



World Christian Fellowship

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Galatians

Lesson 41-Relationship to law and Sanctification

Galatians 4:19-20, *My little children, for whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you, ²⁰ I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.*

Paul is enduring the pain that longs for them to become what they are not yet.

This time it is “labour pain until Christ is formed in you.”

- ✓ First it was “labour pain until Christ is in you.”
- ✓ Now he longs that Christ be formed in them, or that they become Christlike.

Son of God in human form lived in the womb of Mary for nine months.

Mary carried in her body the eternal Son of heaven, the creator and sovereign Lord of life, the Savior and Redeemer of the world as an infant.

A wonderful parallel to our own lives is that we as believers have in us the Son of God, Son of Man, the living Christ.

He lives in us!
Not as an infant, and
Not for nine months.

But Jesus Christ lives in us in all His fullness permanently. If you are a believer, you have the Spirit of Christ living in you permanently.

It is His presence that is the sanctifying reality.

Galatians 1:15-16, *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,¹⁶ to reveal **His Son in me**, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,*

Galatians 2:20, *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, **but Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

Galatians 3:27, *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

Galatians 4:6, *And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"*

Entire New Testament we can see this reality.

Colossians 1:27, *“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”*

Colossians 3:11, *“Christ is all, and in all.”*

Romans 8:10-11, *“Christ is in you. His Spirit dwells in you.”*

1 Corinthians 3:16, *“You are the temple of God.”*

2 Corinthians 6:16, *“We are the temple of God.”*

Ephesians 2:22, *“The believer is a dwelling of God in the Spirit.”*

Ephesians 3:17, *“Christ dwells in your hearts through faith.”*

1 John 4:4, *“Greater is He that is in you”*

Jesus, in the upper room, establishing the patterns of sanctification.

John 14:21, *He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and [I](#) manifest Myself to him.”*

John 15:10, *If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.*

Obedience, self-discipline, accountability, duty, sense of diligence must be motivated by love.

The legitimate motivation is love for Christ!

Sanctification, holiness, purity of life, virtue, and righteousness are the result of loving Christ.

We can see the passion of a pastor for his congregation to be sanctified in the heart of Apostle Paul.

2 Corinthians 11:1-3, *Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly—and indeed you do bear with me. ²For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. ³But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the ^[a]simplicity that is in Christ.*

Paul wanted them to be committed as chaste virgins.

2 Corinthians 11:23-28, *Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. ²⁴From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; ²⁶in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; ²⁷in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings*

often, in cold and nakedness—²⁸ besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

What we can see the internal pressure of concern for the Christlikeness of the saints by Paul.

2 Corinthians 11:29, *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?*

My prayer is that I will have the same desire in my heart and same burden for His church.

But as we are in this 2020, we see there is a great decline in this area.

- Call to Sanctification,
- Calls to holiness,
- Call to repentance,
- Denial of the flesh, and
- Denial of the world

All the above are very rare to here from the churches today.

But on the other hand, natural, sinful longings of the selfish, sinful heart of man is legitimized, and the world has gone to church and found a home there.

Instead of churches confronting these desires as evil, the church has redefined itself as the place you go to get all your desires fulfilled.

Confrontation and the call to Holiness

Antinomianism.

Nomos is “law” in Greek. So anti is “anti-law.”
Antinomianism is “against the law.”

Antinomianism is an old heresy that says you do not have an obligation to God to obey His moral law. You are not under the law and you are free from the law.

How can that be?

Because Christ has fulfilled the whole law for us.

In His death, He took the penalty for us.

In His life, He fulfilled the law for us.

His righteous life is imputed to us

When God looks at you, He sees the full obedience of Christ. So, you don't have any obligation to God to obey His moral law, because Christ fulfilled the law for you.

This would mean that holiness, obedience, virtue, righteousness is not necessarily a result of justification in that view.

Sanctification is not an inevitable result of justification. In fact, you can be saved and since Christ paid the penalty for your sin and fulfilled the law for you, you don't have to worry about being under bondage to anything.

Antinomianism is imagined to be the cure for legalism. Those who advocate antinomianism spend so much of their time denouncing legalism.

The legalist is the one who wants to follow every law of God as a legal term to get please God by obeying it.

The antinomian thinks that because he is not a legalist, he has to completely ignore the law.

Antinomianism is the opposite of legalism.

Core belief of Antinomianism is that,

- To be a legalist is to be bound by law,
- To be in Christ is to be freed from the law.

The antinomian thinks that he is free from legalism when he pays no attention to the law.

If you call yourself a Christian and you say, "Because Christ fulfilled the law for me, I don't have to fulfill the law and I don't have any responsibility," and you go on in your sin, you are not transformed. Inevitably these people crash and burn.

Antinomianism says that I'm not a legalist. But your reaction to legalism and nothing more. It's just a backside of legalism. People who are into this still define their religious life by the relationship they have to the law.

- The legalist says, "I must keep the law to please God."
- The antinomian, says, "I must reject the law to please God."

Both are wrong!

Because they are connecting to the law.

Two sides of the same heresy!

Being attached to the law or detached from the law.

The law becomes the defining reality. Neither the legalist nor the antinomian has understood the defining relationship of salvation is not your connection to the law, it is your relationship to Jesus Christ!

That alone breaks the bonds of legalism and antinomianism.

- Legalism undermines the gospel by insisting that believers must add righteous works to faith in order to be justified.
- Antinomian perverts the gospel by saying, "You don't have to work, you don't have to obey, you are free to go on in sin, because your sins paid for. Christ's righteous

life is accredited to your account, and you are under grace.”

Antinomians then pervert the gospel by subtracting from the efficiency and the sufficiency of Christ’s work. They talk about really a conversion that didn’t happen.

If you have been born again,

- ✓ you love Christ,
- ✓ you love His Word and
- ✓ His law.

Your life is defined by your relationship to Christ. The law of God is a reflection of the holy nature of Christ.

Jesus kept the law perfectly when He was on earth, and He is your example. So, it is characteristic of a true believer not to define his relationship, his spiritual life with relationship to the law, but to Christ.

Paul doesn’t say to the Galatians that freedom Christ has set us free. You are free and go do whatever you want.

Paul doesn’t define what God wants by the law; he defines it by Christ.

So instead of saying, “I am in labor until you all obey the law,” he says, “I am in labor until you become like Christ.”

Present day churches are a breeding ground for antinomianism. Present day Antinomian can call himself as a Christian and yet he can be

- Immoral,
- Worldly,
- Sinful,
- LGBTQ, and
- Anything against bible.

He can call himself be an authentic Christian.

Churches are happy to accommodate all these people.

Why?

Because they want this generation to come, not be offended in their self-actualization. They show no interest in sanctification, separation, holiness, virtue, purity, love of obedience, worship, submission, and hatred of sin. Churches are just interested in what people want not what God wants His church to be!

Galatians 4:11, *I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain.*

Paul talks a lot about labouring.

Galatians 4:19, *My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you*

The first preaching of the gospel to these Galatian pagans was a painful work. Paul confronted sin, righteousness and judgment, until they were born into new life, delivered out of the realm of darkness and they were saved.

Now here he is suffering all over again until they come to the full character of Christ.

Paul wants them to be like Christ,

- ✓ who loved God perfectly,
- ✓ served God perfectly, and
- ✓ obeyed God perfectly.

Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled and He is your model. A pastor could never be content with anything except them becoming like Christ.

V 20, *I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.*

Paul was very upset as he writes the letter.

They had begun so well at salvation, who hindered you?

The goal of our salvation is sanctification or simply Christlikeness.

So instead of gritting your teeth and saying, "I'm going to have to obey the law and work really hard to obey the law," what you want to do is become like Christ.

This is the objective.

Jesus kept the law. The closer you near Him, the more you will do the same.

Paul's commitment to the realities of Christlikeness as essential to the believer's experience.

Romans 8:28-29, *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. ²⁹For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

That is the purpose of God in redemption to make us like Christ. That has been the purpose since we were justified.

Romans 13:14, *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

Deny yourself; focus on becoming like Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13, *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and*

teachers,¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the [e]difying of the body of Christ,¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ

That's why we have pastors in the church, so that they can edify the saints until they come to the fulness of the stature of Christ, to a mature man.

Philippians 3:13-14, *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

One thing Paul does that he presses to the goal.

What is the goal?

The goal is the prize of the upward call.

What is the prize when we are called up?

We all be like Him.

1 John 3:2, *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

So that is the prize, at glorification.

In the meantime, “I do one thing: I press on. I pursue that goal in this life. I’m going to be like Christ when I’m glorified; I pursue that now in my sanctification.”

Colossians 2:6, *“Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him.”*

Colossians 3:10, *“You’ve put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the one who created Him.”*

You were recreated by the power of Christ, and now as you have put on the new self in Christ, you are being renewed into His image. That’s sanctification.

Salvation brings a person into union with Christ.

He takes up residence in our life and we are to become more and more like Him.

How does that happen?

2 Corinthians 3:17-18, *Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. ¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

But how do we live within that freedom?

Chapter 3 talked about the bondage of the old covenant.

The old covenant was written in ink, not with the Holy Spirit. Written on tablets of stone, not on the heart.

- It was a covenant that killed, not a covenant that gives life.
- It was a covenant that faded away, not one that was permanent.
- It was a covenant of bondage, not freedom.
- It was a covenant that hid, that veiled things - did not reveal them.

But now,

2 Corinthians 3:16, *Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.*

What obscured the truth in the Old Testament?

He uses the illustration of Moses who had a veil over his face, and the people were looking at a fading glory that he had picked up from seeing the Lord in the mountain. But he had a fading glory, and he covered his face with a veil.

Now we turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Now we're at liberty.

We are no longer under the bondage of the old covenant.

we all without exception with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror.

Now we have the veil off our face, and we have an intimate, clear look at “the glory of the Lord.”

Where is that?

It is the New Testament - Scripture.

So, we look at Scripture with an unveiled face.

Nothing obscures, nothing obstructs.

We have full glory on display.

John 1:14, *“We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

We have this clear vision of Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:18, *“And as we, with unveiled face, are in the process of looking at that revelation of His glory, we are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”*

There is the sanctification.

We gaze at the revelation of the glory of the Lord and the pages of Scripture, and the Holy Spirit changes us into His image from one level of glory to the next, and to the next, and to the next.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit. When Moses gazed at the glory of God, that was on his face for a little while, and then it decreased. It faded away!

2 Corinthians 3:13, *unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.*

We gaze at the glory of the Lord, in Moses' case, it decreased; in our case, it increases.

This is the work of the Lord who is the Spirit.

We are not passive in the work of sanctification!

We are active.

What are we actively doing?

We are actively being caught up in the glory of Christ. This is how you work out your own salvation, because it's God who works in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure.

Philippians 2:12-13, *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and*

trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

Conclusion:

What is the believer's responsibility?

To gaze at Christ and to be lost in His glory!

The Spirit changes us into His image.

So, whether you are a legalist or an antinomian, you have got it all wrong.

- You are not changed.
- You are not transformed.
- You are not saved, because you are still defining your life by the law.

When you define your life by your relationship to Christ, you will love Him, and you will love what He loves. He loves mostly what is holy, just, and good and so will you.

Legalism and antinomianism are not opposites.

- Both against grace
- Both against love.

The antinomian may be the worst legalist, because he's a rebellious legalist.

Would you please reject everything which is turning you away from loving Christ and becoming like Christ?