

Chapter summary – A Michigan state policeman had stopped the same man twice in one day for reckless driving. The offender was weaving in and out of traffic at speeds up to 93 miles per hour. When he was pulled over, he flashed an official seal, signed by the U.S. Secretary of State. He announced that he was the consul general of another nation, and he had no intention of obeying America's laws. He honked his horn impatiently while the trooper radioed headquarters to verify that a foreign diplomat cannot be detained except for serious crimes. Upon learning this, he said to the man, "Even though you aren't subject to our laws, you could at least have some regard for the safety of our people."

As believers in Christ, we are not bound by the rules and regulations of the Mosaic legal system. In Christ we have complete immunity from the eternal sentence required by God for breaking His commandments. But this does not give us reason to be lawless like this consul general.

Paul's doctrine of grace is dangerous!" cried the Judaizers. "It replaces Law with license. Why, if we do away with our rules and abandon our high standards, the churches will fall apart."

First-century Judaizers are not the only ones afraid to depend on God's grace. Legalists in our churches today warn that we dare not teach people about the liberty we have in Christ lest it result in religious anarchy. These people misunderstand Paul's teaching about grace, and it is to correct such misunderstanding that Paul wrote the final section of his letter (Gal. 5–6).

Paul turns now from argument to application, from [who we are as Christians, to what we do as Christians]. The Christian who lives by faith is not going to become a rebel. Quite the contrary, he is going to experience the *inner discipline* of God that is far better than the outer discipline of man-made rules. No man could become a rebel who depends on God's grace, yields to God's Spirit, lives for others, and seeks to glorify God. The *legalist* is the one who eventually rebels, because he is living in bondage, depending on the flesh, living for self, and seeking the praise of [God and] men and not the glory of God.

No, Paul's doctrine of Christian liberty through grace is not the dangerous doctrine. It is *legalism* that is the dangerous doctrine, because *legalism* attempts to do the impossible: change the old nature and make it obey the Laws of God. Legalism succeeds for a short time, and then the flesh begins to rebel. The surrendered Christian who depends on the power of the Spirit is not *denying* the Law of God, or rebelling against it. Rather, that Law is *being fulfilled in him* through the Spirit (Rom. 8:1–4). It is easy to see the sequence of thought in these closing chapters:

1. I have been set free by Christ. I am no longer under bondage to the Law (Gal. 5:1–12).
2. But I need something—Someone—to control my life from within. That Someone is the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:13–26).
3. Through the Spirit's love, I have a desire to live for others, not for self (Gal. 6:1–10).

4. This life of liberty is so wonderful, I want to live it to the glory of God; for He is the One making it possible (Gal. 6:11–18).

Now, contrast this with the experience of the person who chooses to live under Law, under the discipline of some religious leader.

1. If I obey these rules, I will become a more spiritual person. I am a great admirer of this religious leader, so I now submit myself to his system.
2. I believe I have the strength to obey and improve myself. I do what I am told, and measure up to the standards set for me.
3. I'm making progress. I don't do some of the things I used to do. Other people compliment me on my obedience and discipline. I can see that I am better than others in my fellowship. How wonderful to be so spiritual.
4. If only others were like me! God is certainly fortunate that I am His. I have a desire to share this with others so they can be as I am. Our group is growing and we have a fine reputation. Too bad other groups are not as spiritual as we are.

No matter how you look at it, legalism is an insidious, dangerous enemy. *When you abandon grace for Law, you always lose.* In this first section (Gal. 5:1–12), Paul explains what the believer loses when he turns from God's grace to man-made rules and regulations.¹

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III. Paul states his case concerning Christian liberty, (Chs. 5-6)

1. PAUL SAYS TO STAND FAST, (5:1)

1) Paul states the need to stand up for liberty, (1a)

INTERPRETATION:

¹ **Stand fast** (take a stand now and keep on standing in the future), **therefore** (as I have validated my apostolic calling and God's gospel message which is that justification is by faith alone in Christ—take a stand and keep on standing), **in the liberty** (the freedom), **by which Christ has made us free** (through His death and resurrection and not we ourselves through our personal efforts),

2) Paul states the need to stand against bondage, (1b)

and do not be entangled (lit., “do not subject yourselves”), **again with a yoke of bondage**, (with the Law of Moses or system of legalism that is like it in principle).²

F APPLICATION:

¹ Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. " Ga 5:1.

² Jn 8:36—...if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

We have been freed not so that we may have license to sin, but that we would please God and not ourselves. Ro 15:1-3 –We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”

The liberty, freedom that gospel believers possess here, through Christ, revolves around the issues of justification and sanctification. In these areas God tells us in Romans 6:14 that, **“...you are not under law but under grace.”** This does not mean that we are not under any laws at all because we are. We are always under God’s universal laws of right and wrong. For example, the laws of marriage and family expressed in Ephesians 5:22-6:9. As well as the laws of government as expressed by God in Romans 13:1-7. Paul said when he was trying to evangelize the lost that he became, **“to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law,”** (1 Corinthians 9:21). Paul did not become lawless in his evangelism, but he felt perfect freedom to live outside the boundaries of the Law of Moses. For example, Paul could and would now eat what used to be called unclean or sacrificed to idols.

Our freedom pertains to the fact that Christ, **“wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross,”** (Colossians 2:14). God tells us in Romans 8:31-34, **“...If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely (graciously), give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.”**

Simply put, God paid the penalty in full, through Christ, for any actual past and present offences of sin against Him, as well as any future offences of sin that would come about. When we stand before God on judgment day, we will not be judged based on our personal righteousness (as those who try to earn their salvation will be), but we will be judged based upon Christ’s righteousness that has been attributed to all gospel believers. God tells all gospel believers that **“the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, [is given] to all and on all who believe...”** this is a righteousness **“...found in [God], not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith,”** (Rom. 3:22; Phil. 3:9).

This is the gospel believer’s freedom. It is a freedom from the judicial penalty, guilt and power of sin, not a license to continue to sin, (Rom. 6:1, 2). It is a freedom to live selflessly, not selfishly. It is a freedom to have an intimate relationship with God and honor Him and His Word, not a provision God made so He can overlook our being unfaithful to Him and His Word. God defines this freedom in no uncertain terms in Romans 8:29. **For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son...** Gospel believers are, **“not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God,”** (Romans 12:2). Gospel believers are, **“...created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them,”** and not our fleshly desires, (Ephesians 2:10).

That is the freedom that Paul is preaching and it is not hard to understand at all. This liberty is anything but license to sin!

2. PAUL STATES THAT THERE IS NO ROOM FOR COMPROMISE, (5:2-4)

1) Any compromise will negate all benefit of Christ, (2)

² **Indeed I, Paul** (an Apostle of Jesus Christ), **say to you that if you become circumcised** (on the basis that you believe it provides some spiritual and eternal favor with God), **Christ will profit you nothing**, (you actually forfeit what you seek. You won't find acceptance, but rejection. You place a barrier between yourself and Christ. You counter the means by which Christ can help you.)

F APPLICATION:

Rather than looking on **circumcision** as God had given it—as a symbol of His covenant of promise (Gen. 17:9–10)—most Jews looked on it as having spiritual value in itself. To them it was not a reminder of God's gracious and sovereign blessing but a means of humanly guaranteeing His favor.³ Those who believe that, will receive no benefit at all from Christ's work on the cross or from His resurrection.

2) Any compromise will mandate you keep the law in its entirety, (3)

³ **And I testify again** (I'm going to say it again), **to every man** (without exception, whether Jew or Gentile), **who becomes circumcised** (in order to merit favor with God—the result will be), **that he is a debtor** (in bondage then), **to keep the whole law**, (without failing in a single point [Gal. 3:10; Ja. 2:10; Deut. 27:26], in order to be saved by merit/works).

3) Any compromise will alienate you from Christ, (4a)

⁴ **You have become estranged** (separated, alienated [Col. 1:21]), **from Christ** (from receiving any value whatsoever from His death on your behalf or relationship with Him. There is no middle ground. There is no way to compromise and combine legalism and grace. It's one or the other. Like oil and water, they don't mix.)

4) Any compromise will keep you from any saving grace, (4b)

you who attempt to be justified by law (by your works, by personal merit); **you have fallen from** (lost your grip on), **grace**, (missed the opportunity to be saved based upon the sole and finished work of Christ on the cross rather than, your own ongoing and feeble endeavor to keep the law).

F APPLICATION:

Now for those who use this verse to say a believer can lose his or her salvation, are we talking about the state of salvation or the means of salvation, (Eph. 2:8-10)? We are talking about the means which is grace. Can a believer fall not from salvation, but from grace? Yes. He or she can become a legalist in how they measure their spirituality and the spirituality of others.

³ MacArthur, John. *Galatians*. Includes indexes. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1987.

These believers are not living by the Spirit, but through the flesh. Through their own strength and for their own glory, which is all life of wood, hay and stubble, (1 Cor. 3:11-13).

3. PAUL STATES THE FOUNDATION THAT THOSE WHO STAND, STAND UPON, (5:5, 6)

1) Gospel believers stand upon the hope of righteousness, (5)

⁵ **For we** (those of us who have not alienated ourselves from Christ, who are no longer in bondage to the law, and have not fallen from grace—we to the contrary—not by living by the flesh, but), **through the** (agency of the Holy), **Spirit** (in our lives), **eagerly wait for** (not work for), **the hope** (the expectation or realization), **of righteousness by faith**, (not only ^[11] the realization of the fact that *saving faith* in Christ alone provides the perfect imputed righteousness of justification, but that also, in time, as we continue to function through the agency of the Holy Spirit exercising *practical faith*, our daily actions and thoughts become more of the Spirit's work through us and less of our doing things in our own strength, with our own wisdom, for our own benefit; even if it involves doing right things but for the wrong reasons or in the wrong way.)⁴

F APPLICATION:

Contrary to justifying grace, sanctifying grace is interruptible. Living by the flesh interferes with living by the Spirit, and living by the flesh may even involve doing the right things but for the wrong reasons or in the wrong way. For example, to worship God from the heart and for His own sake is to live by the Spirit. But to worship Him only outwardly or to impress others with our supposed spirituality is to live by the flesh. To witness to a person while trusting in God to convict and convert him is to live by the Spirit. To witness with the intention of converting a person through our own knowledge of Scripture and powers of persuasion is to live by the flesh. No matter how worthy and God-ordained a person's outward activities may be, to perform them by the flesh is to live by the way of law and to forsake the way of grace.⁵

2) Gospel believers stand upon their identity in Christ, (6a)

⁶ **For in Christ Jesus** (for the gospel believer saved by grace alone), **neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything** (every believer is equal in Christ—externals in and of themselves, avail nothing spiritually or eternally, quite to the contrary of the Judaizers thinking. Legalism always attributes a great deal to the external.)

F APPLICATION:

⁴ Tit 2:11-14—For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

⁵ MacArthur, John. *Galatians*. Includes indexes. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1987.

The story is told of an aspiring artist who was commissioned to do a large sculpture for a famous museum. At last he had the opportunity to create the masterpiece he had long dreamed of. After laboring over the work for many years, he saw it grow not only in shape but in beauty. But when it was finished he discovered to his horror that it was much too large to be taken out a window or door and that the cost for tearing down part of the building in order to remove it was prohibitive. His masterpiece was forever a captive to the room in which it was created.

That is the fate of all human religion. Nothing a person does to earn God's favor can leave the room of this earth where his self-made works are created.⁶

3) Gospel believers stand upon their active faith, which is motivated by love, (6b)

but (what does have tremendous force and value spiritually now and for eternity is living), **faith** (not dead faith), **working through** (motivated though agape), **love**.⁷

4. PAUL STATES THE DANGERS OF LISTENING TO THOSE WHO COMPROMISE THE GOSPEL, (5:5, 6)

1) Compromisers will isolate you from God's truth, (7)

⁷ **You ran well**, ("You started out right! You were doing great! You were right on target!"). **Who hindered you** (*hinder* here means "to cut into" or "to impede." Who cut you off), **from obeying the truth**, (who caused you to stumble from faithfully believing, following and spreading God's truth about faith and grace in Christ? The answer is supposed to be obvious, the Judaizers.)

2) Compromisers will remove you from God's calling, (8)

⁸ **This persuasion** (to follow legalism), **does not come from Him** (God), **who calls you**, (who directs you to establish and enjoy a relationship with Him through Christ. God isn't the source of this false gospel, the devil is, and he's working through these Judaizers).

⁶ MacArthur, John. *Galatians*. Includes indexes. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1987.

⁷ 2 Co 5:7-15—For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences. For we do not commend ourselves again to you, but give you opportunity to boast on our behalf, that you may have an answer for those who boast in appearance and not in heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; or if we are of sound mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

Ga 5:14—For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

3) Compromisers will contaminate even your acquaintances, (9)

⁹ **A little leaven** (referring here to sin—the specific sin being heresy—a little false teaching), **leavens the whole lump**, (eventually ruins the whole batch—or group that listens).

F APPLICATION:

How many times have entire churches or even denominations gone liberal when a little false teaching was allowed in? The Separatists left the Church of England because of false teaching. The Puritans remained in an endeavor to remove the leaven from the lump. Later, they too realized that it couldn't be done and left. The foundation of one's personal theology as well as an organization, must remain free of all false teaching. There are areas where we can agree to disagree, but upon the fundamentals of the faith there can be no such attitude.

4) Compromisers will cause you and those who love you, great distress, (10)

¹⁰ **I** (Paul), **have confidence in you** (Galatian believers), **in the Lord, that you will have no other mind** (that you will survive this attack, that we will believe, practice and teach alike on this matter—I am confident that you will not be deceived as Eve was in the garden and escape the snare that is set for you.); **but he** (the Judaizer—the devil's agent), **who troubles you** (who has distressed you, who has stirred you up), **shall bear his judgment** (he will bear the consequences for his heresy and the trouble he caused as a result of it, if he doesn't confess and repent of his wrong), **whoever he is**, (Jew or Gentile).

5) Compromisers will teach you inconsistent practices, (11, 12)

¹¹ **And I, brethren** (fellow believers), **if I still preach circumcision** (as necessary to salvation, as Paul was apparently being accused of, [maybe referring in part to Paul circumcising Timothy in Acts 16:1-3]), , **why do I still suffer persecution**, (why are the Judaizers still persecuting me for doing what they want me to do)? **Then the offense** (or stumbling block), **of the cross** (the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ), **has ceased**, (has been removed if I preached that we needed to contribute something to our salvation).⁸

¹² **I could wish that those** (heretics), **who trouble you** (who want to circumcise you), **would even cut themselves off**, (emasculate themselves, that they would make themselves eunuchs)!

F APPLICATION:

⁸ The stumbling block was that Paul was preaching that man was helpless to contribute anything to his or her salvation. That it was simply a gift to be received through faith in Christ's work alone, by faith.

Acts 4:12—"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Paul would like those preaching circumcision to go emasculate themselves! Sounds really loving, doesn't it? Actually, it carries more concern that we might suspect, as John Stott explains.

We may be quite sure...that it was due neither to an intemperate spirit, nor to a thirst for revenge, but to his deep love for the people of God and the gospel of God. I venture to say that if we were as concerned for God's church and God's Word as Paul was, we too would wish that false teachers might cease from the land.⁹

Compromisers come in many different guises today. They are not preaching circumcision, but they are preaching good works, that there are many gods, that there is no hell, that everyone goes to heaven, etc.

5. PAUL STATES THE BASIS OF THE GOSPEL BELIEVER'S CALL TO LIBERTY, (5:13-15)

1) The gospel believer has been liberated in order to serve others through God's love, (13, 14)

¹³ **For you, brethren** (all gospel believers), **have been called** (summoned), **to liberty** (absolute justification in Christ and potential sanctification through Him); **only do not use liberty as** (the Judaizers say you will, as), **an opportunity for the flesh** (as an opportunity for self-indulgence), **but through** (agape, selfless), **love** (use your liberty to), **serve** (minister to, edify), **one another**.¹⁰

F APPLICATION:

Christian freedom does not leave believers wandering through life without laws, rules, restraints, or guidelines. Instead, they freely live according to God's standards and glorify God through loving service to others.¹¹

"By love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13). The key word, of course, is *love*. The formula looks something like this:

liberty + love = service to others
liberty – love = license (slavery to sin)

"I have an extra day off this week," Carl told his wife as he walked into the kitchen. "I think I'll use it to fix Donna's bike and then take Larry on that museum trip he's been talking about."

⁹ Charles Swindoll, *Galatians: Letter of Liberation*, p 105.

¹⁰ Lk 22:24-27—**Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.**

Is that easy to do? No! Did Christ doing it belittle Him at all? No. It exalted Him. The difficulty is not then being less of a person then, it is having less for myself.

¹¹ Barton, Bruce B. *Galatians*. Life application Bible commentary, Page 174. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1994.

“Fixing a bike and visiting a museum hardly sound like exciting ways to spend a day off,” his wife replied.

“It’s exciting *if you love your kids!*”¹²

Do you see why God says in 1 John 4:20, 21, **“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.”** Love of God is the motivation to love one another.

¹⁴ **For all the law is fulfilled in one word** (in essence the entire law can be summarized in a single way; by a single means), **even in this: “You shall** (agape) **love your neighbor** (any person you come into contact with, at any given time, of any given day), **as yourself.”**

F APPLICATION:

We cannot love our neighbor unless we are abiding in Christ. The selfish desires of our flesh is too strong. It doesn’t want to share its time or resources with others. Without Christ, we will at best, only love those who contribute something positive to our desires.

Gospel believers though, have two indispensable divine enabling. One is that the Holy Spirit enables him or her to grow in their ability to conquer ones selfish desires in order to learn to love his neighbor. He develops within us self-control. The second is that when we fail to love our neighbor, through Christ, we can find forgiveness.

2) The gospel believer has been liberated in order to refrain from destroying one another through God’s love, (15)

¹⁵ **But** (in contrast to exercising God’s love), **if you bite** (backbite, strike at one another like a snake), **and devour one another** (attack one another with the intent to cause injury—like the Judaizers are doing to me), **be-ware** (take heed, end it quickly and properly), **lest you be consumed** (rendered useless), **by one another**, (stop before you crush the souls of one another, stop before you diminish the physical, emotional and spiritual health of one another, stop before you weaken the integrity of one another, stop before you destroy one another’s resources and opportunities)!

F APPLICATION:

A loveless life is a selfish life, driven by clawing competition and cutting criticism. Instead of nourishing each other, we chew each other up; instead of growing together, we shrink in to ourselves. As some one once said, “Any man wrapped up in him self makes a very small parcel.” (Commentator Leon Morris)

Let’s not live small lives, but let’s live in the fullness of Christ’s freedom. Let’s go and sin no more and serve from a heart of love so that the whole world will see Christ and come to Him for real freedom.¹³

¹² Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Ga 5:13.

¹³ Swindoll, *Galatians*, p.113.

6. PAUL STATES THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL BELIEVER'S CALL TO LIBERTY, (5:16-26)

1) The gospel believer is promised victory over the flesh, (16-18)

(1) The command concerning the promise, (16)

¹⁶ **I say then** (in order to exercise and enjoy true Christian liberty): **walk in** (live in union with), **the** (Holy), **Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh**, (you will not fall into the trap of religious legalism or lustful license).

F APPLICATION:

How does the gospel believer walk in the Spirit?

1. The gospel believer must deal with all known sin in his or her life, by confessing and repenting of it. Not to do so grieves the Holy Spirit, (Eph. 4:30). If one is living in a way that grieves the Holy Spirit, refusing to bring ones life in agreement with the Holy Spirit's standards, he or she is obviously not walking in union with Him.
2. The gospel believer must submit him or herself to the direction and power of the Holy Spirit. Not to do so quenches the Holy Spirit, (1 Thess. 5:19). If one is living in a way that quenches the Holy Spirit, refusing to allow the Holy Spirit to direct ones life, he or she is obviously not walking in union with Him.
3. The gospel believer must be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18), thus not only living in agreement of the Holy Spirit's standards and allowing the Holy Spirit to direct his or her life, but depending upon the Holy Spirit by faith to do His part as we do ours.

Knowing how to walk in the Spirit is not hard. What's hard is doing it!

- How is the gospel believer going to know what grieves and quenches the Holy Spirit? He or she will know these things by reading and studying God's Word.
- What are the characteristics that will mark a gospel believer who is walking in the Spirit? His or her life will be marked by joy, thanksgiving and submission, (Eph. 19-21)

(2) The conflict concerning the promise, (17)

¹⁷ **For the flesh** (the cancerous sin force within everyones body), **lusts** (strives and struggles with strength and determination), **against** (or in opposition to), **the** (leadership of the Holy), **Spirit, and the Spirit** (then, obviously works likewise), **against the** (corrupt desires of the), **flesh; and these are contrary to one another** (they are in conflict with one another—mutually antagonistic towards one another—there is no way to reconcile the differences between them), **so** (a characteristic of Christian

liberty is), **that you do not do the things that you wish**, (all the time or perfectly).¹⁴

F APPLICATION:

NO man was ever more conscious of the tension in human nature than Paul. As the soldier in Studdert Kennedy's poem said;

I'm a man and a man's mixture
Right down from his very birth;
For part of him comes from heaven,
And part of him comes from earth.¹⁵

Another way to put that last line is to say, "For part of him is reborn from heaven, and part of him remains from earth."

Whatever path we choose, we will hear the whispers of opposition. Whenever we set out to do what the Holy Spirit instructs, we can expect the flesh to flare up in opposition. When we decide to share the gospel, our sinful human nature will make us feel foolish. When we decide to commit ourselves to some service, the flesh hinders us with evil desires. The flesh relentlessly tries to thwart the leading of the Spirit.

The greatest of all evils is *not* to be tempted, because there are then grounds for believing that the devil looks upon us as his property.

*John Vianney*¹⁶

(3) The solution concerning the promise, (18)

¹⁸ **But if you are led by** (if you are living by the counsel and through the power of), **the Spirit, you are not under** (defeated by, in bondage to, rendered spiritually impotent by), **the law**, (neither as a rule of conduct, nor as a means of salvation).

To live by the sword is to die by the sword. To live by the law is to die, be condemned by the law. But, to live by the Spirit is life and liberty. That is our solution to living in the flesh!

2) The gospel believer is warned of the peril of not finding victory over the flesh, (19-21)

(1) The peril of sexual sins, (19)

¹⁹ **Now the works** (the desires, lusts), **of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery** (sex with someone other than you spouse), **fornication** (this not only refers to those who engage in sex before marriage, but it is the word that we get *pornography* from—it refers to any sexual sin), **un-**

¹⁴ 1 Jn 1:8—If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Ro 7:24-25—O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

¹⁵ *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*. Edited by Barclay, William, lecturer in the University of Glasgow. The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 2000, c1976.

¹⁶ Barton, Bruce B. *Galatians*. Life application Bible commentary, Page 180. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1994.

cleanness (a mind that is filled with sensual depravity that expresses itself in thought, humor and/or deeds), **lewdness** (the lowest kind of sexual sin that speaks of a ferocious appetite that knows no boundaries or shame—the imagination is its only limitation—it's very close to our English word, *debauchery*),

(2) The peril of religious sins, (20a)

²⁰ **idolatry** (anything that usurps God from first place in every area of your life), **sorcery** (astrology, witchcraft, magical arts, demon or Satan worship—it's the word we get *pharmacy* from so it would take into consideration mind altering drugs),

(3) The peril of attitude sins, (20b-21a)

hatred (an attitude that thinks the world is against him or her, one that constantly rebels against others), **contentions** (an attitude that challenges everyone and everything—one that is constantly picking at someone's beliefs, looks, abilities, etc.), **jealousies** (an attitude that gets upset at others or the world if they feel they have not received what is coming to them—one that is in constant competition with others), **outbursts of wrath** (an attitude that exhibits a hot temper, explosive anger, temper tantrums, uncontrolled rage), **selfish ambitions** (an attitude where one is only watching out for number one—one who uses others as rungs in the ladder to success), **dissensions** (the kind of attitude that creates division, that instigates rebellion—the person who forces others to take sides—the person who creates or promotes cliques), **heresies** (an attitude that creates and spreads lies for fun, revenge or personal gain),

²¹ **envy** (an attitude that carries a grudge—one that has a deep and injurious passion to possess another's spouse, material goods, talents, etc.—it is looking at another with ill-will because of what he or she has become or has [e.g., Cain and Able; the brother of the prodigal son]¹⁷),

(4) The peril of social sins, (21b)

murders (murder here means *to slay, to slaughter, to cut to pieces*—this would not only include the one who literally takes the life of another, but also one who slaughters, cuts to pieces or ruins the reputation or well-being of another—the weapon can be a gun or a tongue), **drunkenness** (intoxication, whether private or public is wrong),¹⁸ **revelries** (which are connected at least in part to rude and crude drunken behavior especially at parties where sexual promiscuity and even orgies may take place—which was common practice in the worship of many of the pagan gods—it incorporates the impurities and obscenities of the grossest kind), **and the like** (God is letting us know that this is not an exhaustive list of sins of those who live according to the impulses of their flesh.);

¹⁷ Pr 14:30—A sound heart is life to the body, But envy is rottenness to the bones.

¹⁸ *Drunkenness*; in the ancient world this was not a common vice. The Greeks drank more wine than they did milk; even children drank wine. But they drank it in the proportion of three parts of water to two of wine. Greek and Christian alike would have condemned drunkenness as a thing which turned a man into a beast. *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*. (Edited by Barclay, William, lecturer in the University of Glasgow. The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 2000, c1976.)

(5) The judgment of these kinds of sins, (21c)

of which I tell you beforehand (I will forewarn you again), **just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice** (those who have an ongoing, habitual lifestyle that includes), **such things** (as God just listed and other acts like them that are not listed), **will not inherit the kingdom of God**, (will not enjoy eternity in God's presence and glorious kingdom, but will have to suffer judgment for all of eternity in Hell and torment, [cp., 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Jn. 3:4-10]).

F APPLICATION:

The true Christian's nostril is to be continually attentive to the inner cesspool.

C. S. Lewis¹⁹

Even as in [an unsaved] man there is something of this struggle (the convictions of his conscience and the corruption of his own heart strive with one another; his convictions would suppress his corruptions, and his corruptions silence his convictions), so in a renewed man, where there is something of a good principle, there is a struggle between the old [man] and the new [man], the remainders of sin and the beginnings of grace; and this Christians must expect will be their exercise as long as they continue in this world.²⁰

True believers realize the deadly power of sin. No longer their master, sin now attacks like a powerful enemy. Sinful desires still pop up, like guerrilla forces, attacking us when we least expect it. And when we attempt to follow the Spirit's desires, we find the attacks growing in intensity, indeed they "war against [the] soul" (1 Peter 2:11 NIV). In other words, having wrong desires doesn't always mean we have sin in our life. If we are in tune with the Holy Spirit, sinful human desires will attempt to block his leading.

...If we function normally, our desires and the Spirit will counter each other's moves. So we must realize this warfare, claim the Spirit's victory, focus on Christ's help, and rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.²¹

These opposite appetites are illustrated in the Bible in different ways. For example, the sheep is a clean animal and avoids garbage, while the pig is an unclean animal and enjoys wallowing in filth (2 Peter 2:19–22). After the rain ceased and the ark settled, Noah released a raven which never came back (Gen. 8:6–7). The raven is a [flesh]-eating bird and found plenty to feed on. But when Noah released the dove (a clean bird), it came back (Gen. 8:8–12). The last time he released the dove and it did not return, he knew that it had found a clean place to settle down; therefore the waters had receded.

Our old [man] is like the pig and the raven, always looking for something unclean on which to feed. Our new [man] is like the sheep and the dove, yearning for that which is clean and holy. No wonder a struggle goes on with-

¹⁹ Barton, *Galatians*. Life application Bible commentary, Page 186.

²⁰ Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*, Ga 5:13.

²¹ Barton, *Galatians*. Life application Bible commentary, Page 181.

in the life of the believer! The unsaved man knows nothing of this battle because he does not have the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9).

Note that the Christian cannot simply *will* to overcome the flesh: “These two are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do anything you please” (Gal. 5:17, WMS). It is this very problem that Paul discusses in Romans: “I do not know what I am doing. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.... For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing” (Rom. 7:15, 19, NIV). Paul is not denying that there is victory. He is simply pointing out that we cannot win this victory in our own strength and by our own will.²²

As already mentioned, the most effective way for a Christian to oppose the desires and deeds of **the flesh** is to starve them to death, to “make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts” (Rom. 13:14). The surest way to fall into a sin is to allow oneself to be in situations where there is temptation to it. On the other hand, the safest way to avoid a sin is to avoid situations that are likely to pose temptations to it.²³

3) The gospel believer is directed to the Holy Spirit through which victory can be found over the flesh, (22-)

²² **But** (in contrast to the fruit of the flesh), **the fruit** (singular—the by-product),²⁴ **of the** (Holy), **Spirit**

(1) The inward qualities of the fruit of the Spirit, (22a)

1a Love

is love (*love* is the foundation that all the all the other qualities rest upon—this is *agape* love, and it is thoroughly described in 1 Corinthians 13),

But you say, “I can’t love like 1 Corinthians 13 says I should love!” No kidding, but the Spirit can, every day and all day. I have no idea how to farm. But, if I showed up to a farm tomorrow and worked under the leadership of the farmer, I’d be able to farm everyday, all day. This is how God’s children are able to do the things they have no ability to do on their own.

God describes how He loves us in Romans 5:6-8, ***“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*** The Spirit can on-

²² Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. " Ga 5:13.

²³ MacArthur, *Galatians*.

²⁴ This is one fruit not nine fruits. It is a fruit that you either produce or you do not. Like an apple that is one fruit, it does have several qualities though. An apple like the Cortland has a crisp texture, a red and green color, a sweet taste, and is excellent for cooking. Every Cortland apple will possess the same qualities because it is the make up of one fruit. Every expression of the fruit of the Spirit will possess the same qualities because it is the make up of one fruit. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, will be produced in our lives every time. It cannot be less. The Holy Spirit cannot produce some of the qualities of His fruit and not others, just as the Cortland apples cannot change their qualities.

ly produce this kind of love. Children of God, who are filled with the Spirit of God, will demonstrate the love of God, towards every sinner who is without God, without exception or partiality.

“But I can’t do that either!” Of course not, but the Spirit can, every day and all day.

The South Pole could be called the healthiest place on earth, because there's no pollution, no dust, and very few people. The air is as fresh and clean as it must have been everywhere before man began pouring industrial wastes into the atmosphere. Furthermore, it's one of the few locations where man is not bombarded by germs. Not only is it too cold for them to be active, but there's nothing for them to live on. And since winds start at the South Pole and move northward, they tend to keep away any contaminants from that region. Now, you'd think people would be eager to live in such a germ-free environment, but they're not. With temperatures that drop to 100 degrees below zero, it's just too cold!

Some churches bear a striking resemblance to that kind of atmosphere. The truth of God is preached. Error has no chance to survive. Scriptures are meticulously quoted by the chapters. But there is no corresponding obedience or love, and the spiritual temperature is sub-zero. Unloved and untouched, many people leave. The poor are given the cold shoulder (Jas. 2:13). Those weak in the faith are engaged in icy arguments (Rom. 14:1). Brothers in Christ are left outside because they're newcomers, and they pose a threat to inbred relationships (3 John 1:5-10).

God’s children are to:

- Love their wife as Christ loves the church
- Love God with all their heart, soul, body and mind
- Love their neighbor as him or herself
- Love the brethren
- Love our enemies

We are told in 1 John 3:14, 4:7, that this kind of love is a test of the professing believers genuine salvation. ***“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death...Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.”***

Just think, if love was the only aspect of the fruit of the Spirit how it would affect the world if it was habitually practiced.

2a Joy

Another internal quality of this fruit is **joy**, (An inner rejoicing that abides despite outer circumstances. This characteristic has little to do with happiness and can exist in times of unhappiness. It is a deep and nourishing satisfaction that continues even when a life situation seems empty and unsatisfying.²⁵ **Joy** is the deep-down sense of well-being that abides in the heart of the per-

²⁵ Barton, *Galatians*. Life application Bible commentary, Page 188.

son who knows all is well between himself and the Lord.²⁶ Only those who have experienced this joy can understand it. It is other-worldly, supernatural.

One of the proofs that we have concerning this joy having nothing to do with negative circumstances it given to us by our Lord Jesus. **“...Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”** (Heb. 12:2)

Nehemiah declared during the trials of erecting the wall of Jerusalem, **“...Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”** (Neh. 8:10)

Peter addresses this same issue about our trial some experiences in 1 Peter 1:8, when he says that Jesus, **“whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,”**

God leaves no option at all when He tells us through James in James 1:2, **“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials.”**

The Spirit’s joy is an outflow of internalized truth, not an inflow of external circumstances. Our then is to follow the counsel of Philippians 4:9. **“The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”**

Dr. R. A. Torrey was one of the great Bible teachers of a past generation and founder of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA University). He and Mrs. Torrey went through a time of great heartache when their twelve-year-old daughter was accidentally killed. The funeral was held on a gloomy, miserable, rainy day. They stood around the grave and watched as the body of their little girl was put away. As they walked away, Mrs. Torrey said, "I'm so glad that Elisabeth is with the Lord, and not in that box."

But, even knowing this to be true, their hearts were broken. Dr. Torrey said that the next day, as he was walking down the street, the whole thing broke anew-the loneliness of the years ahead without her presence, the heartbreak of an empty house, and all the other implications of her death. He was so burdened by this that he looked to the Lord for help. He said, "And just then, this fountain, the Holy Spirit that I had in my heart, broke forth with such power as I think I had never experienced before, and it was the most joyful moment I had ever known in my life! Oh, how wonderful is the joy of the Holy Ghost! It is an unspeakable glorious thing to have your joy not in things about you, not even in your most dearly loved friends, but to have within you a fountain ever springing up, springing up, springing up, always springing up three hundred and sixty-five days in every year, springing up under all circumstances unto everlasting life!"²⁷

3a Peace

²⁶ MacArthur, *Galatians*.

²⁷ *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, p. #1295, 349, 350.

The third internal quality of the fruit of the Spirit is **peace**,²⁸ If joy speaks of the [well-being] of heart that comes from being right with God, then **peace** (*eirēnē*) refers to the tranquility of mind that comes from that saving relationship. The verb form has to do with binding together and is reflected in the modern expression “having it all together.” Everything is in place and as it ought to be [between oneself and God].²⁹ An inner quietness and trust in God’s sovereignty and justice, even in the face of adverse circumstances. This is a profound agreement with the truth that God, not we, remains in charge of the universe.³⁰

Ro 5:1—Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (We are bound together again with God our Creator.)

It is the belief that God means what He says when He tells us, **“that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Ro 8:28** (How many times have we gone to that promise looking for peace?!)

This peace is so special, so incredible, so profound, so powerful that it is no wonder that God tells us, **“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Jn 14:27**

Php 4:6-9—Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

The Lord sets your burden and you press on with your function.

(2) The external qualities of the fruit of the Spirit, (22b)

1a Longsuffering

longsuffering, the calm willingness to accept situations that are irritating or painful.³¹ It is self-restraint before proceeding to action. The quality of a person who is able to avenge himself yet refrains from doing so.

²⁸ *Peace*; in contemporary colloquial Greek this word (*eirene*) had two interesting usages. It was used of the serenity which a county enjoyed under the just and beneficent government of a good emperor; and it was used of the good order of a town or village. Villages had an official who was called the superintendent of the village’s *eirene*, the keeper of the public peace. (*The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*. Edited by Barclay)

²⁹ MacArthur, *Galatians*.

³⁰ Barton, *Galatians*. Life application Bible commentary, Page 188.

³¹ MacArthur, John. *Galatians*. Includes indexes. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1987.

Being longsuffering means you never get to the boiling point or at least you temper it before it boils over. Example, my mom would have me watch the potatoes she was boiling so they didn't boil over the pan and cause a mess. If our anger boils over it causes a big mess too. (Examples?)

Forgiving others and having a forgiving spirit towards those who have not asked for forgiveness is a big issue here, as many times longsuffering has to do with being offended. David is a good example of longsuffering in his distress under King Saul, is he not? We all have some Saul's in our life.

2a Kindness (or gentleness)

kindness, (“grace in action, [the act of being gentle]—Whereas longsuffering holds back vengeance, gentleness bestows mercy.”)³²

1 Th 2:6-7—[The disciples did not] **seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, (How gentle?) just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.** (That's pretty gentle.)

Jesus' **kindness** is the believer's example. When “**some children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them ... Jesus said, ‘Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these’**” (Matt. 19:13–14). On another occasion He said, “**Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls**” (Matt. 11:28–29).³³

Christ did not condemn the woman caught in adultery, but said, “**Go and sin no more.**”

Christ said to the women at His tomb, be sure to tell Peter too; the man who denied Jesus 3 times at a crucial moment in His life.

3a Goodness

goodness, (has to do with one who hates evil and refrains from wishing it on others, or acting towards another in such a way. One who would truly love his neighbor as himself.)

Joseph was such a righteous and good man. When he learned that Mary was pregnant but did not yet know it was by the Holy Spirit, “being a righteous man” he could not bring himself to marry her, assuming she had been unfaithful. But being also a good man, he could not bear the thought of disgracing his beloved Mary and therefore “desired to put her away secretly” (Matt. 1:19).³⁴

(3) The upward qualities of the fruit of the Spirit, (22b)

³² (Gromacki, *Stand Fast in Liberty*, p.171)

³³ MacArthur, John. *Galatians*. Includes indexes. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1987.

³⁴ MacArthur, John. *Galatians*. Includes indexes. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1987.

1a Faithfulness

faithfulness, (This quality revolves around being trustworthy, reliable, or loyal.)

La 3:22, 23—Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

Job 1:7-8—the Lord said to Satan, “From where do you come?” So Satan answered the Lord and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.” Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?”

1 Co 4:1-2 —Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

2a Gentleness

²³ **gentleness**, (it does not denote outward expression of feeling, but an inward grace of the soul, calmness toward God in particular. It is the acceptance of God’s dealings with us considering them as good in that they enhance the closeness of our relationship with Him... This [gentleness] does not blame God for the persecutions and evil doings of men.)³⁵

Ge 50:17-20—‘Thus you shall say to Joseph: “I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you.” ’ Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father.” And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, “Behold, we are your servants.” Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

3a Self-control

self-control, (the restraining of ones passions and emotions, self-mastery.)

Secular Greek uses it of the virtue of an Emperor who never lets his private interests influence the government of his people. It is the virtue which makes a man so master of himself that he is fit to be the servant of others.³⁶

Mk 14:55-61—Now the chief priests and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree. Then some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying, “We heard Him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands,

³⁵ Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, p. 1208.

³⁶ *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*. Edited by Barclay, William, lecturer in the University of Glasgow. The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 2000, c1976.

and within three days I will build another made without hands.’ ”
But not even then did their testimony agree. And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, “Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?” But He kept silent and answered nothing... How difficult would it be to exercise that kind of control?

(4) The summary, (22c)

Against such (fruit as the Spirit produces in the gospel believer), **there is no law.**

The believer who walks in the Spirit and manifests His fruit does not need a system of **law** to produce the right attitudes and behavior—they rise from within him.³⁷

Mt 7:16-18—You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

The source of the fruit—man cannot produce it—it’s a by-product, (Jn. 15:5; Phil. 1:21)

4) The gospel believer is informed of the crosses victory over the flesh, (24)

²⁴ **And those who are Christ’s** (not a select group of gospel believers, but everyone of them), **have crucified** (a past tense and a once for all action—those who are Christ’s have ruined the monopolizing power of), **the flesh** (not here referring to the body, but the sin force resident in the body [Rom. 7:20-23]), **with its passions and desires**, (with all its persuasive and seducing powers [cf., 2:20; Rom. 6:6, 11-12]).

F APPLICATION:

The sin force is still as active in us as it was before salvation. We still possess the same moral weaknesses in general as well as the same areas of personal weakness that we are especially susceptible to. But as Believers, Christ has broken the monopolizing power that the sin force once had on us and has now provided every gospel believer with a new capability called choice. The choice to live for God or not to. The choice to model spiritual life or spiritual death.

Before salvation, trying to win over the sin force in us was like trying to play football against a NFL team all by yourself. You didn’t stand a chance. After salvation things change dramatically. After salvation you become a member of the GGG team (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit), and the old man/the sin force is all by himself now. The sin force cannot compete effectively against the power of Almighty God. In order for the sin force to score from now on, you have to betray your divine Teammates and let the old man through (by wanting to enjoy your sinful desires more than

³⁷ MacArthur, John. *Galatians*. Includes indexes. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1987.

you want to enjoy a close relationship with your Creator), or you can let the sin force through by trying to take the sin force on in your own strength again.

The basic principles necessary for making the right moral decisions that will not allow the sin force to score in your life are:

1. **KNOW** that Christ broke the sin force's monopolizing power over you on the cross, (Rom. 6:6)
2. **RECKON** it to be so, (Rom. 6:11) Believe that it is true.
3. **YIELD/PRESENT** yourself to the Holy Spirit whose power far outweighs that of the sin force, (Rom. 6:13; Gal. 5:25).

All these truths are one component of the two needed for epoxy. The other necessary component that hardens the epoxy is a close and growing relationship with God Himself.

The more we have invested in our relationship with our heavenly Father, the less eager we are to compromise our intimacy with Him and dependence upon Him. The more in love you are with a person, the less you want to hurt them. But if you drift apart it eventually becomes not that big a deal if you hurt him or her. If you love them though, you want to please them, not wound them. You want to spend more time with them, not less. Love is what turns the mechanics of what must be done (know, reckon and yield), into a passion of what one can't help but do.

Wayne Rice tells about a wealthy Dutch businessman "who was seeking to buy a diamond of a certain kind to add to his collection. Finding such a stone, a New York dealer called the merchant to come and examine the gem for himself.

"When the Dutchman arrived, the dealer assigned his best diamond expert to close the deal. Yet after the expert explained in precise technical detail the diamond's worth and beauty, the Dutchman declined to buy it. As he rose from his chair, the dealer (who had been observing) stepped forward.

"Do you mind if I show you that stone once more?" he asked the collector, who after a moment's thought lowered himself once again into the chair.

"The dealer took the stone from the tabletop into his hand and stared at it for several seconds before speaking. When he did speak, he did not define the diamond's flawlessness or unparalleled size or exquisite design in typical, technical stonecutter's jargon. He simply put into words what he saw within the stone that distinguished it from the millions of others he had seen in his lifetime. And when the Dutchman walked out of the store some time later, he took with him the diamond.

"Meanwhile, the dealer's expert was perplexed at his inability to close the sale. After all, hadn't he described in accurate technicality the brilliance of the stone?

"The dealer read his thoughts. 'There is no doubt that you are the best in the business at what you do. You know more about diamonds than anyone I know, including myself, and I pay you handsomely for that. But I would gladly pay you double if you had one thing that I have. You see, the difference between you and me is that you know diamonds--but I love them.'

[Youthworker Journal, Spr 1993. Pages 46-48.] **The one most likely to live for God is the one who doesn't only know much about Him, but loves Him deeply. That takes a lot more concentration and effort than just gaining knowledge.**

Dr. A. B. Simpson said that he once saw a reproduction of the Constitution of the United States which had been skillfully engraved on a copper plate. At first glance it seemed to be nothing more than a piece of noble writing. When he looked at it from the proper perspective, however, he could discern the portrait of America's renowned President George Washington artistically etched in minute detail. Simpson adds, "His face was revealed in the shading of the letters and I saw his person, not just a flow of words or lofty principles. Then I thought: that's the way we should look at the Bible if we are to understand its deeper meaning. We must see in it a 'Face of love shining through,' not merely ideas, not just doctrines, but Jesus himself-- sufficient for all our needs."

5) The gospel believer is confronted with his responsibility of finding victory over the flesh, (25, 26)

(1) The gospel believer is responsible to walk in the Spirit, (25)

²⁵ **If we live in the Spirit** (i.e., if we are gospel believers convicted by, regenerated by, sanctified by, sealed by, indwelt by and enabled by the Spirit), **let us also walk in the Spirit**, (This carries the idea of cooperation. The Holy Spirit has done and continues to do His part, now, let us do our part.—Walk in the strength of and according to the standards and direction of the Spirit—for by walking in the Holy Spirit we will live righteously and not by trying to follow the law as the Judaizers say).

(2) The gospel believer is responsible to avoid conceit and envy, (26)

²⁶ **Let us** (gospel believers), **not become conceited** (like the Judaizers who are attacking Paul, who desire the admiration by others, who are self-satisfied and self-important, who want to appear as something more than they are), **provoking one another** (as one who tries to make himself look good by making others look bad. Who raises himself up by putting others down. Who broadcasts everyones weaknesses and failures, while only talking about his strengths and successes), **envying one another**, (hating to see others succeed beyond them. Resentful of those who have the focus of attention. Begrudging anyone of the blessings God bestows upon them. Their only concern is themselves all the time and in every situation. Ouch! Can't you see the veins bulging on the necks of these purple faced Judaizers?!)

 **INTERPRETATION:**

F APPLICATION:

 **COMMENTARY:**

