

GALATIANS

5:1-15 | STUDY GUIDE

The Entire Law

GALATIANS 5:1, "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (ESV)

- Paul contrasts the motives of the legalists (those opposing his gospel) with those of Christ
 - Christ's love for us compels him to set us free
 - The legalists seek to control you by putting you under The Law
- Paul also recognizes the distortion this can lead to:
 - **ANTINOMIANISM**: The belief that the moral law doesn't apply to those saved by grace.
 - He addresses this in Romans 3:8 & 1 Colossians 5-6
- Freedom was meant to serve one another (5:13)
 - The Holy Spirit deposit leads us and cannot contradict Scripture
 - This is why murder and adultery are still out of the question, even though we bear no physical mark of circumcision

GALATIANS 5:2, "Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you." (ESV)

- Look = Behold
 - Imperative form, implying force and urgency
 - "You are severed from Christ..." (Galatians 5:4)
- You either accept salvation by grace or you work in vain for salvation—you can't have both
 - "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love." (Galatians 5:6)

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GALATIANS 5:9, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump." (ESV)

- It doesn't take much for deception to get a foothold
 - The "leaven" he refers to is yeast and the amount of yeast that makes a dough rise is extremely small
 - Usually only about 1% of the loaf of bread is yeast.

GALATIANS 5:12, "I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!" (ESV)

- Paul suggests that those preaching circumcision ought to castrate themselves
 - Obviously an extremely harsh thing to say
 - He's also referencing something extremely familiar to the church of Galatia, which is sacred castration
 - Priests of the Temple of Cybele
- Paul is arguing that if it is the physical act itself that makes a person righteous, even the pagan priests take it further than merely foreskin

GALATIANS 5:14-15: "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another."

- Leviticus 19:18
 - Quoted by Jesus in Matthew 22:39, Mark 12:31 and 33, and Luke 10:27
 - Also quoted by Jesus' brother, James, in James 2:8

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: N.T. Wright, *The New Testament In its World*, Craig S. Keener, *Galatians: A Commentary*, Archeological Study Bible