cue this fact, therefore, love is the agent of our serving one another. There are again other possibilities, namely that the love referred to here is either God's love for us, or our love for God, both of which would take an instrumental sense, enabling us to serve one another.

v14

Paul goes on to make the point that the law of God is "fulfilled" (better than NIV "summed up") in love. Although we are free from the law's right to condemn sin, to hold us to our sin, we are still bound to apply its divine guidance, and this guidance is fulfilled / completed in mutual service through love. The very substance of the law is love, compassion. Paul quotes Leviticus 19:18b to make this point. The law directs us to care for others with the same energy with which we care for ourselves. On the one hand, through our identification with Jesus, we have actually kept the law as far as God is concerned, and on the other hand, through the compelling love of the indwelling Spirit of Christ, we begin to be the loving person we are already in Christ. So, mutual love fulfills the law.

γὰρ "for" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why the Galatians should love one another, "because"

ὁ πᾶς νομὸς "the entire law" - ALL LAW. The position of the article may imply that the Torah is not intended as in v3, but rather, in a general sense, namely, the divine principles and intentions that lie behind all human laws.

πεπληρωται [πληρωω] perf. pas. "is summed up / is fulfilled" - HAS BEEN FILLED UP, FULFILLED, COMPLETED. The perfect tense is used to make a general assertion. The meaning is either that the "law" is "summarized" in the law of love, or is "completed (made perfect, stands fulfilled)" in the law of love. "Stands fulfilled" seems best in that the whole law rests on the principle of love, so therefore, the person who loves fulfills the law's requirements.

εν + dat. **"in [a single command] / in [keeping this one command]"** - IN [ONE WORD]. Local, expressing space; "in one sentence", Barclay. "Commandment" is better than a "divine word / truth".

απαλησεις [αγαπαω] fut. **"love"** - THE *word = instruction*, LOVE. The future tense is being used for an imperative, or possibly to express an absolute truth.

τον πλησιον adv. **"neighbour"** - THE NEAR, NEIGHBOUR [OF YOU]. A substantive adverbial phrase functioning as a noun, object of "love". Like the lawyer in the parable of the Good Samaritan, we may ask "who is my neighbour?" For Paul, the neighbour is our brother and sister in Christ. We may think Jesus has answered otherwise, but Jesus didn't actually answer the lawyer's question. The lawyer didn't think he had a problem loving his neighbour, he just wasn't sure how far his loving had to extend. The parable underlines the impossible demand of love. The lawyer's real problem lay in his inability to "go thou and do likewise", which, of course, is the point of the parable.

ως **"as [yourself]"** - Comparative; "as you love yourself", i.e., the golden rule, cf., Matt.7:12.

v15

The opposite of mutual service through love is a congregation acting like a pack of wild animals, "biting and devouring each other." Such behaviour results when believers use the freedom they have in Christ as an opportunity for the free expression of their sinful nature.

δε "-" - but/and. Transitional, possibly indicating a step to a contrasting point, "but if on the other hand"

ει + ind. **"if"** - IF, *as is the case for argument's sake*, [YOU BITE AND DEVOUR, THEN BEWARE LEST YOU ARE DESTROYED BY ONE ANOTHER]. Introducing a 1st class conditional clause where the condition stated in the "if" clause is assumed to be true for argument's sake.

δακνετε [δακνω] **"biting"** - BITE (as with a snake). "Hurting each other", "snapping", NEB.

κατεσθιετε [κατεσθιω] **"devouring"** - DEVOUR, GULP DOWN (as with a wild animal). "Harming each other", "tearing to pieces", NEB.

βλεπετε [βλεπω] pres. imp. **"watch out"** - LOOK. "Look, I need to warn you.. / you need to beware.."

μη αναλωθητε [αναλωω] aor. pas. subj. **"you will be destroyed"** - LEST YOU ARE DESTROYED, CONSUMED (as with fire). Technically a subjunctive of prohibition forbidding the intention of an action, although following a verb of perception, here βλεπω, "I see", this construction can form an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they need to look out for, namely, "that you are not consumed by one another." With such a construction

the usual **ἵνα** or **ὅτως** leading the subjunctive is missing. Paul's warning to the Galatian church is that if they keep fighting with each other over the issue of law and grace they will inevitably destroy the church.

ὑπ [ὑπο] + gen. "**by [each other]**" - Expressing agency.

v16

Paul now explains how the goal of freedom, namely, mutual service through love (community, fellowship, unity, oneness), is achieved. "Live by the Spirit", says Paul (RSV "walk", meaning conduct our life under the influence of the Spirit). Here we have the secret of successful Christian living. By detaching ourselves from the demands of the law and cooperating with the inward dynamic of the indwelling Spirit of Christ, we find that we are no longer driven by the dynamic of the sinful nature.

δε "so [I say]" - BUT/AND [I SAY]. Another step in the argument; "The point that I am making is this...."

περιπατεῖτε [περιπατεω] pres. imp. "**live**" - WALK ABOUT. "Walk", as in walk / travel the way / pathway, is being used in a moral sense, "conduct oneself", therefore "live". The present tense indicates an ongoing action (durative). "Continue to walk".

πνευματι [πνευμα ατος] dat. "**by the Spirit**" - IN = BY SPIRIT. "Holy Spirit" is obviously intended, but it could be argued that we should live "by our spiritual self", "our conscience." The instrumental dative "by the Spirit", with the imperative "live", may be taken to mean either: "allow the Spirit to guide", "allow the Spirit to direct your lives", TEV, or "live in accordance with the Spirit's guidance." The first option is best. It is faith in the operation of the indwelling Spirit of Christ that enables / empowers a believer to love as Christ loves. No law can compel such love. Again, we see that the Christian life is all about receiving rather than doing.

και "and" - Particularly after an imperative, **και** implies result; "and as a result you will never ever gratify the desires of the flesh."

ου μη τελεσητε [τελεω] aor. subj. "**you will not gratify**" - BY NO MEANS COULD YOU FINISH, PERFORM, COMPLETE, FULFILL, GRATIFY. A subjunctive of emphatic negation; the double negative with the subjunctive, carries an emphatic future sense, with the "not" emphasized. Note the NRSV "do not gratify the desires of the flesh". The phrase may be taken as a promise rather than a command (an imperative). Given that believers do often gratify the flesh, the NRSV can be commended for its honesty at least. The promise is not a "higher life" proof text; a promise of perfection for those who "live by the Spirit". In fact, the sentence is surely elliptical. "Live by the Spirit" (follow the leading of the Spirit) stands against "observe the law" (following the demands of the law).

Because we are no longer under the law (under the law's condemning authority), our sinful nature is no longer empowered by the law, and so we are free from the control of our sinful nature. As a consequence, we "will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature", i.e., we will not be / are not bound to fulfill the demands of the flesh. We are now free to honour Christ, although there will still be many times when we don't. The promise is one of orientation, not perfection.

επιθυμιαν [α] "**the desires**" - LUSTS, DESIRES, PASSIONS. The word does not necessarily indicate evil desire, but in the New Testament it usually does.

σαρκος [σαρξ κος] gen. "**of the sinful nature**" - OF FLESH, LOWER NATURE. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "lusts", "fleshly lusts", but verbal, subjective, or idiomatic / source, are possible, "the promptings *stemming from* your lower nature", cf., v13.

v17

Within the believer there is a continual conflict between the sinful nature (flesh), and the Spirit. The conflict is such, that the Spirit does not overrule the flesh, nor does the flesh overrule the Spirit. As a consequence, we are not forced to follow the leading of the sinful nature, but then, neither are we forced to follow the leading of the Spirit.

γαρ "for" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why, if we are led by the spirit, we will not gratify the desires of our flesh (sinful nature), "because" the flesh and the spirit are opposed.

επιθυμει [επιθυμειω] pres. "**[the sinful nature] desires**" - [THE FLESH] DESIRES, LUSTS. Selfish human passions.

κατα + gen. "**what is contrary**" - AGAINST [THE SPIRIT]. Expressing opposition; the flesh / Spirit is at war with / opposed to the Spirit / flesh.

γαρ "-" - FOR. Here emphatic, introducing a restatement of the previous clause and therefore untranslated, as NIV.

αντικειται [αντικειμαι] pres. "**[they are] in conflict with**" - [THESE *things*] OPPOSE. Is the conflict between humans and the Spirit, the flesh (the sinful nature) and the Spirit, our sinful desires and the Spirit's desires, or our sinful deeds and what the Spirit wills? In a broad sense we may say that the flesh and the Spirit are at war.

αλληλοις dat. pro. "**each other**" - ONE ANOTHER, EACH OTHER. Dative of direct object after the **αντι** prefix verb "to oppose."

ινα μη + subj. "**so that [you are] not [to do]**" - SO THAT NOT = LEST. Possibly a consecutive clause, expressing result, "with the result that you do not do ...", or a final clause, expressing purpose, "in order that you do not do ..." The debate is over whether Paul's point is "you do not do", or "you cannot do." Those who choose "cannot do" conclude that the war between the flesh and the Spirit

either confines the flesh, enabling the believer to do what the Spirit wants, or confines the Spirit, such that the believer doesn't do what the Spirit wants. Romans 7:7-25 is an important source text for both arguments. Yet, it is more likely that the war simply gives us the freedom to do either, that is, to follow the leading of the flesh, or the Spirit. "The flesh and the Spirit are in conflict with each other, so that we are not forced to do what the sinful nature wills us to do;" The use of "you" is interesting. Is this not Paul's experience as well as the Galatians? Of course it is!

ὃ ἔαν θελήτε [θέλω] pres. subj **"what you want"** - WHATEVER YOU WILL, DESIRE [THESE *things* YOU DO]. Properly ὃν. This construction forms an indefinite relative clause; "whatever you please."

v18

Our freedom to follow the leading of the Spirit is assured because we are no longer under the curse of the law. The prime purpose of the law was to expose sin, hold us to that sin, even make sin more sinful. As a consequence, those who seek to advance their Christian life by restraining sin and promoting holiness through obedience to the law, find their sinful nature empowered and their rebellion magnified. Yet now, in Christ, the believer has found God's approval apart from the law, and therefore the sinful nature, once empowered by the law, no longer rules our lives.

δε **"but"** - BUT/AND. The NIV takes this conjunction as adversative (but), but an untranslated transitional connective would be better, indicating another step in the argument. It is often argued that this verse summarizes the chapter, but it is more likely that δε here is exegetical, serving to introduce a clause which further explains the sense of 17b, in which case there should be a semicolon after "want", v17. A believer is guided throughout life by the Holy Spirit, but is also guided by the sinful nature (flesh), but since we are not under the law, such that the sinful nature is empowered, we are free to choose either between the guidance of the flesh, or the guidance of the Spirit.

εἰ **"if"** - IF, *as is the case* [YOU ARE LED BY *the* SPIRIT *then* YOU ARE NOT UNDER *the* LAW]. Introducing a 1st. class conditional clause where the condition is assumed to be true.

ἀγεσθε [αγω] pres. pas. **"you are led"** - YOU ARE BEING LED. Parallel in meaning to walking by the Spirit, living by the Spirit, following the leading of the Spirit. Bruce sees the Spirit's leading as active, such that it empowers resistance to the leading of the flesh and conforms to the likeness of Christ, cf., 2Cor.3:17. This is probably going a bit too far. Paul's point is that we are free to choose either the flesh, or the Spirit, not that we are empowered to choose the Spirit over the flesh.

πνευματι [α ατος] dat. "by the Spirit" - A dative of agency.
ὑπο + acc. " **under**" - [YOU ARE NOT] UNDER [LAW]. Expressing subordination; "under the rule / authority of." Not under the law in the sense of not being confined by the law, such that the sinful nature is empowered toward rebellion. The law confines us when we enact its role to hold us to our sin and as a consequence place ourselves again under its curse. This we do when we seek to progress our Christian life by means of obedience to the law. When used this way, the law stirs rebellion; it makes sin more sinful and so accentuates our state of loss. Yet, if we have found the way to stand approved before God by grace through faith, then we are no longer confined by the law, and so the sinful nature is no longer empowered; it is then that we are free to choose the leading of the Spirit. Note that other meanings are suggested, but are not likely, eg., the NRSV reads "subject", a word slightly off the game and can be expanded to mean: "as a believer, you are not subject to (do not need to obey) all the Old Testament laws."

5:19-25

5. Exhortations, 4:8-6:10

v] Be led by the Spirit and not by the flesh, 5:19-25

Argument

Paul now counters the idea that freedom from the law means freedom to sin. It is very easy to give the sinful nature free reign in our lives, but those who have found new life in Christ are not impelled toward evil, rather, they are constrained to resist evil. Given that believers possess new life in Christ, being daily shaped by the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit, Paul encourages his readers to give themselves to the leading of the Spirit.

Issues

i] Context: See 5:13-18. As usual, there is little agreement with regard the boundaries of this unit, eg., Dumbrell, 5:22-26; Dunn, 5:16-24; Martyn, 5:13-24; Garlington, 5:16-26, The point of Paul's argument in this section is likely summed up in v25, with the more practical advice through to 6:10 introduced by the exhortation in v26. The Gk. doesn't help much (αδελφοι "brothers", 6:1, is possibly introductory) so we must rely on the context. The translations similarly adopt numerous paragraph divisions, the REB opting to set their break between v25 and 26.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: #5. *Be led by the Spirit and not by the flesh*:

Exhortation:

"If we live by the Spirit let us be guided by the Spirit", v25.

Explanation:

a descriptive list of the works / acts of the flesh, v19-21;

as against the fruits of the Spirit, v22-23;

exhortation to follow the leading of the Spirit, v24-25.

iv] Interpretation:

The fifth exhortation: Paul, having explained in v13-18 how love, the quality that sums up the ethical demands of the law, is realized in the life of a believer when they rest on the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit of Christ, now, in v19-26, outlines the "works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit". The sinful nature, stirred up and impelled forward by the law, promotes "the works of the flesh"; the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit of Christ, on the other hand, promotes "the fruit of the Spirit." So, since

believers possess the fullness of new life in Christ, they should strive to cooperate with the Spirit of Christ in his work of renewal.

v] Homiletics: *The fruits of the Spirit*

Too often, we fallen angels display "repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat competition; all-consuming yet never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; an impotence to love and be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community" and the like (Eugene Peterson).

Yes, we all taste the bitterness of "the sinful nature" for as Martin Luther said, "the old Adam retains his power until he is deposited in the grave." Yet, at the same time, our compassion is unrestrained. So, how do we accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative, how do we grow love and depreciate "the desires of the lower nature"?

Verses 24 and 25 of our reading today have the answer. In eternal terms we are crucified with Christ, our sinful self was nailed with Christ to the cross such that, as Luther put, Christ was "forsaken for me." In Christ our perfection is complete. This fact is not just a theory, but actually affects our day-to-day living. There is a sense where the old Adam in us, the sinful selfish self, has been put to death. Sure, the song lingers on, but its power is broken. It is broken because of what Jesus has done for us and is doing for us - we are alive in him. In our day-to-day life we are now free to choose the song we sing, either of the flesh leading to death, or the Spirit leading to life.

The apostle leaves us with a simple exhortation to apply in our day-to-day living for Christ; "let it be the Spirit that guides our steps" - always try to sing the new song.

Text - 5:19

Exhortation 5. Walking by the Spirit and not by the flesh, v19-25: Paul sets out to illustrate the battle that exists between the flesh and the Spirit by listing the outward expressions of both life-styles. i] The first list summarizes the product of the "sinful nature", v19-21. It consists of fifteen different evils - by no means a complete list! The "vices" make up four different kinds of evils: "sexual immorality, religious heresy, social conflict and habitual drunkenness", Dumbrell. Sexual immorality heads the list and this because of its association with idolatry, but it's the evils of social discord that Paul focuses on. The Galatian church is full of discord, dissensions, factions, and the like. In v19 Paul lists

examples of sexual immorality, an issue that takes centre stage in the ethics of Judaism.

δε "now" - BUT/AND. Transitional connective, introducing the next step in the argument, as NIV.

τα εργα [ον] "the acts" - THE WORKS. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. "Episodic and disordered ways in which sin manifests itself in the personality", Dumbrell. Paul is not just listing identifiable evils, but rather exposing the product of "flesh", as opposed to the product of "Spirit". "For Paul, flesh and Spirit were two powers, to modalities of existence, locked in conflict on the battlefield of every individual Christian", George. "The effects of the flesh", Martyn.

της σαρκος [ος] gen. "**of the sinful nature**" - OF THE FLESH, SINFUL NATURE, BODY. As noted, the genitive may be adjectival, "fleshy works", or subjective "the works *generated by* the flesh / sinful nature." Given v18, "you are not subject to the law", we could have expected Paul to say something like "now the works that are generated by law-obedience are easily seen", but instead he refers to "works of the flesh". Of course, Paul may not have made a direct link between law-obedience and his list of vices here, but the link is central to his argument - law makes sin more sinful; it draws out the product ("the works of the flesh") of our inner corruption. "As for the doings which have their origin in our lower nature, they are plain to see", Cassirer.

φανερα adj. "**[are] obvious**" - [ARE] PLAIN, KNOWN, MANIFEST, CLEAR, OBVIOUS. Predicate adjective.

ατινα pro. "-" - WHICH [ARE]. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. The relative pronoun with the verb to-be serves to express the qualitative aspects of the vices.

πορνεια [α] "**sexual immorality**" - ILLICIT SEXUAL ACTIVITY, FORNICATION, ADULTERY. Referring either to sex with a prostitute, or unfaithfulness in marriage. Why does Paul head his list with sexual sins? Ethical lists were common in the ancient world, stemming mainly from Greek sources. Dual lists of virtues and vices were not as common, but certainly common in Jewish circles (eg., Qumran "the two ways"). Secular lists tended to focus on matters of justice / injustice, bravery / cowardice, before considering self-control / licentiousness. In fact, adultery was not viewed as a serious human flaw, as was paedophilia, although Dunn suggests that Paul's list is designed for maximum assent - the list "begins and ends with items which would receive disapprobation from most ethically concerned people", Dunn (certainly for Jews, although probably not Gentiles). Paul's tendency to place sexual sins first in his list of vices may reflect the need to "emphasize sins against the common life in the brotherhood", Schweizer, or possibly he is driven more by theology, the oneness

of sexual union imaging oneness with God, or maybe sexual sins "display more graphically self-centredness and rebellion against God's norm", George, or maybe these vices "often come to the fore in the paganism of that day and its cultic extravagances", Ridderbos, also Guthrie. Calvin thought Paul was listing grosser sins first but this is rather unconvincing. It seems likely that Paul is prompted to begin his list with sexual vices because of their ethical prominence in Judaism and this driven, on the one hand, by the link between adultery and idolatry, cf., Hosea, and on the other, by the view that marriage images union with God. Garlington argues that the vices identified by immorality, religious heresy and finally carousing would have been central to the ethical teaching of the judaizers. Paul identifies the same evils, but places the real problem in their midst, namely "malice and envy, being hated and hating one another", Tit.3:3 - the "sting" comes in the middle, Dunn. "The point needed particularly to be driven home is the product of a 'righteous indignation' whose effect is often the abuse of others", Garlington. "You know all the big evils [stirred on by the law], illicit sex,, covetousness (idolatry), but don't forget 'righteous indignation' (Jesus' "speck removal"),"

ακαθαρσία [α] "**impurity**" - UNCLEANNES, IMPURITY. Predicate nominative. "Sexual impurity" is probably better than "filthy thoughts", CEV.

ασελγεία [α] "**debauchery**" - SENSUALITY, INDECENCY, LICENTIOUSNESS. Predicate nominative. "Debauched sexual behaviour".

v20

Paul now lists two examples of religious heresy, another priority issue in the ethics of Judaism, before listing the ethical vices that the Galatian believers needed to confront, vices reflecting the social conflict that existed within the Galatian fellowship. The NIV rightly includes "envy", v21, in this list. Garlington is surely on the mark when he identifies this "meat" (the vices of social conflict), in Paul's "sandwich of vices", as a well-aimed barb at the Galatian nomists whose highly developed moral superiority is undermining fellowship and edging believers out of the kingdom of God.

ειδωλολατρία [α] "**idolatry**" - THE WORSHIP OF IDOLS. Of course, Paul has, on occasions, widened the reach of idolatry: covetousness, Col.3:5; participation in pagan festivals, 1Cor.10:14.

φαρμακεία [α] "**witchcraft**" - SORCERY. A neutral medical sense is possible, but here obviously the use of medical herbs and incantations for magical purposes.

εχθραί [α] pl. "**hatred**" - HATREDS, ENMITIES, HOSTILITIES. Of cherishing a hostile thought (sentiment, intention), or performing a hostile act. "Hostility", Longenecker.

ερις [ις εως] "**discord**" - STRIFE, DISCORD. "Quarrelsomeness", Bruce.
ζηλος [ος] "**jealousy**" - The word can take a positive meaning, "zeal", but obviously here Paul intends the negative sense, "jealousy toward persons of other opinions", Martyn.

θυμοι [ος] pl. "**fits of rage**" - ANGERS, TEMPER RAGES. "Outbursts of explosive temper", Barclay.

επιθειαι [α] pl. "**selfish ambition**" - SELF-SEEKING AMBITION. Possibly driven by party spirit, so "factious ambitions", Garlington.

διχοστασαι [α] pl. "**dissensions**" - DIVISIONS, DISSENSIONS. The backbiting, bad-mouthing and bickering that goes with the development of party spirit within a group; "creating and feeding selfish divisions among you", Junkins.

αιρεσεις [ις εως] pl. "**factions**" - FACTIONS. "The forming of organized factions and cliques", Eadie.

v21a

The NIV has linked "envy" with the vices of social conflict, and this is probably in Paul's mind. Then follows two examples of intemperance: a) Drunkenness; b) Orgies - binge drinking along with sexual play.

φθονοι [ος] pl. "**[and] envy**" - JEALOUSY. "Where self-assertive ambition, resulting in factions, raises its head, then envy of others is sure to follow", Garlington.

φονοι [ος] pl. "-" - MURDERS. This variant has substantial support and certainly, in a list of vices, we would expect its inclusion, so Calvin. Its position in the list seems strange, but possibly supports Garlington's "sandwich" argument. None-the-less, it is usually regarded as an addition, see Metzger.

μεθαι [η] pl. "**drunkenness**" - DRUNKENNESS. "Drunken orgies", Bruce.

κωμοι [ος] pl. "**orgies**" - PARTY DRINKING, REVELRIES. Celebrations are not necessarily a vice in themselves, but as the revelry continues so excesses often follow - excessive consumption of alcohol, illicit heterosexual sex, homosexual sex,

τουτοις dat. pro. "**[and the like]**" - [AND THINGS LIKE] THESE. Dative of comparison; a dative is typically used with the adjective ὅμοια, "like, similar." Referencing back to the list.

v21b

Finally, Paul warns his readers that to "practise" such sins ("live like this") bars a person from the kingdom. At this point, Paul is probably adopting Jesus' approach to ethics. The Galatian nomists are right into ethics, given their theological position, namely, that law-obedience is essential to the Christian life

(restrains sin and shapes holiness for the appropriation of the promised Abrahamic blessings). To sustain personal righteousness, a pietist is bound to get into legalistic reductionism, i.e., reshape the law so that it is doable. Note how Jesus picks on murder and adultery cf. Matt.5:21-32. Of the ten commandments, we may be able to argue that we have, at least, not broken these two commands, but after Jesus has finished with them we are left without any defence. The nomist Galatians may be able to take the high moral ground with adultery and orgies, but they are very vulnerable when it comes to discord, dissensions, factions, By what means then can a person "inherit the kingdom of God"? The kingdom of God is inherited on the basis of Christ's worthiness, not our own. Of course, at the practical level the truth still applies, namely that to use our freedom to indulge the flesh places us outside of God's grace. Yet, a believer, in-dwelt by the Spirit of Christ, although constantly defeated by the old Adam, finds themselves not only covered by God's grace, but orientated to live in a way honouring to God.

ἃ acc. neut. rel. pro. "-" - WHICH *things*. The accusative indicates a possible anacoluthon (error in grammar). Bligh suggests Paul was going to form an accusative infinitive construction, but changed his mind, but as Longenecker notes, the pronoun is not referring back to the vices, "and about these I tell you now", NJB, but forward to "like this", object of "those who live", cf., Bruce.

προλεγω pres. "**I warn**" - I TELL BEFOREHAND, GIVE NOTICE, FOREWARN. The word can mean "forth tell", as in speaking something publicly, but the sense "I warn", as in a predictive warning, is obviously intended here, cf. 1Thes.3:4.

ὑμιν dat. pro. "**you**" - TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

καθως "**as**" - AS, LIKE. Comparative.

προειπον aor. "**I did before**" - I SAID BEFORE. Presumably when Paul was first with the Galatians. The statement indicates that Paul broached the issue of ethics with the Galatians, [either] to expose sin as part of gospel preaching [or] and to guide their Christian lives.

ὅτι "**that**" - introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Paul warns his readers, but it could also be recitative, introducing a quote, a line of catechetical instruction, so Betz, given that it reflects the language of the synoptic gospels more than it does of Paul, cf., 1Cor.6:9f.

οἱ πρασσοντες [**πρασσω**] pres. part. "**those who live [like this]**" - THE ONES DOING [THESE THINGS]. The participle serves as a substantive, while the present tense, being durative, probably gives the sense "practise"; "people who practise things like these", Barclay.

ου κληρονομησουσιν [**κληρονομεω**] fut. "**will not inherit**" - WILL NOT INHERIT. "Will obtain no share in the kingdom of God", Cassirer.

θεου [ος] gen. "[the kingdom] of God" - The genitive may be adjectival, possessive, or idiomatic / source. Paul tends to use the term the "kingdom of Christ" to refer to God's rule exercised through Christ from his resurrection up till the end time, 1Cor.15:24, while he uses the term the "kingdom of God" for the eschatological inheritance of a believer, the Spirit being the down payment - although note Eph.5:5. Luke tells us that Paul used this concept in his preaching, see Acts 14:22, although one wonders to what degree he contextualized the concept when addressing Gentiles. Kingdom of God language is certainly not prominent with Paul and as Bruce notes, in his later letters Paul's eschatology becomes increasingly realized.

v22-23a

ii] Paul now lists the life-style qualities that flow from a life lived under the power of the Spirit, v22-23. Betz puts it this way. "The nine concepts should be taken as 'benefits' which were given together with the Spirit. In other words, when the Galatians received the Spirit, they were also given the foundation out of which the 'fruit' was supposed to grow." It has often been observed that there is some incongruity in Paul's focus on ethics here, having just debunked the law of Moses. Of course, he hasn't actually debunked the law as such, but rather the notion that obedience, encapsulated in the sign of circumcision, can access the Abrahamic blessings. The moral principles of the Mosaic law have always served as an effective guide for the life of faith. Note how many of the "virtues" find their origin in the Old Testament, cf., Isaiah 32:16-18, 57:15-18. So, defining these virtues as "the morality of the New Covenant", Dumbrell, is a bit misleading; see Excursus II, the new perspective on Paul. So, why this list of virtues? If Paul was trying to establish a compendium of ethical principles, we would rightly expect him to defer to the Master. In a sense, he has done this with "love" (compassion), the defining principle for a life of faith. In the power of the indwelling Spirit the faith-life of a believer is shaped by the principle of love. So, why the extended list? It does seem that Paul is rubbing salt into the wound of the nomist Galatians. The list of virtues are relational; they are all the qualities that are destroyed where there is party spirit, "quarrels, dissensions, factions", "to bite and devour one another", 5:15. It seems then that these virtues are most likely contextual, but none-the-less, they do define the fruit of the Spirit's renewing work.

δε "but" - BUT/AND. Possibly adversative, as NIV, although more rightly transitional, indicating the next step in the argument.

ὁ καρπος [ος] "the fruit" - Nominative subject of the verb to-be. Lifestyle qualities exhibited by those "who are in-dwelt and energized by the Spirit", Bruce.

του πνευματος [α ατος] gen. "of the Spirit" - The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "*derived from* the powerful in-working of the Holy Spirit", but producer is also possible, "*produced by*"

αγαπη [η] "**love**" - [IS] COMPASSION. The first in another list of predicate nominatives. "The measure and goal of freedom", Schlier. It is the greatest of all qualities and is a reflection of the nature of God. Love / compassion is the quality generated in the life of a child of faith by the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit of Christ, cf., Rom.5.5.

χαρα [α] "**joy**" - Commentators treat this list of "virtues" as either expressing a person's relationship with God, or their relationship with their brothers and sisters in Christ, so here either human happiness, or "joy in the faith", joy in the Lord. As noted above, they are probably relational qualities within the fellowship of believers. So, joy is "the result of God-directed healthy relationships arising from the assurance of covenant-acceptance", Dumbrell. "An inner and constant rejoicing", Junkins.

ειρηνη [η] "**peace**" - WHOLENESS, SOUNDNESS, PROSPERITY. Often in the sense of peace with God through the work of Christ, but such peace promotes peace in relationships. "A sense of peaceful wellbeing", Junkins.

μακροθυμια [α] "**patience**" - LONG-SUFFERING, EVENNESS OF TEMPER (imaging the long-suffering of God toward his rebellious people). "A willingness to put up with unpleasantness for His sake", Junkins.

χρηστοτης [ης ητος] "**kindness**" - A graciousness that images God's gracious forgiveness and acceptance of sinners.

αγαθωσυνη [η] "**goodness**" - GENEROUS KINDNESS. "A basic decency as God is decent", Junkins.

πιστις [ις εως] "**faithfulness**" - TRUSTWORTHINESS IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS.

πραυτης [ης ουτος] "**gentleness**" - Not weakness, rather strength that is not overbearing. Firmness in dealing with others, but with humility, patience, and forbearance. "A rejection of anything haughty and overbearing in ourselves", Junkins.

εγρατεια [α] "**self-control**" - SELF-MASTERY AND SELF- RESTRAINT (exercised in the face of evil, rather than self-indulgence). "Able to marshal and direct our energies wisely", Peterson.

v23b

Against these qualities "there is no law", the sense being:

- "Law exists for the purpose of restraint, but in the works of the Spirit there is nothing to restrain", Lightfoot;

- "The law is not against those who walk by the Spirit because in principle they are fulfilling the law", Ridderbos, cf., Burton;
- The quality of the law is possibly in view, "are in a sphere with which law has nothing to do", fruit that "cannot legally be enforced", Bruce, "they go beyond the law's requirements", Longenecker (what about 5:14?).

A friend of mine, now in glory, argued that the law had three functions: to lead to Christ; to guide the Christian life; to restrain sin, cf., Lightfoot above. Yet, surely law promotes rebellion, enhances sin, rather than restrains it, contra Guthrie. Anyway, we agreed on the first two, but will debate the third in glory!!! It is likely that Paul is arguing that "no law is required to produce such virtue", Dunn, in the sense of restraining sin and thus by implication, promoting holiness (the nomist heresy). A believer who follows the leading of the Spirit, even though not under the law, does that which the law requires; they strive to love their neighbour, albeit imperfectly, 5:14. The law actually does the opposite; it promotes rebellion.

κατα + gen. "**against**" - This preposition + gen. implies opposition to, reaction, contrary to, cf., v17. Probably emphatic, with the verb to-be functioning to join the subject and the predicate; "the law is not against such things as these", Bligh. The point being; "law-obedience is helpless in bringing this about", cf., Peterson, see above.

των τοιούτων neut. gen. adj. "**such things**" - Obviously the list of virtues, but the masculine "such people" is possible, but unlikely.

νομος "**[there is no] law**" - [THERE IS NOT] A LAW. The noun is anarthrous, so possibly qualitative, "a legal prescription", but "certainly with the Mosaic law primarily in view", Longenecker.

v24

iii] Since we belong to Christ, let us follow the leading of the Spirit, v24-25. Paul has made the point that a believer experiences within the self, a battle between the flesh and the Spirit. We may therefore, freely choose to follow the leading of one, or the other, either to gratify the leading of the sinful nature prompting sinful practice, or to gratify the leading of the Spirit prompting the fruit of love. "In Christ" we have "crucified the sinful nature" i.e., have "put to death all the base pursuits of the body." The use of the crucifixion image reminds us that our death to sin, in our day-to-day living, is based on our death to sin as far as our eternal standing in the presence of God is concerned (a victory over the curse of sin through our identification with the crucifixion of Christ).

δε "- " - BUT/AND. Here transitional, indicating the next step in the argument.

οἱ **"those who"** - THE ONES. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the possessive genitive "of Christ Jesus" into a substantive; "the ones who belong to Jesus Christ."

του Χριστου [ος] gen. **"belong to Christ"** - OF CHRIST [JESUS]. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, as NIV, synonymous with "in Christ" and therefore those who are "led by the Spirit", v18. Exclusivity is possibly intended; "those who belong to Christ and him alone", Martyn.

εσταυρωσαν [σταυρω] aor. **"have crucified"** - CRUCIFIED. The action is punctiliar, decisively completed, ie., constative rather than inceptive (action commenced); "those who belong to Jesus Christ have once and for all crucified their lower nature", Barclay. Paul's "in Christ" concept and his use of a "crucifixion" metaphor surely makes the point that "to share in the Spirit-life means to have been identified with Jesus in his death, and to have ended life under the tyranny of the flesh, though the struggle with the sinful nature must be maintained", Dumbrell. This logical sense is more likely than an ethical sense with the implication that in the same way that Jesus was put to death so believers have put to death the deeds of the flesh. It is the power of the corrupt self that is put to death in that by not being under the law the believer is no longer provoked to sin, and also, by the power of the indwelling Spirit the unbridled ambitions of the sinful self are resisted. For this reason, we can hear and act upon the exhortation in v26, explicated in 6:1-10 (although never perfectly).

την σαρκα [σαρξ κος] **"the sinful nature"** - THE FLESH. Accusative direct object of the verb "to crucify." The lower nature; "the demands and lusts of our human nature", Junkins.

συν + dat. **"with"** - Expressing accompaniment / association.

τοις παθημασιν [α] pl. **"passions"** - THE = ITS STRONG DESIRES, PASSIONS, LUSTS, AFFECTIONS.

ταις επιθυμιας [α] pl. **"desires"** - [AND] THE = ITS POWERFUL LONGINGS, DESIRES. "All that their human nature wants so much to do", TH.

v25

The Spirit is the source of life for a believer, but to realize that life in our daily lives we must follow the Spirit's leading, we must "walk by the Spirit", "keep in step with the Spirit", be "led by the Spirit". Longenecker suggests that this verse is virtually a "précis of Paul's message."

ει + ind. **"since"** - IF, *as is the case* [WE LIVE BY *the* SPIRIT, *then* ALSO WE SHOULD BE IN LINE IN / WITH / BY *the* SPIRIT]. Introducing a conditional clause, 1st class, where the condition is assumed to be true. The translation "since" is better than "if", given that "if" in English introduces a note of doubt; "given that

we now possess new life in the Spirit, let us then" What we have here is an indicative imperative pair: given that we are, let us be

ζωμεν [ζωω] pres. "**we live**" - Sometimes the word means nothing more than "conduct oneself", but can expand to "an all-embracing description of character and direction of life", Dunn, and can extend further to express the fullness of life in Christ, God's promised blessing of life, eternal life, new life in the Spirit; "if it is in the sending the Spirit into our hearts that God has made us alive (3:21, 4:6) - and it is - then", Martyn.

πνευματι [α ατος] dat. "**by the Spirit**" - The dative is instrumental, expressing means, as NIV, although cause is possible, "because of the action of the Spirit." "Spirit" is probably "the Holy Spirit", but our spirit / psyche is an outside possibility. So, the dative "Spirit" probably carries the same instrumental sense as **δια**, "by means of" the active agent of God's power. Possibly "preeminently God's power at work in the life of the believer", Schweizer, although this statement dangerously depersonalizes the Spirit. Schweizer notes that this instrumental sense is not repeated in the action of "the flesh" indicating that "the Spirit" has it over "the flesh" such that "the believer can overcome the flesh if they submit to the leading of the Spirit", Fung.

στοιχωμεν [στοιχω] pres. subj. "**let us keep in step**" - WALK TOGETHER IN FORMATION, MARCH IN LINE, BE DRAWN UP IN LINE. Hortatory subjunctive.

και "-" - AND. Here adjunctive; "let us also walk by/with the Spirit."

πνευματι [α ατος] dat. "**with the Spirit**" - Does this dative express association, "keep in step with the Spirit", "walk in the footsteps of the Spirit", or means, "walk by the Spirit", "be led by the Spirit"? Given that we possess new life in Christ, daily facilitated by the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit, "let us carry out our daily lives under the guidance of the Spirit", Martyn.

5:26-6:10

5. Exhortations, 4:8-6:10

vi] Care for one another

Argument

In this passage, Paul encourages his readers to welcome and aid a fallen brother, to support a Word ministry, and to follow the leading of the Spirit, rather than the flesh.

Issues

i] Context: See 5:13-18.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: #6. *care for one another*:

Exhortation:

"Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another", 5:26.

Explanation:

A recommendation in case of failure, 6:1;

A maxim about sharing the burdens of life, v2;

A maxim about self-deception, v3;

A maxim about self-examination, v4;

A maxim about bearing one's own burdens, v5;

A maxim about the common life of a teacher and student, v6;

An eschatological admonition, v7-9; Conclusion, v10.

Paul's *exhortatio* concludes with a series / list (*sententiae*) detailing accepted ethical practice, see Betz.

iv] Interpretation:

The sixth exhortation: Paul concludes his exhortations with a practical word on achieving unity between the "libertines" and "legalists" in the Galatian fellowship. He begins with a negative exhortation in 5:26 and follows this up with an exposition on "exercising our freedom to serve each other, with the contrasting warning added to avoid proud attitudes. By so doing they will fulfill the law of Christ amid the present tensions in Galatia", Dumbrell.

v] Homiletics: *Bearing one another's burdens*

Our reading today encourages us to properly use the freedom we possess in Christ, to follow the leading of the Spirit rather than the leading of the self. The apostle encourages us to focus our attention on two practical ways of walking by the Spirit, namely, forgiving and giving.

Forgiving

A central principle evident in our relationship with God is that of his unconditional mercy, his forgiveness. In Christ God eternally accepts us, warts and all. On the basis of this kindness toward us, we are asked to show mercy toward others; we are asked to accept, without question, a brother or sister who has made a mess of their lives; we are asked to accept them, warts and all, in the same way God accepts us.

So, be forgiving, be accepting.

Giving

In our world, it is very hard for believers to allocate a large portion of their giving toward the maintenance of a Word ministry. Yet, the Spirit of Christ, active in the Word of God, builds the kingdom through the proclamation of the gospel.

So, be generous in the support of the ministry of God's Word.

Text - 5:26

Exhortation 6. Paul encourages his readers toward an inclusive, rather than judgmental, treatment of a brother, 5:26-6:5. Given the difficulties that have developed in the Galatian fellowship, the reader is reminded that a believer, living under the guiding hand of the indwelling Spirit of Christ, should not be filled with conceit and so damage the Christian fellowship by provoking one another.

Most commentators link 5:26 with the previous section, but it seems better to take it as the negative side of 6:1-5, so REB.

μη γινωμεθα [γινωμαι] pres. subj. "**let us not become**" - LET US NOT BE. Subjunctive of prohibition.

κενοδοξοι adj. "**conceited**" - VAIN MINDED, CONCEITED. Predicate adjective. "We must have no desire for empty prestige", Barclay.

προκαλουμενοι [προκαλεω] pres. mid. part. "**provoking**" - CHALLENGING / PROVOKING [ONE ANOTHER]. This participle, and the one following, is adverbial, possibly modal, identifying the manner in which the action of the main verb is accomplished, or final, expressing purpose, "so as to compete with each other and to envy one another", Berkeley. Possibly attendant circumstance and therefore imperatival; "let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another,

nor envying one another", Cassirer. "Don't be conceited, or make people jealous by claiming to be better than they are", CEV.

φθονουντες [φθονεω] pres. part. "**envying**" - ENVYING (experiencing a feeling of ill will due to a real or presumed advantage experienced by someone else*).

αλληλοις dat. "each other" - ONE ANOTHER. Dative of direct object after the verb "to envy", here as the participle "envying".

6:1

Rather, it is better to gently include a fellow believer. We are to draw those on the edge into the full life of the Christian fellowship. We will be tempted to judge and ostracize, but as Jesus forgives, in like manner, we are urged to be forgiving, accepting.

και "-" - [BROTHERS] AND. Ascensive; "brothers, even if someone is caught it sin."

εαν + subj. "**if**" - IF. Introducing a conditional clause, 3rd class, where the condition is regarded as a future possibility; "if, *as may be the case*, *then* ...". The apodosis is in the form of an imperative = "then you should ..."

ανθρωπος [ος] "**someone**" - A MAN. Nominative subject of the verb "to surprise. Most likely generic, referring to a fellow believer rather than man in general, "if any one of you is caught ...", NJB.

προλημφθη [προλαμβανω] aor. pas. subj. "**is caught**" - IS SURPRISED, OVERTAKEN, OVERPOWERED, ENTRAPPED. Possibly, "detected", NRSV, although better, "if someone is entrapped by some sin", Longenecker.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [SOME TRANSGRESSION, SIN]. Local, expressing sphere, metaphorical, "in the sphere of sin", or possibly reference / respect.

τινα pro. "**a**" - A CERTAIN [SIN]. In a general sense, "any sin."

παραπτωματι [α ατος] "**sin**" - TRESPASS. Dumbrell's suggestion that it is an "unintentional fault", with the meaning of the controlling verb being, "seized unawares", is probably too narrow. The sense "entrapped" cannot be discounted for the controlling verb. The trespass would surely include "the works of the flesh", 5:19-21. Lit. "to step aside", the word being "chosen because of its appropriateness to Paul's thought of the Christian life as a walk by the Spirit", Guthrie.

οι πνευματικοι adj. "**spiritual**" - [YOU] THE SPIRITUAL. Adjective, here as a substantive, standing in apposition to **υμεις**, "you". Probably believers in general, those guided by the Spirit.

καταριζετε [καταριζω] imp. "**restore**" - MEND, RESTORE, STRENGTHEN, PUT IN ORDER, MAKE COMPLETE [SUCH A ONE]. Rather than judge, censure, condemn possibly "correct", "gently lead that person back to the right path",

CEV, as of ethical restoration, Burton; or even better, "restore" socially, i.e., "draw back into congregational fellowship", Dumbrell.

εν πνευματι πραυτητος "gently" - IN A SPIRIT OF MEEKNESS. This prepositional phrase is functioning adverbially, modifying the verb "restore", probably modal, expressing the manner in which the restoration is undertaken, or instrumental, expressing means, "through the aid of the Holy Spirit with the result of gentleness", or better, ("spirit" = the human spirit) "through a gentility of spirit", Guthrie. The genitive **πραυτητος**, "gentleness", is adjectival, attributive; "a gentle spirit."

σκοπων [σκοπεω] pres. part. "**watch**" - WATCHING, LOOKING, OBSERVING, TAKING NOTICE, TAKING HEED [FOR YOURSELF]. The present tense is durative, expressing a continued attention to watching, while the participle is adverbial, probably concessive, "although watch / watching / looking out for yourselves." The present tense, being durative, indicates habitual practice.

μηπειρασθης [πειραζω] aor. pas. subj. "**or you [also] may be tempted**" = [LEST AND - ALSO YOU] BE TEMPTED, TRIED. Note, as with the participle, a move in this clause from plural to the second person singular serves to accentuate the exhortation; "each one of you must" This construction, **μη** + subj., may form a purpose clause, encouraging care in the Christian life, "in order that you don't fall as your brother has fallen" - every believer is potentially vulnerable to sin. Yet, it is more likely that it forms an object clause, object of the verb "watch" / dependent statement of perception expressing what to watch out for (usually with **ινα** or **οπως**, although often missing with a verb of perception). The construction may also be treated as a subjunctive of prohibition; "watch yourselves, don't be judgmental." Serving to warn the "spiritual" believers of the temptation of being censorious toward a brother.

και "also" - AND. Adjunctive, as NIV.

v2

The Spirit-led believer should also share the burden of a brother's sin (weakness, failure). Not only must we welcome a brother back into the fellowship, but we must support them as they seek to deal with the consequences of their sin. Such behaviour fulfills "the law of Christ". This "law" may amount to Jesus' ethical teachings, possibly the law of love, but it may refer to the principle of living freely by the leading of the Spirit, as opposed to living under the direction of the law.

βασταζετε [βασταζω] pres. imp. "**carry**" - BEAR, CARRY, BRING. Possibly drawing on cross imagery. Not only are we to include / welcome, a brother, we must also share their burden, work to resolve the consequences of their sin within the limits of this imperfect world.

αλληλων pro. gen. "each other's" - ONE ANOTHER'S. The position is emphatic, underlining mutual care, other person centredness. The genitive is obviously possessive, "one another's burdens."

τα βαρη [ος] "burdens" - LOADS, WEIGHTS, BURDENS. NT. = "oppressive burden." Accusative direct object of the verb "to bear." Longenecker suggests that the burdens are the temptations of fellow believers, but surely it is their failures.

οὕτως "[and] in this way" - [AND] THUS, SO, THEREFORE. Establishing a logical conclusion.

αναπληρωσετε [αναπληρω] fut. "you will fulfill" - YOU WILL COMPLETE, FULFILL. A variant aorist exists, expressing the "completeness of the fulfillment", Guthrie. The propositional prefix serves to strengthen the verb. When we carry a brother's burdens, we really do complete, within our lives, the law of Christ. "Obey", CEV; "live out", Phillips; "keep", NJB; "carry out", Williams.

τον νομον του Χριστου "the law of Christ" - Technically, the genitive του Χριστου, "of Christ", may be treated as adjectival, possessive, it is a law *which belongs to* Christ, or idiomatic /. source, a law *from* Christ. Numerous meanings are possible. Given the context, it is likely that the phrase "the law of Christ" is a polemic, a counter to Galatian nomists (those who use the Torah to appropriate covenant blessings). "The law of Christ" is set over against "works of the law" = submission to the law of Moses / Torah. If this comparison is intended by Paul, then "the law of Christ" is the leading of the Spirit in the Christian life, the indwelling compelling of the Spirit of Christ enabling a believer's walk. See Betz, 299-301, also Bruce. So, "the law of Christ" is all about "the quality of the act and the direction in which it is moving", Dodd, rather than a new law as such. If we accept this interpretation, then "the law of Christ" does not mean the whole of Christ's teaching ("the prescriptive principles stemming from the heart of the gospel", Longenecker), or in particular, the law of love, "love one another." Believers are not bound under a new law because faith "expresses itself in love and this love, in effect, fulfills the law", Betz.

v3

A believer properly acts with generosity toward a sinner because all are sinners, all are insignificant; what righteousness we possess, we possess in Christ alone. To think we are significant, apart from God, is to live in self-deception.

γαρ "-" - for. Possibly just transitional, therefore left untranslated, as NIV, but probably explanatory of v2, "for, you see," To not support a fallen brother, but take the high moral ground, would deny that we, like them, are nothing before God, and thus can only evidence our self-deception. "For if anyone thinks he is something", NAB.

εἰ + ind. "if" - IF, *as is the case*, [ANYONE THINKS TO BE SOMETHING, BEING NOTHING, *then* HE DECEIVES HIMSELF]. Introducing a conditional clause 1st. class, where the proposed condition is assumed to be true.

τις "anyone" - A CERTAIN ONE. Indefinite pronoun.

εἶναι [εἶμι] pres. inf. "[thinks] they are" - [SUPPOSES, THINKS] TO BE. The infinitive forms a dependent statement of perception expressing what the certain person supposes; "if anyone supposes that they are someone important ..."

τι μηδεν "something nothing" - A CERTAIN, ANYONE NOTHING, NO ONE. "Being nothing" in ourselves is probably describing the state of all believers; it is only in Christ that we are something. On the other hand, "being nothing" may be the state we move to when we claim to be something; we make ourself nothing by self-approval, status seeking, at the expense of a fallen, or weaker, brother. The first option seems best. A believer uplifts the insignificant brother, because we know that we are all insignificant before God. To think otherwise is to live in self-deception.

ὧν "when he is [nothing]" - BEING. The participle is adverbial, possibly temporal, as NIV, or concessive, "although they are nobody", but more likely causal; "again, if anyone imagines he is somebody, he is deceiving himself, for he is nobody", Moffatt.

φρεναπατα [φραναπαταω] pres. "he deceives" - HE DECEIVES. Hapax legomenon. Of leading one's mind astray. As with the verb "thinks", "deceives" is 3rd. person sing. indicating the expression is gnomic (ie., expressing a general truth), even possibly with secular origins, so Betz; "a traditional maxim", Longenecker. "Delude", Knox.

v4

To gain an understanding of our mutual insignificance requires unfettered self-examination. It is then, when we know ourselves, know our insignificance, know that our "righteousness is but filthy rags", it is then that we can rightly be self-satisfied in Christ. Of course, such self-satisfaction is not the product of a comparison between ourselves and a fallen brother, it is not the product of "speck removal."

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point; "but let each one test his own work", ESV.

δοκιμαζετω [δοκιμαζω] imp. "should test" - LET TEST, TRY, PROVE. To achieve a situation where a believer does not come to think they are superior to a weaker brother, each need to "examine / test" their behaviour to make sure they are not so deceived. "Let everyone (every man) learn to assess properly the value of their (his) own work." Phillips.

ἑαυτου gen. reflex. pro. "their own" - [EACH MAN THE WORK] OF THEMSELVES. The genitive is adjectival, possessive.

τοτε adv. "then" - [AND] THEN. A temporal sense for this temporal adverb is dominant, but with an added consequential sense, "then, having examined their actions, they will have a"

το καυχημα [α ατος] "pride" - [HE WILL HAVE] THE PRIDE, REASON FOR BOASTING IN [HIMSELF ALONE]. The article indicates a "ground / basis of boasting". The sense is softer than the English "boast", so "sound basis for self-satisfaction." Presumably the sound basis for our "boast" is our knowing that we are nothing in the sight of God, but complete in Christ, rather than our knowing / claiming that we are good at forgiving.

και "-" - AND [NOT IN THE OTHER *man*]. Certainly, introducing a coordinate idea, even identifying a new sentence. As a new sentence: "He should not compare himself with what someone else has done", TH. Probably better as a coordinate idea; a believer who has examined their thinking and as a consequence knows they are one with their fallen brother ("nothing" together), can be well satisfied in this knowledge, and this a satisfaction that is not conjured up by comparing themselves with their fallen brother (*speck removal*, as Jesus calls it). "Any sense of achievement that he has will be the result of judging himself by himself, and not of comparing himself with someone else", Barclay.

εις ἑαυτον "in themselves" - This prepositional phrase is emphatic by position. The preposition εις is probably spatial, expressing movement toward and arrival at, but possibly adverbial, expressing reference / respect. "All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbour's work, will become a cause for pride", Dumbrell.

v5

So then, a believer must face weakness and failure, and this under God's mercy, rather than be busy with the failings of others.

γαρ "for" - More reason than cause; introducing a summary exhortation covering v1-4, so best left untranslated. "We each must carry our own load", CEV.

βαστασει [βασταζω] fut. "should carry" - [EACH MAN] WILL BEAR [THE OWN LOAD]. The future tense is probably imperatival, so NIV etc. In v2 we are to bear one another's burdens (limitations, etc.), but here we are to bear our own load. The word for "load" here is different to that of v2, so possibly "load" here takes a positive sense, as of "cargo", "pack", Phillips; "load of responsibility", Moffatt; "each must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life", Peterson. Yet, it seems more likely that Paul is still making the same point. We must learn to carry our own failings, our own load of weakness

and sin, deal with our own "log", rather than use the failings of others to magnify our own righteousness, when in truth, what righteousness we possess comes wholly from Christ. It is with such renewed thinking that we are able to support (carry the load of) the weaker brother.

v6

Having explored the idea of bearing the burden of a brother's failure, Paul tackles the practical responsibility of financially supporting the Word ministries of the Christian community. Since the kingdom of God is realized through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, it is essential to release gifted ministers for the business of teaching God's Word.

δε " - / **nevertheless**" - BUT/AND. Transitional. Here obviously used to start a new sentence, since it is very unlikely that the subject matter of this verse is related to the previous passage, although the TNIV takes an adversative sense. What we have here is a new instruction regarding the support of Christian ministry.

ὁ κατηχούμενος [κατηχέω] pres. pas. part. "**anyone who receives instruction in / the one who receives instruction in**" - [LET SHARE] THE ONE BEING INSTRUCTED. The participle serves as a substantive. "Those who are taught the word", NRSV.

τον λόγον [ος] acc. "**the word**" - *in* THE WORD. Accusative direct object of the verb "to instruct", here as a participle. "The Word of God."

κοινωνεῖτω [κοινωνέω] pres. imp. + dat. "**must share**" - LET [THE ONE BEING INSTRUCTED] SHARE, HAVE A SHARE / GIVE, CONTRIBUTE A SHARE TO. Here with the sense "give to / contribute a share to", Longenecker.

εν + dat. "**[all good things]**" - [WITH THE ONE INSTRUCTING] IN [ALL GOOD THINGS]. Here adverbial, reference / respect. This prepositional phrase serves as an object complement to the verb κοινωνέω, "contribute a share to", in what would normally be a double accusative construction, except that this verb normally takes a dative; "should share with the teacher all good things." Although a general sense may be intended, eg., "all kinds of good support", it is most likely that Paul intends financial support, "material goods", Bligh. "As usual, Paul is loath to speak clearly about money", Bligh. "He should give his teacher a share in all his possessions", NJB (probably not!); "be willing to contribute toward the livelihood of his teacher", Phillips.

τω κατηχουντι [κατηχέω] dat. pres. part. "**with his/their instructor**" - THE ONE INSTRUCTING = THE INSTRUCTOR, TEACHER. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of direct object after the verb κοινωνέω, "to contribute a share to / share with"; "should share with the teacher."

v7

Eschatological exhortation: that we properly use the freedom we have in Christ (although Bligh argues that these verses are linked to v6. Note the context of 2Cor.9:6), v7-9. A believer may be free from "the works of the law", but we are not free to run amuck. Paul covered this subject in 5:13-25, he then dealt with practical ethical matters, and now he summarizes his teaching, namely, that the freedom we possess in Christ is not "an opportunity for self-indulgence." See Longenecker, p279. It is often suggested that Paul's words here are addressed to the libertine group in Galatia, as opposed to the nomists, although it is more likely that he is reinforcing the point that his gospel is not a libertine gospel.

μη πλανασθε [πλαναω] pres. pas. imp. "**do not be deceived**" - DO NOT BE LED ASTRAY, DECEIVED. "Make no mistake", NAB.

θεος [ος] "**God**" - Nominative subject of the verb "to mock." The position is emphatic. The absence of the article implies a qualitative understanding of God; "he is not the kind of God who can be mocked", Guthrie.

ου μυκτηριζεται [μυκτηριζω] pres. pas. "**cannot be mocked**" - IS NOT MOCKED, SNEERED AT, RIDICULED, TREATED WITH CONTEMPT. Lit. "to turn up the nose at", and therefore "to show contempt toward." "You cannot make a fool of God", Phillips.

γαρ "-" - Obviously treated by the NIV as introducing a quote, but it still could be explanatory, "for ..."

ὅ εαν + subj. "-" - WHATEVER [A MAN SOWS THIS ALSO HE WILL REAP]. The presence of **εαν** serves to make the relative pronoun "what" indefinite, "whatever", so introducing an indefinite relative clause; "Whatever a man sows, this also he will reap." Obviously a proverbial saying. A farmer knows well that a person harvests what they plant, and so the believer needs to understand that the principle applies to moral matters under God. A believer cannot defiantly indulge in sinful living and expect anything other than a harvest of destruction. Karma tends to apply in practical, as well as spiritual matters.

v8

Presumably, the dichotomy between "flesh" and "S/spirit" is the same as in 5:16-25. The point Paul made there was that there is an ongoing conflict between the urging of our sinful nature and the urging of the Holy Spirit. Since the two are in tension, a believer is free to follow the leading of either. This freedom is only undermined when a believer places themselves again under the law, for then the law, arousing / empowering the sinful nature, prompts evil rather than godliness. Of course, being free doesn't mean we can indulge the sinful nature; libertarianism leads to destruction.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Here causal, clarifying the proverb in v7, "because when a person gives free reign to their sinful nature".

ὁ σπειρων [σπειρω] pres. part. "**whoever sows**" - THE ONE SOWING. The participle serves as a substantive.

εις "**to please**" - TO, INTO. Spatial, expressing movement toward and arrival at; as of casting seeds into, toward the field of fleshly self-indulgence. The image is not of a particular failing, either past, present, or future, nor does it concern some problem of recurrent sin, or situational sin (eg., divorce and remarriage), but of an ongoing defiant disregard of the Spirit's leading, giving free-reign to the flesh; "indulgence in", Bruce.

την σαρκα [σαρξ κος] "**sinful nature**" - THE FLESH [OF HIMSELF]. "Sows with a view to his own evil nature." Wuest. "The unregenerate, uncrucified self", Bruce. Sowing to the flesh obviously means living in accord with one's evil nature, eg. 5:15.

εκ "**from**" - OUT OF, FROM [THE FLESH WILL REAP]. Expressing source / origin.

φθοραν [α] "**destruction**" - DECAY, CORRUPTION. "Annihilation", Betz.

δε "-" - BUT/AND [THE ONE SOWING TO THE SPIRIT, FROM THE SPIRIT WILL REAP LIFE ETERNAL]. Transitional, indicating a step to a contrasting point; "but if he sows in the field of the Spirit, the harvest will be eternal life", Barclay. The flesh indeed has its power, destructive power, but the Spirit has even greater power, the power to generate the fruit of love, joy and peace within the Christian community, and ultimately, life eternal. For this reason, let the believer's focus be upon the Spirit of Christ - walk by the Spirit, and not by the flesh.

v9

So, a believer must not lose heart in the leading of the Spirit, for in due time the eternal reward will be ours, as long as we persevere.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional. Given what Paul has said in v7-8, he now makes this appeal, so "then / accordingly"; "So", NRSV. "However, *as the saying is* 'let us not weary in doing good'", Bligh.

μη εγκακωμεν [εγκακω] aor. subj. "**let us not become weary**" - LET US NOT LOSE HEART, GIVE IN TO SIN, BECOME DISCOURAGED. Hortatory subjunctive.

ποιουντες [ποιω] pres. part. "**in doing**" - DOING. The participle is best viewed as adverbial, possibly temporal, "when doing good", although see Bligh Gk. 213.

το καλον "**good**" - THE GOOD. Accusative direct object of the participle "doing". Obviously all that the Spirit leads us toward; "everything the Christian is responsible for doing", Betz.

γαρ "for" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why we should not become weary in doing good; "because"

καιρω ιδιω dat. "at the proper time" - [WE WILL REAP] IN ITS OWN TIME. The dative is locative, temporal; "at the appointed time." Presumably the day of judgment.

μη εκλυομενοι [εκλυομαι] pres. pas. pat. "if we do not give up" - NOT FAINTING, GIVING UP, BECOMING DISCOURAGED DUE TO FATIGUE. The participle is probably adverbial, introducing a conditional clause, so NIV; "we will reap as long as / if we don't give up."

v10

Conclusion; An appeal and summary of the exhortations for an application of the fruits of the Spirit toward all people, but especially toward "the family of believers."

αρα ουν "therefore" - THEREFORE, THEN. Inferential / drawing a logical conclusion; "so then", NRSV.

ως "as" - AS [WE HAVE OPPORTUNITY]. Temporal use of the conjunction; "while we have the time." "Whenever we get the chance", Barclay.

εργαζομενθα [εργαζομαι] pres. subj. "let us do" - LET US WORK. Hortatory subjunctive. The variant present indicative, "we do" is unlikely to be original.

το αγαθον "good" - THE GOOD [TOWARD ALL]. Accusative direct object of the verb "to work." The good is done to "all", a universal doing of good.

μαλιστα sup. adv. "especially" - [AND] ESPECIALLY. Although universal care is called for, special attention should be given to our fellow believers.

προς + acc. "to" - TOWARD. Spatial, movement toward, but in a metaphorical sense, of the toward ones doing good.

τους οικειους [ος] "the family" - THE HOUSEHOLD. "The household of faith", ESV.

της πιστεως [ις εως] gen. "of believers" - OF FAITH. The genitive, is adjectival, attributive, limiting "the household"; "the Christian fellowship."

6:11-18

6. The Postscript

Being a new creation, 6:11-18

Argument

Paul now concludes his letter to the Galatian churches by writing a final exhortation in his own hand - do not "be deceived and hoodwinked by the Judaizers", Hunter.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-10. As we all know, a good composition states the thesis, argues the thesis and finally, restates / summarizes the thesis. In my senior school years, we called it the *SPIDER* format; start with the body, work around the legs, end up with the body. So, here we are back at the *body*. Most commentators do view this passage as a summation of Paul's central argument, so Betz, Dumbrell, Longenecker, Neil, Guthrie ("a summarizing appeal") Lightfoot ("summing up the main lessons of the epistle in terse eager disjointed sentences"). Bruce and Ridderbos see the passage more in the terms of concluding comments, while Fung moves to the other extreme arguing that Paul carries his polemic against the judaizers a stage further in this passage. The passage certainly does contain some pointed comments that encapsulate Paul's argument, although probably not "interpretive clues to the understanding" of the letter, so Betz.

ii] Background: See 1:1-10.

iii] Structure: *The conclusion of Paul's letter to the Galatians:*

Personal ascription in Paul's own hand authenticating the letter, v11;
peraratio, a recapitulation of Paul's thesis, v12-17;
benediction, v18.

iv] Interpretation:

The summation of Paul's argument / thesis, v12-17: Paul begins by restating his condemnation of "those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh." Central to this epistle has been a critique of the members of the circumcision party, the Judaizers - nomistic Christians who promote obedience to the Torah to restrain sin and shape holiness in order to enable a believer to move forward in the Christian life and so appropriate the fullness of new life in Christ. Paul suggests that their motives in promoting obedience to the law are anything but pure. Paul then posits a choice between two grounds for Christian boasting. These are encapsulated in the images of circumcision and the cross.

First, Paul discounts submission to the law of Moses (the Torah), which submission is outwardly expressed in circumcision. It has been Paul's contention that "works of the law" (obedience to the law of Moses) is not the means by which a believer appropriates the promised Abrahamic blessings. The law has but two functions: it serves to make sin more sinful, thus encouraging a search for a righteousness that is apart from "works of the law", and it serves to guide those who are righteous by faith. Those who want to make a "good showing" as a believer, by placing themselves again under the law, serve only to promote sin, enact the law's curse, and so undermine their justification.

Second, Paul uplifts the cross, for, as he has argued, it is the only way to stand approved in God's sight and so receive, as a gift of grace appropriated through faith in the faithfulness of Christ, the promised blessings of the covenant - new life in Christ. The only ground of boasting for a believer is the righteousness which is ours in Christ through his cross and empty tomb.

v] Homiletics: *A New Creation*

Imagine you had to advise a new Christian on how to live for Jesus. What guidance do you offer? Would you give them a list of do's and don'ts, rules to keep them on the straight and narrow?

In our reading today, Paul concludes his letter to the Galatians by returning to his main theme. It is very easy to see law-keeping as the means of restraining sin for the purpose of maintaining and advancing our Christian standing. Yet, we all know, only too well, that we never seem to see victory over recurrent sins, besetting sins.

So, we cry for help. "Who can rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God - through Jesus Christ our Lord..... because through Jesus Christ the law of the Spirit of life has set me free from the law of sin and death", Rom.7. We live now by the new way of the Spirit, we live as "a new creation."

Our new condition rests wholly on "the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Through the cross, our old life is buried with Christ and a new life raised with him, all as a gift of grace through faith. Our new life, infused with the renewing power of the Spirit of Christ, makes us a new creation. We are certainly not perfect, but as we walk by the Spirit we find we are better able to overcome the sins of the flesh.

So, what do we say to that young believer to do? "Never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Text - 6:11

Being a new creation, v11-18: i] A personal ascription, v11. Paul had been dictating this letter, and now he takes up the pen himself and jots down his final words in the rough hand of a tradesman, rather than a calligrapher.

ιδετε [ειδον] imp. "See" - LOOK. Used for emphasis. "Take note."

πηλικοις dat. pro. "what large" - HOW BIG, GREAT [LETTERS, WRITING]. The dative is instrumental, expressing means; "you can see by means of these large letters." The position is emphatic; note separation from noun "letters". As is typical of NT. Greek, an interrogative pronoun is used in an exclamation; note the relative variant. Paul's writing hand is obviously different to that of his scribe, probably not as neat and fine. It is possible that the increased size of the writing is down to emphasis, similar to our use of capitals, although a personal subscription at the end of the letter is more likely. Chrysostom suggests that "clumsy" is intended, rather than "large". Another possibility is to read "large" as "long", with "letter of the alphabet" taken as "letter, epistle" (although Paul would have used a different word), "see what a long letter I have written to you", Bligh. "You can see by this rough writing that I now pen these words to you by my own hand"

εγραψα [γραψω] aor. "I write" - An epistolary aorist where the writer adopts the time perspective of the reader.

υμιν dat. pro. "to you" - Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage; "for you."

τη εμ χειρι dat. "with my own hand" - The dative is instrumental, expressing means; "with/by my own hand."

v12

ii] The summation of Paul's argument, v12-15. In v12-13 Paul notes those against his gospel of justification by faith. These law-bound believers have been pressuring his new Gentile converts to submit to the Mosaic law to maintain and progress their standing before God. Yet, as Paul observes, these "members of the circumcision party" are unable to keep the law themselves, so what's the point? As far as Paul is concerned, they are motivated by fear, trying to prove their kosher credentials to their unbelieving Jewish friends by circumcising Gentile converts.

οσοι pro. "those" - AS MANY AS. Nominative subject of the verb "to will / want." These ones who want to make a good showing are obviously the same group as the ones being circumcised, v13.

ευποσωπησαι [ευποσωπεω] aor. inf. "[want] to make a good impression / [want] to impress people" - [DESIRE] TO MAKE A GOOD SHOWING. Hapax legomenon, once only use in the NT. The infinitive is complementary,

completing the sense of "will [to make a good showing, show off and boast]." Paul seeks to expose the attitudes of the Judaizers. The real reason, says Paul, for their religious fervor, is not religious at all. They are simply afraid of the opposition of their fellow Jews.

εν σαρκι [σαρξ σαρκος] "outwardly" - IN THE FLESH / BY MEANS OF THE FLESH. The prepositional phrase is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner in which "will to make a good impression" is realized, or, as NIV11, instrumental, means. It is possible that Paul is using "flesh" in an ethical sense, as he sometimes does, in which case it means the innate power that opposes and resists God, "the old man", "the body of sin", as opposed to "Spirit", the indwelling compelling of the Spirit of Christ that renews and aligns us to God. Yet, it is more likely that Paul is using "flesh" here for the mortal physical self, as opposed to "spiritual / inward", so "outwardly", NIV; "externally", Bruce; "they want to make a pleasing front to the world", Phillips.

αναγκαζουσιν [αναγκαζω] pres. **"trying to compel [you]"** - [THESE] COMPEL, FORCE [YOU]. The present tense is usually read here as conative, action that is attempted, so NIV. "Those people are telling you to get circumcised", CEV.

περιτεμεσθαι [περιτεμνω] pres. pas. inf. **"to be circumcised"** - The infinitive is complementary, completing the action of the verb "to compel."

μονον adv. **"the only reason they do this is"** - ONLY. Limiting adverb. Elliptical, as NIV. "Reason they do this is", has been supplied. "Only [their object in doing so is] that they may not be persecuted", Lightfoot.

ινα + subj. "to [avoid being persecuted]" - THAT [THEY MAY NOT BE PERSECUTED]. This construction introduces a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that ..." Maintaining Jewish exclusivism by demanding that Christian converts submit to the Torah would obviously endear Jewish Christians to their unconverted Jewish friends, rather than antagonize them, and, it could be argued that it would serve as an excellent method of *building bridges* to unconverted Jews!!!! Is this a Pauline critique of Church Growth methodology????

τω σταυρω [ος] dat. **"for the cross [of Christ]"** - IN = FOR THE CROSS. The position in the Gk. is emphatic since the phrase is placed between *hina* and its negation. Dative of interest, often classified as cause, "because of (the offense of) the cross of Christ", Wallace 167. The whole justification package is tied up with the cross.

v13

γαρ "-" FOR. Possibly expressing cause, following on from "in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ", although the logic is not obvious, "for those who are circumcised ...", Longenecker. Probably best taken

to indicate a logical step in the argument, so "they want you to obey the law, but even they themselves are unable to obey it", NIV, NRSV, REB, NJB, etc.

οἱ περιτεμνομενοι [περιτεμνω] pres. pas. part. "**those who are circumcised**" - [NEITHER] THE ONES BEING CIRCUMCISED. The participle serves as a substantive, most likely passive, but possibly middle. If middle, it refers to the Gentiles who receive circumcision, but most likely it is referring to those who promote it, "those who want to make a good show", v12. Not those who are doing the circumcising, but those who belong to it; "not even the members of the circumcision party."

φυλασσοουσιν [φυλασσω] pres. "**obey**" - KEEP, OBSERVE [LAW]. Some commentators suggest that Paul is seeking to expose the double standards of the Judaizers; they encourage others to keep the law, but are not diligent themselves. This view certainly fits with the context. Yet, it is more likely that Paul is restating his central theses in this letter. The Judaizers promote law obedience as a means of restraining sin and thus advancing their standing before God for blessing, yet a person's standing before God is by grace through faith. For a believer to return to the law to promote their standing before God can only serve to place themselves again under the curse of the law, under judgment, for no person can obey the law perfectly, and that includes the members of the circumcision party.

αυτοι pro. "-" - [NEITHER THE ONES BEING CIRCUMCISED] THEMSELVES [KEEP THE LAW]. Intensifying use of the pronoun.

αλλα "yet" - BUT [THEY DESIRE YOU TO BE CIRCUMCISED]. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, "not ..., but"; "but they want to get you circumcised", Berkeley.

ινα + subj. "that" - Introducing a purpose clause; "in order that / so that ..."

καυχησωνται [καυχωμαι] aor. subj. "**they may boast**" - BOAST, GLORY, PRIDE ONESELF. The real motive behind the evangelistic zeal of the Judaizers, says Paul, is to bolster up their pride in having brought Gentiles under the Law of Moses. They seek the praise of their fellow Jewish believers, not the salvation of the Gentiles.

εν + dat. "in [your]" - Here expressing reference / respect; "they want to boast with respect to the outward mark of circumcision which they have been able to persuade you to adopt."

σαρκι [ξ κος] dat. "**flesh**" - As above, their outward physical self, with particular reference to circumcision, ie., the outward marks of Jewishness, "they want to boast about your submission to the Law of Moses."

v14

As a Pharisee, Paul has plenty to boast about in the law department, but he boasts of only one thing, namely, the cross of Christ. Paul's confidence rests on what Christ has done for him, not on what he has done. As for all the "worldly" piety that seemingly earns *brownie-points* for divine blessing, it is dead to him, and he is dead to it.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step to a counter point; we can't boast in circumcision, but can in the cross.

μοι dat. pro. "**I**" - TO ME. Dative of interest, advantage, "far be it for me to boast", possibly possession. The position of "to / for me" is emphatic; "when it comes to my interests, may I never boast"

μη γενοιτο [**γινομαι**] aor. opt. "**May I never**" - MAY IT NOT BE. The optative mood, virtually a weakened subjunctive, is used by Paul, with a negation, to express a strongly negated desire, often as an exclamation, and here integrated into the sentence; "God forbid that I should boast", Barclay.

καυχασθαι [**καυχασμαι**] pres. inf. "**boast**" - TO BOAST. Variant has the accusative + infinitive construction **με καυχασθαι**. It may introduce an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what is not wished, "but for me, perish the thought that I should boast", Berkeley, but at the same time it can be taken as the subject of the verb "to become." Here the word is used positively, not negatively as in v13. The present tense implies ongoing boasting, or better, "confidence". The Judaizers boast that they keep the regulations of the law, (although, as Paul has shown, they may keep the outward regulations, but they do not keep the substance of the moral law). Paul boasts of only one thing, namely, the cross of Christ. Paul could well boast of his "righteousness" under the law, even of his missionary service, but his confidence rests on what Christ has done for him, not on what he has done. He trusts wholly in the finished work of Christ on the cross.

ει μη + ind. (var.) "**except**" - Introducing an exceptive clause expressing a contrast by designating an exception. Noted as a rather messy sentence; "God forbid that I should boast about anything or anybody except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ", Phillips.

εν + dat. "**in [the cross]**" - Here adverbial, expressing reference / respect; "except with respect to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

του κυριου [**ος**] gen. "**of [our] Lord**" - OF THE LORD [OF US, JESUS CHRIST]. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. "Jesus Christ" is genitive in apposition to "Lord".

δια + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF. Instrumental, expressing means.

οὗ pro. "**which**" - WHOM. The pronoun may be either masculine or neuter, so it is through "the cross" or through "Christ", "through whom", Ellicott? Probably the cross, although it doesn't actually matter because the cross but represents the person and work of Christ.

εσταυρωται [σταυρω] perf. pas. "**[the world] has been crucified**" - [TO ME] WORLD HAS BEEN CRUCIFIED [AND I TO THE WORLD]. The perfect tense indicates a past action with ongoing consequences. In the cross the world has been crucified to Paul. The world may be "the order of material creation and everything under its sway", Guthrie, but most commentators, following Burton, argue that it is not the physical, nor sinful world, but all the glories and vanities which undermine right-standing with God, and in which we put our trust. For the Judaizers, the vanity on which they trust involves keeping the regulations of the law. Paul says that he is dead "to the world", it is "crucified to me."

μοι dat. pro. "**to me**" - Dative of reference / respect, "through the cross the world is a dead thing with respect to me"; "The world is dead as far as I am concerned", CEV.

κοσμῳ [ος] "**[and I] to the world**" - Dative of reference / respect. As well as being able to boast of "the total ongoing sufficiency of the cross of Christ", Paul happily declares that "by the death of Christ in which he was included, he had died to the old era which, with its values, stand done to death", Dumbrell. The law has no claim over him when it comes to the business of standing approved before God. "I am dead as far as the world is concerned", CEV.

v15

There is nothing to boast about in meticulous piety, or even flexible freedom. What we can boast about is "a new creation", our participation in Christ, through his cross, in the kingdom of God.

γαρ "-" - FOR. Causal; "boasting about the cross is the way to go, "because there is nothing to boast about in circumcision or uncircumcision."

ουτε ουτε "**neither nor**" - NEITHER [CIRCUMCISION IS ANYTHING] NOR [UNCIRCUMCISION]. Negated comparative construction.

τι "**[means] anything**" - ANYTHING [IS]. Predicate nominative of the verb to-be. Possibly it is the "boast" that is nothing. Paul goes on to stress that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any value when it comes to our relationship with God. "Circumcision is nothing (to boast about), nor is uncircumcision", Bligh.

αλλα "**what counts is**" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, "not, but" ; "but rather, what we have to boast about is a new creation."

καινη κτισις "[what counts is] **a new creation**" - A NEW CREATION / CREATURE. Chilton, *A Call to Freedom before God - Galatians 6:15*, suggests "a new humanity", "God has set aside the polarity of Jew and Gentile in favour of an altogether new humanity." Probably best treated as either, "new creation", or "new creature." If new creature, it may refer to "both God's act of new-creating us and our condition of being new-created", Bligh (one would think either the divine act, or the product, here probably the product). So, Bligh suggests that "new creature" = "in newness of the Spirit", cf., Rom.7:6. Lightfoot opts for "new creature", so also: "new man", Neil; "the inward work of the Spirit to regenerate and sanctify us", Stott; "the regenerating work of God in the individual soul", Cole; "men and women made new by the transforming power of the Spirit", Hunter; "the new life in the Holy Spirit", Ridderbos. Possibly elliptical, "what matters is being a new creature" Certainly these interpretations fit the use of the phrase in 2Cor.5:7. The other possibility, "new creation", certainly has a far better Old Testament precedence and is the translation chosen by Betz, Bruce, Longenecker; "the reality of God's kingdom which is ushered in by God's saving act in the cross of Christ", Fung; "the totality of the renewal effected by Christ", Guthrie; "a new order of existence", Tannehill, *Dying and Rising with Christ*. Barrett supports this view by arguing that v15 is dealing with "an objective, metaphysical view" of salvation, having moved from a "subjective, existential view of salvation" in v14. So, possibly referring to a new order of things, the realization, in Christ, of the promises made to Abraham of an eternal kingdom, the kingdom of God. "What matters is the reality of (pos. our membership in) God's Kingdom (which reality is ours 'in Christ')", Fung.

v16

ii] Final blessings and warning, v16-18. The NIV translation is followed, but it is possible that Paul intends the verse to read "Peace to all who follow this rule and mercy even to the Israel of God."

ειρηνη και ελεος "**peace and mercy**" - [AND AS MANY AS WILL KEEP IN LINE WITH THIS RULE] PEACE [UPON THEM] AND MERCY [EVEN UPON THE ISRAEL OF GOD]. Interestingly, Paul usually has "mercy and peace", given that peace is the consequence of mercy. Presumably this blessing is upon all believers (those who follow the rule), and that includes "the Israel of God", but note above.

επι + acc. "**to**" - UPON. Spatial, although the accusative can express motion, as of the blessing of peace coming down from heaven upon...

οσοι "**all who**" - ALL THOSE WHO. An absolute inclusive referring to all believers.

στοιχησουσιν [**στοιχω**] fut. "**follow**" - WILL KEEP IN LINE, AGREE WITH. "Live in accordance with", Longenecker.

τω κανονι [ων ονος] dat. "**[this] rule**" - THIS CANE, REED MEASURING ROD, STANDARD. Dative of direct object after the verb **στοιχεω**, "keep in line with." Follow "this principle", that is, the one stated in v15, both Gentile Christians ("all") and Jewish Christians ("the Israel of God").

του θεου [ος] gen. "**[the Israel] of God**" - The genitive is adjectival, possessive; "God's true people", CEV. Possibly Jews in general (as note above), less likely Gentiles, but probably either all believers as the new Israel, the inheritors of the promises to Abraham (in this case the *kai* is expegetic, "that is [to the Israel of God]"), or serving as Paul's term for believing Jews (ascensive, "even", in the sense of "and that includes Jewish believers"), possibly specifically the Judaizers. "To all God's people", NCV.

v17

Serving as a final personal comment by Paul, warning off the Judaizers and reminding them of his apostolic authority, v17.

του λοιπου adv. gen. "**finally / from now on**" - OF THE REST. This genitive articular adverb takes an ablative sense, source / origin, "from", possibly logical, as NIV, but better temporal as TNIV; "the time that remains" = "in future", Barclay.

παρεχω [παρεχω] pres. imp. "**let [no one] cause**" - LET GIVE [NO ONE TROUBLE TO ME]. The present tense indicates durative (ongoing) action; "continue to cause me trouble." Elsewhere Paul calls these troubles "the care of all the churches." This pain and suffering comes on him as a servant of Christ, and in a sense adds to the other "marks" he has borne for Jesus. In this suffering, Christ himself is identified and thus, this pain is being inflicted indirectly onto Christ. The church had therefore, better change its ways.

μοι dat. pro. "**me**" - TO ME. Dative of indirect object / interest.

κοπους [ος] "**trouble**" - WORK, TROUBLE. Accusative direct object of the verb "to give." Here obviously the sense is "trouble / difficulty."

γαρ "for" - Expressing cause / reason; introducing a causal clause explaining why Paul should not be troubled by **μηδεις**, "no one", "because of my standing as an apostle."

εγω pro. "**I**" - I [BEAR THE MARKS]. Emphatic by use and position.

τα στιγματα [α ατος] "**the marks**" - A branding such as a tattoo of ownership for a slave. Possibly the scars on Paul's body marks of his suffering for Christ; "the scars I bear on my body brand me as the slave of Christ", Barclay. Still, a figurative sense may be implied as of ownership to Christ, a spiritual mark, a religious branding, as opposed to the mark of the Judaizers, namely, circumcision. Paul bears the religious brand of apostle and the Judaizers need to

take note of it; "I bear in my body the brand-marks of Jesus' ownership", Berkeley.

του Ιησου gen. "of Jesus" - OF JESUS [IN THE BODY OF ME]. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "marks / scars", Jesus type scars, scars which indicate Paul's apostolic authority exercised under Jesus' authority; "scars that prove I belong to Christ Jesus", CEV / "the scars I bear on my body [that] brand me as the slave of Christ", Barclay.

v18

A gracious blessing, v18. May the bounteous kindness of God be poured into our inner being, in and through the person and work of Christ Jesus.

ἡ χάρις "the grace" - Paul begins and ends with God's unmerited favour, here "may God's favour in and through the person and work of Christ be with us."

ἡμῶν gen. pro. "our" - [OF THE LORD] OF US. The genitive could be classified as possessive, and there is certainly a sense where Jesus is our Lord, a treasured possession indeed, but a more appropriate classification would be subordination, Jesus is Lord over us.

του κυριου [ος] gen. "of [our] Lord" - The "grace" is most likely active so the genitive may be classified as adjectival, verbal, subjective, or idiomatic / source; "the grace *that pours out from* our Lord Jesus Christ." "I pray that the Lord Jesus Christ will be kind to you", CEV.

μετα + gen. "be with" - *be WITH*. Expressing association, accompaniment; "in company with."

του πνευματος [α ατος] "[your] spirit" - THE SPIRIT [OF YOU BROTHERS. AMEN]. Obviously not the Holy Spirit, but "spirit" as of the real self; "may what our Lord gives freely be deeply and personally yours", Peterson.

Excursus I

Key propositional terms from 2:16

"Even we Jewish believers [more so than Gentile believers] know that a person is not set right with God (justified) on the ground of their faithful observance of the law of Moses, but rather on the ground of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ (his atonement, ie., a person's right-standing in the sight of God depends on Christ's faithfulness not our own). Convinced that no person can gain God's approval by self-improvement, we believed in Jesus as the Messiah so that we might be set right with God, because no one can ever be set right with God on the ground of law-obedience."

δικαιουται [δικαιω]. The verb "**justified / set right with God / put in the right with God**", appears in Galatians three times in 2:16, and once in 2:17, 3:8, 11, 24 and 5:4, while the adjective appears once in 3:11. Paul uses the present tense, indicating an ongoing state, while the passive voice is usually regarded as divine, ie., God does the justifying. The noun **δικαιοσυνη** takes the sense "justified", "right", "righteous", or "uprightness", Fitzmyer, "the state of being right with God", Bruce, "covenant compliant", Dumbrell.

The action "to justify" is best understood in the terms of God regarding a person in the right with him and this on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ. This "recognition of covenant inclusion", Dumbrell, is sometimes expressed by commentators in forensic terms, "judged in the right with God", Dumbrell, "confer a righteous status on", Cranfield, or in more relational terms, "count / treat as right / righteous", Barrett, "accepted as right / righteous", Cassirer. Along with the "declared right" approach, there are those who argue that the verb means "made right". Those who support the "made right" position do not necessarily agree with the Catholic "ethical" view of making right, nor a Protestant notion of perfectionism, but rather see it in the terms of a person being included in God's program of setting all things right, so "rectified", Martyn, "made sinless in the sight of God", Junkins, in the terms of establishing a right relationship with God. Of course, in the end, what God declares so, is so. If God declares us right before him, even just regards us right before him, then we are right, holy, perfect in his sight, and eternally so (as long as we hide behind Jesus!!!). We can say then that justification is an action stemming from God's grace (his promise-keeping mercy facilitated in the sacrifice of Christ) whereby a person is "set right / judged right with God".

It seems likely that both Paul and his opponents equally accept the gospel formula that a person is justified on the basis of Christ's faithfulness, appropriated through faith, apart from works of the law. The point of contention seems to be

over what we might call the coverage of the doctrine. It is likely that the judaizers limit the coverage to forgiveness, possibly even just forgiveness at conversion, whereas Paul sees justification in much wider terms, probably best described as "the fullness of new life in Christ" (note the parallel use of "justified" and "live to God" in Gal.2:15-21). For the judaizers, this new life is accessed by obedience to the law, whereas for Paul, the new life is a natural consequence of being right with God. "Life" is a product of Christ's faithfulness appropriated through faith and not law-obedience.

The judaizers, obviously influenced by Second Temple Judaism, had developed a dichotomy between justification and sanctification - justified by grace through faith; sanctified by works / obedience. For Paul, sanctification is a product of justification, a state of holiness which, in the renewing power of the indwelling Spirit, a believer strives to apply in their daily life - godliness is not achieved by obedience, but by walking with the Spirit. Whiteley, in *The Theology of St. Paul*, nicely illustrates our experience of sanctification. It is "just as a man who has come out of the cold into a warm room is subject both to the cold which has numbed his hands and to the heat which is thawing them out."

So, justification is the relational element of God's setting all things right. Christ is even now seated at the right hand of the Ancient of Days and we are seated with him. The kingdom of God, with all its blessings, is upon us, the day has come for which humanity, and even nature, yearned. Our participation in this new life, yesterday, today and tomorrow, is inclusive of our justification and is not an extra appropriated by a faithful attention to the law.

ἐξ + Gen. "**on the ground of**" - FROM. In v16a Paul uses two prepositions to express a similar idea (in this context they are interchangeable): ἐκ with "works of the law", and δία with "faith". The NIV translates both to express means, "by". In v16b he uses ἐκ with both "works" and "faith." The preposition can be used to express, source, separation, means, and cause / basis. Given that Paul uses δία + gen., expressing means, along with ἐκ, it seems that he is using ἐκ to express a means consisting of a source. A possible translation for such a sense is "on the ground of." So, a person is set right before God on the basis of / on the ground of faith / faithfulness of Christ appropriated through faith". Bruce has "through", instrumental, but note how Berkeley has "due to", causal. "Even we (Jews) have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ", 2:16, Longenecker; "righteousness would have come from keeping the law", 3:21, Fung; "that the source of our justification might be the faith of Christ", 2:16, Martyn.

ἐργων νομου "**observing the law / doing what the law of Moses commands**" – WORKS OF LAW. The meaning of this phrase has prompted

endless debate, particularly with respect to The New Perspective on Paul. It probably serves as a descriptor of nomism / pietism, the idea that performance will progress the Christian life. Most likely the law of Moses is in mind. Paul's treatment of the law is a matter of constant debate in that he both affirms the doing of the law, but also depreciates it. Clearly, the intended purpose of obedience is what matters. There is nothing wrong with using the law as a guide to Christian living, but to use the law to facilitate God's grace is to place ourselves under the curse of the law. Only perfect obedience enables us to participate in God's plan to set all things right. Even Paul, who, when it came to the legalistic observance of the law, was "blameless", knew that he was not justified "by doing what the law commands", Moffatt.

δια της πιστεως αυτου "the faith / faithfulness of him (Jesus Christ)"

The noun "faith" when used with the genitive "him / Jesus Christ" is usually understood as "a committal of oneself to Christ on the basis of the acceptance of the message concerning him", Burton, ie., the genitive is treated as verbal, objective. This classification is doctrinally foundational: "Faith in Christ is the sole and sufficient means of justification", Fung.

The trouble is that **πιστις** in Gk. at the time, and in the Septuagint (the Gk. OT), didn't mean "faith / trust" directed toward someone, but rather "reliability / fidelity / firmness / faithfulness / trustworthiness." This sense seems also to dominate the NT, including Paul's letters. Although not widely accepted, it is more than likely that the "faith" here is actually generated by Christ (subjective genitive; see Wallace 115 who argues that the vast majority of personal or impersonal genitives with **πιστις** are subjective), or belongs to Christ (possessive), or generally describes Christ's character (adjectival, descriptive). So, our right-standing before God rests on Christ's "faith / faithfulness" to the will of God expressed in his obedience to the way of the cross on our behalf; "Christ's trustful obedience to God in the giving up of his own life for us", Martyn, (cf., See Galatians 2:16, and also 2:20, "I live in faith, that is to say, in the faith of the Son of God", Martyn).

Most commentators remain unconvinced and opt for an objective genitive. Larkin notes that when **πιστις** is introduced by **εν ᾧ**, "in whom", then Christ is obviously the object of the faith, ie., an objective genitive. In Ephesians 3:12 Larkin argues that the **εν ᾧ** introducing the verse is also assumed for **πιστεως αυτου**, as NIV, "In him *and* through faith in him." Merkle p98 addresses the issue with respect to Ephesians 3:12 and concludes that "though the objective genitive is slightly more likely, the subjective genitive cannot be ruled out."

None-the-less, it seems likely that the genitive "of him" is subjective, or possessive, "through the faith / faithfulness of him", rather than the more widely

accepted objective genitive, "faith in him", where Christ is the object of the faith, as NIV etc. Christ's faithfulness, evident in the cross, rests on the Father's faithfulness to his promises, the appropriation of which (the promises of God worked out in the cross) is to we who (ἐπιστεύσαμεν) believe, cf., Rom.3:22, Gal.2:22 "A person is ... justified by means of the faith / faithfulness of Christ Jesus."

Donald Robinson in *Faith of Jesus Christ - a New Testament Debate*, published in the Reformed Theological Review, #29, 1970, opts for a subjective genitive, translating πιστις as "firmness"; "Christ is the immovable rock established by the immutable God, upon which he invites men to take their stand without flinching." For the use of the genitive in Galatians, see Martyn and also Longenecker p87. For further reading see the doctoral dissertation by Richard Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11*, published in the Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study edition #56 edited by Bird, 1983, and republished as *The Faith of Christ*, Eerdmans, 2002.

Excursus II

A survey of the New Perspective on Paul

The reformed doctrine of justification (the declaration of a righteous status before God by a divine gift of grace appropriated through the instrument of faith in Jesus Christ) finds its summation in the work of Martin Luther. In reformed circles the doctrine of justification is central to any understanding of the Christian faith. "An absolute justification is needed to give the sinner a start. He must have the certainty of *no condemnation*, of being, without reserve or drawback, right with God through God's gracious act in Christ, before he can begin to live the new life", Denny.

Given advances in Biblical studies, Luther's grand doctrine was inevitably going to be tested, and tested it has been by liberal theologians over the last 100 years. Yet recently, within Reformed circles, there has been, as Glen Davies puts it, "a paradigm shift" in Pauline theology prompted by a "positive re-evaluation of first century Judaism. The previously held characterization of Judaism as a religion of legalistic works-righteousness has been challenged, if not replaced, by a renewed appreciation of the place within it of the covenant and the role of repentance and forgiveness", *Faith and Obedience in Romans*, G. Davies, JSOT, supplement Series 39, 1990. This "shift" now goes by the name of "the new perspective on Paul", a term coined by Dunn ("the Sanders/Dunn trajectory", Silva). Paul's critique of law-bound Judaism has prompted endless debate and "the new perspective" has certainly tried to come to grips with the grace/law issue.

E.P. Sanders in *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 1977, expanding on the previous work of G.F. Moore in his paper *Christian Writers on Judaism*, 1921 (ex. *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, the age of the Tannaim*, CUP, 1927-30) and Krister Stendahl in his essay *The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West*, 1963, got the ball rolling by arguing that Pharisaic Judaism did not promote salvation by obedience to the law, but rather taught that salvation was a gift of God's sovereign grace (the blessing of being born a Jew and therefore, an inheritor of the blessing to Abraham, ie. the blessing of their covenant status). For Sanders, the law served to express covenantal status ("covenantal nomism") rather than earn that status ("legalism"), as such it was a privilege rather than a curse.

On the basis of this proposition, Sanders argued that Paul's gospel was not directly opposed to religious Judaism, but rather proclaimed a new framework, in Christ, that replaced nationalistic Judaism. This then is "what Paul finds wrong in Judaism: it is not Christianity." James Dunn picked up on this idea in his work

The New Perspective on Paul, 1983, reprinted in *Jesus and the Law, Studies in Mark and Galatians*, 1990. Dunn refined Sanders by arguing that in Christ there is a new covenantal framework that replaces the old. The old framework, which like the new, was a framework of grace, functioned under the privilege of the law. Dunn initially defined the "works of the law" in the terms of Jewish "exclusivism" rather than "legalism": circumcision, the cult, food laws ... Dunn "adjusted" this view in *Once More*, Society of Biblical Literature, 1991, and *Yet Once More*, JSNT #46, 1992. In his restatement, Dunn argued that the marks of Jewish "exclusivism" are but the markers of the whole law for the Jew. Confronted by a critique from C.E.B. Cranfield in *The Works of the Law in the Epistle to the Romans*, JSNT #43, 1991, Dunn also "adjusted" his view that Paul's attack upon Judaism focused on its reliance on election privilege which encouraged indifference to the law's demands. In his restatement of Paul's attack upon Judaism, Dunn included actual disobedience of the law, along with their "boasting". Dunn concluded that for Paul, the law of the old covenant is replaced in the new by that more fundamental privilege accessed by Abraham, namely, faith. To enable the inclusion of the Gentiles, justification is no longer realized by "works of the law" (Jewish "exclusivism"), but by faith.

Dunn's work was further developed by N.T. Wright in *The Climax of the Covenant, Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*, 1991. Wright agreed with Sanders and Dunn (although he hadn't picked up on Dunn's later "adjustments") that "works of the law" are primarily "the badges of Jewish race", a privilege of the elect people of God, the key mark of privilege being circumcision. Wright went on to further develop the idea of Judaism's covenant status by pointing out that the Jews were actually still in exile awaiting their redemption. This redemption, this exodus, was realized in Jesus the messiah, and since the people of God were now inclusive of Jew and Gentile, justification could no longer be based on Jewish "exclusivism" ("works of the law"), but upon faith. Although justification involves the declaration of a judge (ie. it is forensic), it is a declaration that a person IS eternally righteous (in an anticipatory sense), ie. they are participants in the covenant, thus right with God. This state, rather than status, will be evidenced in a believer's life through the Spirit because "what God has begun he will complete." As for faith, it is the act of believing gospel truth; "covenant membership [is] demarcated by that which is believed."

In summary then, Wright, in the tradition of earlier liberal theologians such as Albert Schweitzer and Krister Stendahl, argues that Paul's "justification" theology does not concern how a person gets saved, but rather how a Gentile can properly be included with Jews in the people of God.

Andrew Das in his work *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant*, 2001, has tried to bridge the gap between conservative and new perspective commentators with

his "newer perspective." He supports the new perspective view that Judaism rested on the grace of God expressed in its covenantal status, but at the same time supports the conservatives in their insistence that strict adherence to the law was expected of the faithful. Das' work at least indicates that the intransigence of both the "Lutheran" and "new perspective" positions is probably less than helpful. The truth is, that no position, in the schema of Christian theology, can claim to have arrived; every age makes its contribution and every contribution has its imperfections. See also Michael Bird, *Saving Righteousness of God - Studies in Paul, Justification and the New Perspective*, 2007, for another excellent attempt to assess the value of both sides of the argument.

New perspective scholars claim that Paul was no Luther oppressed by sin and guilt, driven to desperation by Biblical law. Yet, it does seem likely that they have underplayed the role of the law. Law obedience is not just a status privilege, but a covenant requirement. First century Judaism saw the Torah as something more than just a life-style manual for members of the covenant. See *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Vol.#1: The complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Carson, 2001. On the other hand, there is much to commend the observation that neither were first century Jews crude legalists (the use of the law to earn salvation). Stephen Westerholm in *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The Lutheran Paul and his critics*, 2004, although soundly reformed ("Lutheran"), holds that Pharisaic Judaism "knew and depended on God's grace and did not promote a self-righteous pursuit of salvation by works."

In the end this debate comes down to Paul's understanding of the law. Sanders' observation that "works of the law", for a first century Jew, are the deeds done in obedience to the Torah for the purpose of maintaining their standing before God ("covenant nomism - the maintenance of status" rather than "covenant legalism"), has much to commend it. Yet, rather than seeing the faith / obedience correlatives as positives, it is more than likely that nomism is the very heresy that Paul is attacking. Working to retain standing before God and/or progress that standing, in the sense of advancing holiness, cuts at the very heart of a right-standing before God which is "reckoned" by "faith" (Christ's faith/faithfulness and our faith in his faith/faithfulness - right-standing has always been reckoned by faith, cf. Abraham [faith in the faithfulness of God]). Obedience (always imperfect) is a product of faith and secures nothing, nor serves any meritorious end.

So, what do we draw from all this? For Paul, "works of the law" (the strict obedience of the Torah for the purpose of maintaining and/or progressing right standing before God - nomism) is a heresy. Right-standing before God (covenant compliance / inclusion / acceptance) rests wholly on God's grace (God's covenant mercy facilitated in the faithfulness of Christ), and is appropriated through the

instrument of faith - "from faith first to last". It is very unlikely that Paul is arguing that justification is a mechanism by which God includes Gentiles with the people of God in these last days. It is far more likely that Paul understands justification as a divine action "to set right before God", Bruce, which righteous state is realized in union with Christ / "in Christ" (righteousness realized in identification with Christ better reflects Pauline thought than imputed righteousness). In simple terms, Paul's argument in Galatians and Romans is not about ecclesiology, but soteriology.

The debate continues. At times, the new perspective edges toward being "another gospel", but at the same time, by challenging Luther's synthesis, it has served as a positive corrective. Romans and Galatians is more about staying saved than getting saved, ie., the problem Paul addresses is nomism, not legalism. None-the-less, I happily leave Luther with the last word. "A Christian is free from all things and over all things so that he needs no works to make him righteous and save him, since faith alone abundantly confers all these things. Should he grow so foolish, however, as to presume to become righteous, free, saved, and a Christian by means of some good work, he would instantly lose faith and all its benefits", Luther, 1520.

See also: *Justification and Eschatology, A dialogue with The New Perspective on Paul*, R.S. Smith. 2001. RTR Supplement Series #1. A conservative response; *The Meaning of works of the Law in Galatians and Romans*, R. K. Rapa. 2001; *Paul and the New Perspective, Second thoughts on the origin of Paul's gospel*, Seyoon Kim. 2002, a mid-road response; *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, essays edited by Dunn, Eerdmans reprint, 2003; *Justification and the New Perspective on Paul: A Review and Response*, Guy Waters, P&R Publishing, 2004, a "Lutheran" defence of justification; *The Saving Righteousness of God, Studies on Paul, Justification and the New Perspective*, Michael Bird, 2007, an attempt to find a middle road.

Sid. 4/24

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