

# **Standing Fast In The Liberty Of Christ**

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**October 14, 2011**

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## Gal. 5:1

Galatians has been called “The Magna Carta Of Christian Liberty”; “Magna Carta” refers to...

- The royal charter of political rights given to rebellious English barons by King John in 1215.
- A document or piece of legislation that serves as a guarantee of basic rights. —Dictionary.com.

The reason it has been so called is because of Paul’s discussion regarding “bondage”...

**In connection with the meeting in Jerusalem.** Gal. 2:4-5, *“And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”*

**In arguing that we are justified by faith in Christ, not works of the Law (Mosaic).**

- Gal. 4:3-5, *“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”*
- Gal. 4:9, *“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?”*
- Gal. 4:24-25, *“Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.”*

**With his climax found in the text for our study today.** Gal. 5:1, *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”*

The liberty we have in Christ is indeed precious, and it is imperative that we stand fast in it. Yet exactly what does that liberty entail?

## The liberty we have in Christ

### Freedom from the Law of Moses.

#### **This is Paul's primary concern in this epistle.**

Gal. 2:16, *"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."*

#### **Upon which he expounded in the first four chapters.**

Example: Gal. 3:23-25, *"But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."*

#### **Concerning which he wrote elsewhere.**

Rom. 7:4-6, *"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."*

Christ has delivered the Jews from their obligation to keep the Law of Moses.

### Freedom from the bondage of sin.

#### **Writing of being "justified", Paul refers to being "not guilty" of sin.**

Gal. 2:16-17, *"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid."*

### **Concerning which he wrote elsewhere.**

Rom. 8:1-2, *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”*

### **Jesus also spoke of the deliverance from bondage of sin.**

John 8:31-34, *“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.”*

Christ has delivered all men from the guilt and power of sin.

## **Freedom from the traditions of men.**

### **Paul wrote of this in chapter four.**

Gal. 4:9-11, *“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.”*

### **Also, in his writing to the Colossians.**

Col. 2:20-23, *“Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body: not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.”*

### **Jesus also spoke of the danger of human traditions.**

Matt. 15:3-9, *“But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their*

*heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”*

Christ has delivered us from the need to keep human traditions.

## **Freedom from works of the flesh.**

### **Paul has much more to say about the works of the flesh.**

- Gal. 5:13, *“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”*
- Gal. 5:17, *“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”*
- Gal. 5:19-21, *“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”*
- Gal. 6:8, *“For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”*

### **As he also warned against in writing to the Corinthians.**

1 Cor. 6:9-11, *“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”*

### **And which Jesus also warned.**

Mark 7:20-23, *“And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”*

Christ offers deliverance from deeds of the flesh which imperil our salvation.

Such are the things we experience through the liberty that we have in Christ. Of course, that presumes that we are indeed...

## Standing fast in our liberty

### Handle the Law of Moses and the law of liberty (Law of Christ) properly.

#### **Each law is good if used properly.**

- 1 Tim. 1:8, *“But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;”*
- 2 Tim. 2:15, *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

#### **The Law of Moses was written for our learning and admonition.**

- Rom. 15:4, *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”*
- 1 Cor. 10:11, *“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”*

#### **The Law of Moses and the Law of Christ are profitable for us.**

2 Tim. 3:14-17, *“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*

#### **But the Law of Moses has its limitations; it has ceased as a system of justification.**

Gal. 5:4, *“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”*

#### **It has been replaced as a covenant.**

Heb. 8:6-13, *“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For*

*finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”*

### **Its religious observances have been replaced.**

- Heb. 9:9-10, “Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.”
- John 4:20-24, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

The Law of Moses must be properly handled if we are to preserve our liberty in Christ (law of liberty).

## **Apply our blessings in Christ liberally.**

### **The blood of Christ frees us from the guilt of sin.**

Eph. 1:4, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.”



**The remission of sins is promised to those who repent and are baptized.**

Acts 2:38, *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”*

**The blood of Christ remains available for Christians who repent of sin.**

1 John 1:7-10, *“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”*

**Christians need to repent and pray when they sin.**

Acts 8:22, *“Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.”*

**The Spirit of God can free us from the power of sin.**

Rom. 8:12-13, *“Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”*

**God can strengthen us by His Spirit in the inner man.**

Eph. 3:16, *“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man,”*

**We can do all things through God and Christ.**

- Phil. 2:12-13, *“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye 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. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”*
- Phil. 4:13, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”*

We must not hesitate to access the blood of Christ and the Spirit of God to make use of our liberty in Christ.

**Deal with traditions of men cautiously.**

**Traditions may have a place on an individual level.**

Rom. 14:5-6, *“One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded*

*in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.”*

**When not taught as a doctrine of God.**

Mark 7:7, “*Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*”

**When not done instead of keeping a command of God.**

Mark 7:8-9, “*For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.*”

But they must be handled with the utmost of caution on a congregational level.

Things done on a congregational level necessarily bind them upon all the members.

**That is why religious holidays are reasons for such grave concern.**

Gal. 4:10-11, “*Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.*”

We must be careful not to let human traditions destroy our liberty in Christ.

## **Follow the Spirit diligently.**

**We must not use our liberty as an occasion for the flesh.**

Gal. 5:13, “*For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*”

**Our best weapon against the flesh is to follow the Spirit.**

Gal. 5:16-18, “*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*”

**Those who are led by the Spirit will produce the fruit of the Spirit.**

Gal. 5:22-23, “*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*”

## **Our new life in Christ makes it possible to walk in the Spirit.**

Gal. 5:25, *“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”*

## **We must be diligent to set our minds on the things of the Spirit if we want to enjoy life and peace.**

Rom. 8:5-6, *“For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”*

## **Conclusion**

The liberty we enjoy in Christ is great...

- Freedom from the law of Moses.
- Freedom from the bondage of sin.
- Freedom from the traditions of men.
- Freedom from the works of the flesh.

But it is not license to do whatever we want; we must...

- Handle the Law properly.
- Apply our blessings in Christ liberally.
- Deal with traditions of men cautiously.
- Follow the Spirit diligently.

With the aid of Paul’s epistle to the Galatians, we will succeed in *“Standing Fast In The Liberty Of Christ”*. Have you begun to enjoy the liberty Christ offers through obedience to the gospel?

What obedience am I talking about? His instructions as to how one must become a Christian. The following are the steps necessary to make that happen:

- **Faith.** Heb. 11:6, *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* When I was in high school (I was about 17 years old), a neighbor boy my same age told me he was an atheist. Since I had been baptized, I took the opportunity to talk to him about the scriptures. He told me that he could see that living the life of a Christian was good, but he wasn’t sure if he believed there was a God. But to be on the safe side, maybe he should go to church, and when he dies and stands before God (if there is a

God) on the day of Judgment (if there is a Judgment), maybe if God sees that he has gone to church and lived a good life that God would send him to heaven (if there is a heaven), and not to hell (if there is a hell). I told him, “It doesn’t work that way. You have to believe in Him with all your heart or you cannot please Him.”

- **Repentance.** Acts 2:38, “*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” Acts 11:18, “*... Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*” If while you were sleeping, you heard a noise in the other room, and you think to yourself, “There’s a burglar in my house!” So you reach for your cell phone, and as quietly as you can, you call the police, tell them there is a burglar in your house, and you give them your address. Soon, you heard them arrive and capture the thief. He yells, “I’m sorry; I’m sorry!” What is he sorry for? He is sorry that he got caught; not that he stole. In true repentance the thief would be sorry that he ever stole and wants to change his life so that he would never steal again. That is true repentance. It is a change of mind that brings about a change of action. That is what we have to do before we can become a Christian.
- **Confession.** Rom. 10:9-10, “*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*” What do we confess? That we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Note that in the above scriptures that faith (believing), repentance, and confession are “**UNTO**” righteousness, life, or salvation. “Unto” means toward something; not that one has already attained.

- **Baptism.** It is baptism where righteousness, life, and salvation are attained. Jesus, himself, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness, “*But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon*

him: *And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" (Matt. 3:14-17). Jesus was baptized because God said it was the right thing to do. Did you see how pleased God was about Jesus being baptized? Jesus also said "*it becometh **us** to fulfil all righteousness.*" We are baptized because it fulfills His righteousness, not because it is of our righteousness.

In fact, if we are not baptized, we are still in our sins. "*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" (Acts 2:38). Peter, what did you say the reason of baptism is? "*for the remission of sins*". Why would anyone want to leave out the step that removes our sins?

Jesus commanded that to reach salvation we must be baptized. "*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth **and** is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" (Mark 16:15-16).

Ananias told Saul (before he was rename Paul) the very same thing, "*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*" (Acts 22:16). Baptism is a requirement given by God.

Baptism is called a burial. "*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*" (Rom. 6:4). Our old man is to be dead to us. "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*" (Rom. 6:3-6). Baptism is God's blueprint for applying the blood of Christ in our lives by baptism. We are free from our old sins only when we are baptized.

This doesn't mean "sprinkling. The scripture above says baptism is a burial. We don't take a dead body to the cemetery and sprinkle a little dirt over it; we bury the body.

If you have not yet become a Christian, won't you consider it today?



