



Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Freedom Through Christ Jesus

 An analogy.

I died and I'm standing before the Judge – the Lord God Almighty. The prosecuting attorney is Satan and, while he paces back-and-forth before the Judge's bench, he lists every one of my sins in excruciating detail emphasizing the people I hurt. I am standing, downcast, and feeling deep, deep shame as I listen to all of the sins I committed, the people I had hurt, and the impact and consequences of my words and actions upon those people. Eventually, Satan completes his recitation of the list of my sins, and rests his case.

The Judge turns to my attorney Christ Jesus and asks Him for my defense.

Christ Jesus states, "My Father, the list of charges, the sins, are accurate. The defendant is guilty. The defense rests."

The Judge then states, "My judgment is just. The defendant sinned. The consequence for sin is death. Are there any last words?"

Christ Jesus quietly addresses the Judge, "I know this person by name. I paid the penalty for this person's sins. Please free this person."

The Judge turns to me and lovingly says, "My child, your sins are forgiven. You are free to go."

[As retold by Galen Watje, 07/20/2023]

¹ 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.

Q1. How has Christ "set us free"?

Q2. In this context what is the "yoke of slavery"?

Romans 3:9-20 [NIV-1984]

⁹ What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. ¹⁰ As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹ there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." ¹³ "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." ¹⁴ "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ ruin and misery mark their ways, ¹⁷ and the way of peace they do not know." ¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. ²⁰ Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

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.

Q3. Why does Paul make such a ‘big deal’ out of circumcision? What does circumcision represent?

³ Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law.

Q4. The key word is “lets”. Why is this circumcised man “obligated to obey the whole law”?


⁴ You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

Q5. Why have “you who are trying to be justified by law . . . been alienated from Christ”?

Q6. What does “fallen away from grace” mean to you?

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

Day 2

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⁵ But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.

Q7. What does “await through the Spirit” mean to you?

Ephesians 1:13-14 [NIV-1984]

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession -- to the praise of his glory.

Q8. What is “the righteousness for which we hope”?

 Personally, I don't like the word “hope”. It seems wishy-washy. So, I checked the dictionary and the 1st definition for hope is “*To wish* for a particular event that one considers possible”. “To wish”: yes, definitely wishy-washy. However, the 2nd definition states “*Archaic*: To have confidence; trust”. [© 2003-2023 Farlex, Inc. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/hope>] I cannot discern when etymologists determined that the 2nd definition of “hope” was “archaic”, but the 2nd definition seems to be the meaning intended by Bible translators.

Romans 3:22-24 [The Message (MSG)]

But in our time something new has been added. What Moses and the prophets witnessed to all those years has happened. The God-setting-things-right that we read about has become Jesus-setting-things-right for us. And not only for us, but for everyone who believes in him. For there is no difference between us and them in this. Since we've compiled this long and sorry record as sinners (both us and them) and proved that we are utterly incapable of living the glorious lives God wills for us, God did it for us. Out of sheer generosity he put us in right standing with himself. A pure gift. He got us out of the mess we're in and restored us to where he always wanted us to be. And he did it by means of Jesus Christ.


Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Q9. Circumcision is part of the old Mosaic Law. Does a person become a Believer by following the Mosaic Law?

Yes? } Why?
No? }


Q10. Why does Paul write that “neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value”?

 Paul’s concern is whether people assume that circumcision versus uncircumcision implies religious faith: if a man is circumcised, then the man must be a Jew; and, if the man is uncircumcised and believes in the saving gift of Christ Jesus, then he must be a Believer. However, Paul’s point is intent. If a man is circumcised in obedience to the Mosaic Law, then the man is bound by the law. If a man, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, has faith in the saving gift of Christ Jesus and demonstrates his faith through love, then he is a Believer.

Q11. How does a Believer in the saving gift of eternal life through Christ Jesus express “faith . . . through love”?

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

Day 3

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⁷ You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth?

Q12. Why would Paul refer to his life of ministry as “running a race”?

Acts 20:24 [NIV-1984] [Paul said:]

However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me -- the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

Q13. Why might the Galatians be detoured from following the race course? Or to slow down and allow another to take their position in the race?

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 [NIV-1984] [Paul wrote:]

²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ²⁵ Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. ²⁶ Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. ²⁷ No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 [NIV-1984] [Paul wrote:]

⁶ For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day -- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Hebrews 12:1-2 [NIV-1984]

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

⁸ That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you.

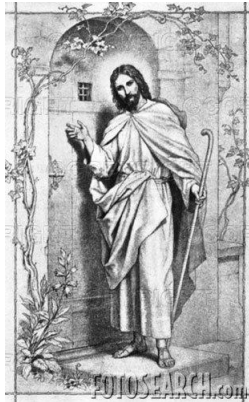
Q14. "Who calls you"? Who calls the Galatians?

Romans 10:8-11 [NIV-1984]

^{8b} "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: ⁹ That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. ¹¹ As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

Revelation 3:20 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.



Source: <http://free-christian-wallpapers.blogspot.com/2011/10/jesus-christ-knocking-on-door-pictures.html>

⁹ "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough."

Q15. What does "yeast" represent?

Q16. What inference is Paul drawing from his word picture "yeast [working] through the whole batch"?

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

Matthew 13:31-35 [NIV-1984]

³¹ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."

³³ He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."


³⁴ Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. ³⁵ So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."

Matthew 16:1, 5-12 [NIV-1984]

¹ The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. . . . ⁵ When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread. ⁶ "Be careful," Jesus said to them. "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

⁷ They discussed this among themselves and said, "It is because we didn't bring any bread."

⁸ Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, "You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? ⁹ Do you still not understand? Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? ¹⁰ Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? ¹¹ How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." ¹² Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.


 If we substitute "teaching" for "yeast", then we, too, should be on-guard against wrong teachings. We do well to remember the praise recorded in Acts 17:11: "Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."

Good yeast raises the dough. Bad yeast spoils the dough. Good and bad yeast cannot be mixed together, because the resulting bread will be affected by the bad yeast. We are like bread dough; good teaching will 'raise us up' and bad teaching will injure our faith. Only our Lord Jesus can cleanse us from bad yeast. We must be always on-guard against bad yeast!

The Bereans verified Paul's preaching against the foundation of Scripture and found Paul's teachings to be in harmony with what we now call the Old Testament. We, too, should verify sermons, teachings, and even these StudySheets against Scripture; The Holy Bible must be our rock, and our foundation of Biblical knowledge, of God's character, of Jesus' Gospel message and His servant-examples, and our behavior in the world and with other Believers.

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

Day 4

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¹⁰ I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view. The one who is throwing you into confusion will pay the penalty, whoever he may be.

Q17. What "view" is Paul hoping they will take?

Q18. What penalty might the one face "who is throwing you into confusion"?


James 3:1 [NIV-1984]

Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

¹¹ Brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished.

Q19. If Paul did indeed "preach circumcision," would the Judaizers still be persecuting Paul?


Yes? } Thoughts?
No? }

 "The Judaizing [trouble-maker] of the Galatians had said, 'Paul himself preaches circumcision,' as is shown by his having circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3; compare also Acts 20:6; 21:24). Paul replies by anticipation of their objection, as regards to myself, the fact that I am still persecuted by the Jews shows plainly that I do not preach circumcision; for it is just because I preach Christ crucified, and not the Mosaic law, as the sole ground of justification, that they persecute me." [©1882, *A Commentary, Critical, Practical, and Explanatory on the Old and New Testaments* by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/galatians/5-11.htm>]

¹² As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26


Day 5

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Life By The Holy Spirit

¹³ You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. ¹⁴ The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Q20. Paul emphasizes that the Galatians are free, but then he warns them to “not . . . indulge the sinful nature.” Why might this be a concern?

 “You [Galatians] were called, not to legal bondage, but to freedom. This caution only is needed: Do not make freedom a pretext for self-indulgence. One servitude you may submit to — the service of love. So doing, you will fulfil the Law without being legalists. He who loves his neighbour as himself will need no other rule. On the other hand, dissensions will be fatal, not to one party only, but to all who take part in them.

“Do not, under the name “liberty,” give way to sensual excesses. This was the especial danger of the Gentile churches, such as Corinth, from which, as we have seen, the Apostle may have been writing. Galatia, too, was a Gentile church; and though it was for the present subject rather to Judaizing influences, the character of the people was fickle, and St. Paul may have thought it well to hint a caution in this direction.

“There is a stress upon this word [serve]. The Apostle had been dissuading the Galatians from submitting to other forms of servitude. This one he will permit them.” [©about 1880, *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/galatians/5-13.htm>]

Q21. Can you provide 2-3 examples of service (“serve one another”)?

(1)

(2)

(3)

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

¹⁵ If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

Q22. What does Satan want Believers to do?

Q23. What word summarizes Christ Jesus' desire for Believers' actions? (See John 17:20-23 ↓)

John 17:20-23 [NIV-1984]

²⁰ "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

¹⁶ So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ¹⁷ For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

Q24. What does the Spirit desire for Believers?


Q25. What does the "sinful nature desire"?

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

Romans 7:15, 17-18, 20 [NIV-1984] [Even Paul struggled with sin.]

¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. . . ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. . . ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

Day 6


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Acts of the Sinful Nature

¹⁹ The acts of the sinful nature 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.

Q26. Are there any sins listed that are surprising?

Yes? }
No? } What?

 Eugene Peterson's paraphrase extends the list:

Galatians 5:19-21 [The Message (MSG)]

¹⁹⁻²¹ It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: 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 or 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. I could go on.

This isn't the first time I have warned you, you know. If you use your freedom this way, you will not inherit God's kingdom.

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

Fruit of the Spirit

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Q27. What is “fruit”?

Q28. What then is “the fruit of the Spirit”?


Q29. Why might there be “no law” against the “fruit of the Spirit”?

Continued (↓)

Lesson 5: Galatians 5:1-26

²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

Q30. Paul wrote in Romans 7:15, 17-18, 20 (↑) that he, too, struggled with sin. If we still sin, how are our “passions and desires” crucified?

 It can be observed that the closer we grow to our Savior through prayer, Bible Study, and obedience, the more influence the Holy Spirit and our Lord have upon our lives. While we still sin, the sins are less frequent and less egregious. We begin to emulate the character of Christ Jesus in our everyday lives.

Prayer is communication between my Lord and me. Through prayer I ask Jesus to intercede for things that are important to me. Over time the ‘things that are important to me’ become more along the lines of ‘things that are important to Jesus’. Through prayer I ask Jesus for forgiveness for the sins that I can name and for those sins that I cannot. Through prayer, I talk to God, to Jesus. Through prayer, I confide to Him my deepest fears. I know He hears me. And He will talk to me through promptings in my heart, through Bible passages, through answered prayer and even through dreams.

A personal example: I never dream. Although one night, I had a dream. The next day I was studying a passage in John’s Gospel (coincidence?) when John 16:13 (↓) was emphasized in my Bible as if it had been bolded and highlighted – even I couldn’t miss it. I believe it was the Holy Spirit telling me that the events of my dream were true and originated from Him. (Note: the events of my dream are still future to me.)

John 16:13 [NIV-1984]

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

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.

Q31. How do we “keep in step with the Spirit”?

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