

Faith: Trusting, Walking, Living

A Study in Ruth & Galatians

Galatians 5:7–26

Read Galatians 5:7–15.

1. In verse 7 Paul likens the life of faith to a race. How had the race been going for the Galatians before the arrival of the false teachers? (v. 7; 3:2–5; 4:14–15)
2. At the beginning of his letter, Paul made it abundantly clear that his message was not of human origin but came “by revelation from Jesus Christ” (1:12). In contrast, what does he say in verse 8 about the “persuasion” of the Judaizers?

3. How does a little yeast act on a batch of dough?

How does even a smidgeon of false teaching act on the church?

4. Paul has used strong language before in condemning the false teachers (e.g., 1:8–9), but his remark in verse 12 may seem particularly shocking. Why do you think Paul felt justified in saying such a thing? (You might consider 5:2–4; Mk. 9:42.)
5. In verse 11 Paul uses the curious phrase “the offense of the cross.” What is it about the cross that is inherently offensive? (Consider how unbelievers often respond to the gospel. You might also consider 1 Cor. 1:18–29 and 1 Pet. 2:6–8.)

6. Philip Ryken writes that Christian freedom “must always be defended from its two greatest enemies—legalism and license.”¹ Thus far, Paul has been defending freedom against the legalism of the Judaizers. He now addresses the danger of license, or taking advantage of freedom to do wrong.

a. What are believers *not* to do with their freedom? (v. 13; * 1 Pet. 2:16; Rom. 6:15–18)

b. What are they to do instead? (v. 13)

c. Can the freedom Paul describes be experienced apart from community?

7. Fill in the chart below to contrast what we’ve been set free from with the life of freedom found in Christ.


	The false teachings of the Judaizers	The gospel preached by Paul
What must one obey?	Acts 15:5b	5:7b 6:2b
What “work” is required?	Acts 15:1 4:10	5:13c–14 1 Jn. 3:23
What motivates this “work”?	5:4a	5:6b Jn. 14:23a 1 Jn. 4:7–11
By what means does one seek to obey?	3:3	5:16

Read Galatians 5:15–26.

8. What does a community look like that doesn't obey the command to love? (vv. 15, 26)

9. What goes on in community is a result of what goes on in individual hearts (James 4:1). Describe the tug-of-war constantly waging within your soul. (v. 17)

¹Philip Graham Ryken, *Galatians* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005), 216.

* Indicates verses for further study.

10. What is the way to keep from succumbing to the pull of fleshly desires that cause so much trouble in your life? (vv. 16, 25)
11. How are “living” and being “led by the Spirit” (vv. 16, 18, 25) very different from following a rote system of law-keeping? (See 5:4; Phil. 2:13; 2 Thess. 1:11b)
12. What does a lifestyle of giving in to your fleshly desires produce? (vv. 19–21)
13. What is the warning about living this way? (v. 21b)
14. What does a life look like that is continuously yielded to the Spirit? (vv. 22–24)
15. What is true of those who belong to Jesus? (v. 24; Rom. 6:6–12)

What does that new identity in Christ imply for your ability:

- a. to deal with “sinful passions and desires” (v. 24)?
 - b. to “keep in step with the Spirit” (v. 25)?
16. Think about one relationship in your life, and pray over each of these nine fruits of the Spirit, asking God to manifest them in you as you relate to that person.