

GALATIANS

DAY 4

Galatians 5

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TODAY'S THEME: I wasn't set free from sin to be enslaved to the law. I can be confident in the Spirit of God in me to lead me to convict me of sin and lead me in righteousness.

Galatians 5:16 (ESV)

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh."

Galatians 5:16 (NLT)

"So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves."

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I'm not sure how much time you spend going through the drive-thru at McDonalds. I've noticed that they never ask me what I don't want. I never have to say, "I don't want the Big Mac, and I don't want the Quarter Pounder, and I really don't want the McNuggets today." I only ever have to say, "I'll have two McDoubles, no onions, large fries, and a Diet Coke...and a Junior Chicken." By choosing what I DO want to eat, I am automatically saying no to the rest of the things on the menu. Or, think of it this way - by choosing my wife, I have said no to every other woman on earth. The focus isn't so much on what I don't do, but rather on what I affirm.

These false teachers had come and expressed concern, and stirred fear in the Galatians, that this new Christian liberty - this Gospel - was going to lead to lawlessness. It was going to give people an excuse to sin. At least obeying the law was measurable. It was a definable standard that was quantifiable. Am I making sure to do this? Am I making sure to avoid this?

There were those who thought that perhaps Paul was making too big a deal of this "new message." The only issue here was that it was entirely contrary to what Paul had preached. He urges them that this idea of "works" is going to permeate every part of their life, and they needed to deal with it! Paul kind of comforts them here. He essentially tells them that there are going to be a lot of warning signs. They're not suddenly going to be living absolute, lawless lives. "The works of the flesh are evident." You can see that fruit coming. He encourages them and says that by making a decision to live by faith, in the Spirit, is to say no to the desires of the flesh. Really, you worry about your focus, and the fruit will take care of itself, and that fruit will be evident too.

Have you ever felt that pressure? Worried about when you're going to blow it, or make the next wrong decision? "When is this whole thing going to unravel?" I believe Paul would encourage you similarly as he did the Galatians in verse 1. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free."

What is God speaking to me about in today's reading?

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY: