STAND FAST

**DATE: 10/21/2015 Wed.**

**TEXT: Galatians 5:1-6**

**INTRODUCTION**

Regarding the subject of Doctrine …

The Book of Galatians is a series of Contrasts between –

-- The Way of Law and the Way of Grace

-- The Way of Works and the Way of Faith

-- The Way of Man and the Way of God

The False Teachers (Also called Judaizers by many) were persecuting the children of God / Believers

Interestingly, those who trust God seem to always be persecuted by those who trust in their own good works

True Believers have always been more mistreated and oppressed by religionist than by atheists

Paul has been defending Justification by Faith

But in this final section of the Book, he is now going to challenge the Galatians in the Practical Aspects of Grace

There will always be a constant pull / push by False Teachers for us to abandon the Truth of the Gospel of Grace …

An attempt to get us away from the Truth

The final 2 chapters of Galatians are a portrait of the need for the child of God to live the Spirit-filled life …

Of the Believer living out the Life of Faith, under the Control, and in the Energy of the Holy Spirit

I want to think on this thought tonight

**“STAND FAST”**

Let’s stand to read God’s Word and then pray

Let’s Read together **vs. 1- 6 …**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. STAND “WITH LIBERTY” – v.1**

Back in **Galatians 4:28-31** Paul showed us how the bondwoman and her son were cast out

And that the Galatians Believers were not of the bondwoman, but of the free woman

Now Paul is challenging them to Stand in that Freedom

The phrase ***“stand fast”*** means *to be stationary, to persevere*

We are to stand against those trying to get us to change

Repeatedly throughout Scripture, we are told to stand in Faith

**I Corinthians 16:13 – *“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong”***

**II Thessalonians 2:15 – *“Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle”***

**A. The ‘Position’ of our Stand – v.1a**

How are we to Stand?

***“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,”***

The word ***“liberty”*** means *the ability* *to live free*

A believer’s true liberty comes from Christ / Salvation

In which we have been released from the bondage of sin

… And the desire that used to haunt us to constantly seek approval from both God and man

Through Christ, believers have liberty from sin and are completely accepted in Him

-- Being Delivered from the Power of Sin

**Romans 6:17, 18 *– “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you” “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness”***

-- Accepted in the Beloved

**Ephesians 1:6 *– “To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved”***

**B. The ‘Persistency’ of our Stand – v.1b**

***“and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage”***

The negative command to ***“be not entangled again”***

… Was a warning to the Galatian Believers not to allow themselves to get caught up in Legalistic practices

The word ***“entangled”*** describes *a trapper who put out snares to catch his prey*

Solomon said in **Proverbs 29:5 – *“A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet”***

That’s exactly what Paul said in **4:17 – *“They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you (cut you off), that ye might affect (benefit) them”***

The believers had to remove themselves before it was too late

Ultimately it is the Lord who delivers us

**Ps. 25:15 *– “Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for He shall pluck my feet out of the net”***

They needed to persist / to continue to live by Grace

The ***“yoke of bondage”*** is works / religion

A ***“yoke”*** is restrictive / holds you in

At the council of Jerusalem Peter declared **Acts 15:10 –**

***“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear”***

The apostles and elders agreed that both Gentile and Jewish believers are not under works

Today, instead, we take the yoke of Christ upon us,

**Matt. 11:29, 30** saysHis yoke is ***“easy”*** and His burden is ***“light”***

The Mosaic Law became oppressive, (Dead orthodoxy)

(I’m talking about the ceremonial aspects)

Man as always perverted what God has given

But a life lived in the will of God (Grace) is liberating

What was going on in Paul’s day was no different than someone telling you today …

You must be baptized to be saved and keep the sacraments to continue in your salvation

**STAND “WITH LIBERTY”**

**II. STAND “AGAINST LEGALISM” – vs. 2-4**

Again the idea of Legalism is that someone can get and keep their salvation by good works

… That somehow, our supposed good works, are acceptable to God

Paul makes some very important statements in these verses

First he tells them …

**A. You Negate the Work of Christ – v.2**

***“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing”***

Whenever the apostle wanted to make a strong, personal assertion, he often began with … ***“I Paul”***

This is also seen in **II Cor. 10:1** and **Eph. 3:1**

The addition of the word ***“Behold”*** further suggests the seriousness of what he is about to say

The phrase ***“if ye be circumcised”*** shows that many Galatians had not yet submitted to the rite

Paul was not against circumcision *per se*

How do we know?

Because he had Timothy circumcised in **Acts 16:3**

This was done for the sake of an effective testimony

By the way, this event occurred in Galatia

He did not advocate the end of circumcision as part of the Jewish religious heritage

**Acts 21:21 *– “And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the***

***… Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs”***

*Rather, he argued,* that circumcision was Not necessary for salvation, either for the Jew or the Gentile

**I Corinthians 7:18, 19 – *“Is any man called being uncircumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any man called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised” “Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God”***

The concluding phrase ***“Christ shall profit you nothing”*** declares that no merit of the Saviour's death and resurrection would be reckoned to the account of any person who believed that circumcision was essential for justification

A man is not saved by faith in what Christ has done …

***AND*** by faith in what that man can do

Whether it involves circumcision, baptism, or any other sacramental work

When some deed is added as a requirement for eternal Life,

That action demonstrates that the person has not exercised Biblical Faith

Saving faith trusts Christ only and disapproves of any attempt by man to produce a meritorious work

Paul warned that if anyone received circumcision as an additional means of salvation …

That there was a great possibility that person was Not saved

**You Negate the Work of Christ**

**B. You’re a Debtor to the Whole Law – v.3**

***“For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law”***

Another strong affirmation is made here in the statement ***“For I testify again”***

At issue was the very essence of the Gospel message

Is salvation of the Lord, or is it of man?

The charge was given ***“to every man that is circumcised”***

The idea here points to those who were about to be circumcised, not to those who had already submitted

Although the principle would apply to both groups

To Paul, circumcision was the first step into a life of bondage under legalism – **2:3, 4**

If a person accepted the rite as necessary to salvation, he became ***“a debtor to do the whole law”***

Earlier (***“again”***) Paul pointed out that a person must keep all of the law, all of the time to gain heaven …

If he breaks just one law once, then he falls under the curse of the law

**3:10 – *“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them”***

On the basis of Legalism there is no reason why faith in Christ is even required

It is negated by the obligation of human effort

**2:21 *– “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain”***

**You’re a Debtor (Obligated) to Keep the Whole Law**

**C. You have Fallen from Grace – v.4**

***“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace”***

The remarks of this verse are given to a specific group

***“whosoever of you are justified by the law”***

This was most definitely the False Teachers and their converts (we see this at the end of **v. 10**)

The issue at stake was Justification, not Sanctification

The tense of the word ***“justified”*** show us that too the legalist, it was an on-going process

Within Legalism, Justification is an on-going process

It is never achieved before death

A person can never attain a justified position because he must continually obey all of the laws all of the time

He can never rest in what he has done or in what someone else has done because there is always more to do

2 thoughts Describe this group

**1.** ***“Christ is become of no effect unto you”***

The finished work of Christ means nothing to this person

To the person who is trying to work his way to heaven

The person thus is not in Christ, nor is Christ in him

He is apart from the Saviour, devoid of the righteousness of God which is imputed by faith alone

**2.**They are ***“fallen from grace”***

This phrase has been greatly misinterpreted and misapplied

It does not refer to losing someone’s salvation

***“fallen”*** – means *has no effect*

They do not understand the means of Grace

Which is *Unmerited Favor*

The issue is Not, Can a Justified person lose his salvation?

The issue is How is a person Justified?

A contrast exists between Justification by Grace and Justification by Law

When a person believes that being circumcised (or baptized) and then keeping the Law (sacraments) are essential for salvation …

He does not understand Grace and how it applies

Such demonstrates their Lack of salvation, not their Loss of it

Salvation is by Grace through Faith apart from works

**Eph. 2:8, 9**

And it’s Maintained by Grace alone

**Romans 5:1, 2 *– “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:” “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God”***

**STAND “WITH LIBERTY”**

**STAND “AGAINST LEGALISM”**

**III. STAND “IN SALVATION” – vs. 5, 6**

We Stand against the Yoke of Bondage

Because we have something so much Better

The Hope of Salvation

How do we Stand with it?

**A. Through the Spirit – v.5**

***“For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith”***

The Legalist is always filled with Insecurity regarding his Standing with God

However, we who know Christ, wait ***“through the Spirit”***

We are Sealed and Confident

**Eph. 4:30 *– “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption”***

**II Tim. 1:12 – *“For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day”***

**Ill.** A husband and wife didn’t really love each other. The man was very demanding, so much so that he prepared a list of rules and regulations for his wife to follow.

He insisted that she read them over every day and obey them to the letter. Among other things, his “do’s and don’ts indicated such details as to what time she had to get up each morning, when breakfast should be served, and how the housework should be done. After many long years, the husband died. As time passed, the woman met and fell in love with another man, one who dearly loved her. Soon they were married. This husband did everything he could to make his new wife happy, always showering her with token of appreciation. One day when she was cleaning the house, she found tucked away in a drawer the list of commands her first husband had drawn up for her. As she looked it over again, it dawned on her that even though her present husband hadn’t given her any kind of list, she was doing everything her first husband’s list required anyway. She realized she was so devoted to this man that her deepest desire was to please him out of love, not obligation. This love relationship is an example of the way we respond to God through His Spirit. When we remember Christ’s Sacrifice for us and God’s Forgiveness toward us, we walk in the Spirit and don’t fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

**B. Through Faith – v.6**

***“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love”***

The fruit of the Spirit is Love

Our love is the result of Justification by Faith

***“but faith which worketh by love”***

**Romans 13:10 – *“Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law”***

**CONCLUSION**

We know the Law Condemns us, but Christ has Forgiven us / He has Loved us

By keeping our perspective on Christ’s Love for us,

We don’t need the Law to always remind us, to tell us how to stay in line

We stay in line and keep the Law because of Christ’s Love for us

We walk in Christian Liberty in the Spirit and serve Christ because we want to serve Him

Not because the Law requires us to serve Him

**STAND “WITH LIBERTY”**

**STAND “AGAINST LEGALISM”**

**STAND “IN SALVATION”**

**“STAND FAST”**