

# Jesus. And That's All

## Galatians 5

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. 2 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. 3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. 4 You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. 5 For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

7 You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth? 8 That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. 9 “A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough.” 10 I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view. The one who is throwing you into confusion, whoever that may be, will have to pay the penalty. 11 Brothers and sisters, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. 12 As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!

13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” 15 If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. 16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

**vs. 1-7** – There has been a lot of talk in our country right now about a history of slavery. Can you imagine anyone wanting to go back to it? Why is Paul so upset?

- How were the people going back to slavery and why was this considered slavery? Consider the points below that are from verses 2-4. Allowing yourself to be circumcised
  - a. effectively negates the value of Christ's sacrifice

- b. obligates a person to keep the whole law
- c. deprives a person of grace and thus that person adopts a “merit-based” plan of salvation.

- Consider again Galatians 2:20-21 - The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God. For if righteousness comes through the law, Christ died for nothing.”
- Consider the time of the Reformation. What sorts of things did people believe would merit them favor with God? What sort of things do people believe today would do that?

**vs. 7-12** – In these verses, Paul directly addresses the false teachers. What is “the offense of the cross” that Paul speaks of in vs. 11.

- In vs. 12, Paul makes a rather shocking suggestion. That being said, what is the logic behind it?

**vs. 13-17** – In these verses, Paul addresses the use of Christian freedom? Does freedom mean, “I can do whatever I want?”

- Consider the words of John Adams, who, in 1798 wrote: “*We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion ... Our Constitution was made only for a religious and moral people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other.*” Why is this true?
- In these verses, what does Paul say that we should and should not do? What two things are in conflict? What is the result of this conflict on the living of our Christian life?

**vs. 19-21** – Where do the sinful acts come from? What are they are what are the results of these actions both now and eternally?

**vs. 22-26** – Why is the fruit of the Spirit called “the fruit” of the Spirit?

- Though what does the Spirit work to bring the fruit to life: the law or Gospel?
- Notice how you could break down the fruit of the Spirit into three categories.
  - 1-3 – our relationship with God based on what Jesus has done for us.
  - 4-6 – our relationship with others based on what Jesus has done for us.
  - 7-9 – how we conduct ourselves in the various stations of the Christian life.
- What are the results of these actions? Do they have eternal results?