

Galatians 5 5-4-14

I. Introduction

A. Paul has told the Galatians they fell from Grace

1. The most dramatic statement of several ("you believed another Gospel", and "who bewitched you")
2. This is a bit like Peter's statement in Acts 2:36 - it should compel someone to say "what do I need to do"
 - a. The hardened heart would say "you're wrong" or "you're ugly" (personal attack)

B. Now Paul redirects them to two choices - life and death

Deut 30:19 "....I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live"

1. Life in the Spirit
2. Death in the flesh

II. The Basis of the Law of Christ is Love

A. The final "hermeneutic" of interpretation

B. The point that is above all else

James 2:8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;

C. All commands are based in Love

Romans 13:8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

D. What is the opposite of Love?

1. Some might say hate, but God (who is love) can hate

Pr 6:16 These six things the LORD hates

2. Some might say it is fear, but I am commanded to both love and fear God at the same time
3. Here, Paul directs us to see that an/the opposite of love is selfish desire in the flesh
 - a. Selfishness is the opposite of love
 - b. Selfishness is the ultimate definition of the flesh - it wants what it wants

Ro 2:8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness-- indignation and wrath,

Jas 3:16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

4. Love then is the desire of the Spirit
 - a. It wants what God wants
 - b. It wants what brethren want

III. Two Choices of Service

A. Serving the Flesh

1. Paul launches into the acts of the body, i.e. selfishness
 - a. adultery
 - b. fornication
 - c. uncleanness

- d. lewdness
- e. idolatry

Col 3:5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

1 Cor 10:8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality.... Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

- f. sorcery (pharmikea)

(1) Consider this as the dabbling in mysticism, or Simon's astonishing works for money from people, deceiving his peers

- g. hatred
- h. contentions
- i. jealousies
- j. outbursts of wrath
- k. selfish ambitions
- l. dissensions
- m. heresies
- n. envy
- o. murders
- p. drunkenness
- q. revelries

2. These things can be placed into three categories, and all reflect selfishness

- a. Sexual Sins against my flesh
- b. Behavioral Sins against my brother
- c. Sobriety Sins against my God

B. Serving the Spirit

1. Here is the Law of Christ:

- a. love
- b. joy
- c. peace
- d. longsuffering
- e. kindness
- f. goodness
- g. faithfulness
- h. gentleness
- i. self-control

2. These too are categorical, and all reflect Love

- a. Personal behavior
- b. Behavior towards brethren
- c. Service towards God

III. Paul continues in this vein in chapter 6