

Title: Stand Fast In The Freedom Of Christ

Text: Galatians 5:1-6

Main Idea: God is not a Creditor to be repaid, but a Treasure to be adored.

Division Statements:

1. God does not desire debt based religion (i.e. trying to buy God off) (vv. 1-5).

Verse one states the overarching theme of the entire letter.

a. If you embrace works as a means of justification, then Christ is of no benefit to you (v. 2). - The atonement of Christ does not cover the sins of those who trust in law as a means of salvation.

b. If you embrace works as a means of justification, then you are obligated to keep the whole law (v. 3). - God's standard for "earning" your way to Him is absolute perfection (e.g. James 2:10).

c. If you embrace works as a means of justification, then you have let go of grace (v. 4). - The phrase, "fallen from grace" appears only here in the Bible. It doesn't mean that you can lose your salvation but the verb means to lose one's grasp on something, in this case it means letting go of grace as a principle, a theology of grace to embrace a theology of human effort, to turn from righteousness given as a gift from God to earning righteousness through obeying the law. Moreover, those who believe that salvation can be lost are inevitably led to embrace some kind of works as the means of maintaining their good standing before God, which is an exact contradiction of everything that Paul has been saying throughout this whole letter. To view this verse as teaching that one can lose his salvation, therefore, is to twist it grossly out of context and such a view is forced even to ignore the first half of this very sentence, "You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law ..."

d. If you embrace works as a means of justification, then you are excluded from true righteousness (v. 5). - True righteousness is that which comes "by faith."

2. God desires love-based relational devotion (v. 6).

It is faith working through love that "avails" with God, not external law keeping. While we are saved by faith alone, faith, if it is true, will never be alone, but will always result in a very real, active and fruitful love towards God.

Textual Idea: Paul urges the churches to approach God not as a Creditor, but as a Treasure.

Sermon Proposition: God is not a Creditor to be repaid, but a Treasure to be adored.

Interrogative: What kind of devotion does God desire?

Transition: The text shows us two possible approaches to God.

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