

THE YOKE OF CIRCUMCISION

We have divided Gal.5 into two sections of studies.

- (Gal.5:1-12) Spiritual freedom from slavery of legalism (Law)
- (Gal.5:13-26) Spiritual freedom from slavery of flesh (OSN)

Paul opened chapter 5 with two present imperatives that we will apply to each section of study (Gal.5:1).

- Positive: Keep standing firm (stekō/ p.a.impv.2pl)
- Negative: **Do not be subject** (enecho/ p.m.impv.2pl) [bound under obligation] (James 2:10) [danger of judicial guilty of all] **again to yoke of slavery**

In (Gal.5:1-12), Paul shows that one danger of slavery of legalism is the Yoke of Circumcision.

- Yoke means loss of independence.
- Slavery means the loss of freedom.
- Yoke of slavery means someone else is in control (Matt.11:28-30).

We will study four aspects of the Yoke of Circumcision.

Keep standing firm for spiritual freedom!

- 1. The Judaizers (a sect of Pharisees who had believed the Gospel (Acts 15:5) were now preaching a different (heteros) [different, but of the same kind] gospel (Gal.1:6-8). They had added circumcision as a necessary step to salvation.**

(Acts 15:5) “But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, ‘**It is necessary to circumcise them**, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.’”

(Acts 15:1) “And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, ‘**Unless you are circumcised** according to the custom of Moses, **you cannot be saved.**’”

Adding anything to the finished work of Christ for salvation **nullifies grace** (John 19:30; Gal.2:21). **Today** believers, much in the same way, add to the grace gospel such works as walking an aisle, water baptism, joining a church, stop sinning, make Jesus Lord and Savior in order to be saved (Rom.1:16; Acts 16:31).

(Eph.2:8-9 “For by grace you have been **saved through faith**; and not of your selves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Rom.4:4-5)

First official Church doctrine: “But we believe that we are **saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus**, in the same way as they also are.” (Acts 15:11) Peter, in (Acts 15:6-12) and James, in (Acts 15:13-21) supported this same message.

- 2. The history of circumcision is important to understanding how it went from promise to Law and from shadow Christology to historical Christology and from necessary to unnecessary.**

(Gal.5:6) “For in Christ Jesus **neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything**, but faith working through love.”

Abraham: Circumcision was introduced with Abraham (Gen.17:10-14). It was associated with the messianic promise of the seed of the Abraham Covenant (Gen.12:1-3; Rom.4:9-25; Gal.3:16).

(Rom.4:11) “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them.”

Moses: Circumcision was instituted with Moses (Lev.12:3). It was associated with shadow Christology of Law (John 7:2, 14, 19-24, 37-43/ Lev.23).

(Heb.3:3) “For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house.” (Heb.3:2-6)

Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ fulfilled shadow Christology and the seed promise of Abrahamic covenant in first advent (Luke 1:31-33; 2:21; Phil.2:9; 3:5; Matt.5:17; Rom.10:4).

(Gal.3:16) “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds.’ As referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to you seed,’ that is, Christ.” Rom.4:13; Acts 3:25)

3. If after salvation by grace, a Church Age Believer (CAB) is falsely persuaded that circumcision is necessary as a sign of authenticity of his salvation, he / she falls subject to a legalistic yoke of slavery (Gal.5:1-12; Col.2:11-13; Rom.2:29) (The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit).

(Gal.5:8) “This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you.” (1 Cor.1:18-25; 2:5-16)

(Gal.1:4-5) “But it was because of the false brethren who had **sneaked in to spy out our liberty** which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring into bondage. But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.”

(Gal.5:2-3) “Behold I, Paul, say to you that **if (3cc) you receive circumcision**, Christ will be of no benefit (opheleo/ f.a.ind.3ps) [no advantage or profit] to you. And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation (opheiletes) [one who is obligated to fulfill a debt/ debtor] to keep the whole Law.” (James 2:10; Gal.3:10-11)

(Gal.5:4-5) “You have been **severed** (katargeo/ a.p.ind.2pl) [rendered invalid or void of results] **from Christ**, you who are seeking to be justified by Law; **you have fallen** (expipto/ a.a.ind.2pl) [left the sphere of grace and spiritual freedom from Law and spiritual slavery] **from grace.**”

(Gal.5:10a) “I have confidence (peitho/ perf.a.ind.1ps) in you in the Lord, that you will adopt (phroneo/ f.a.ind.2pl) no other view.”

4. Paul illustrated two dangers of the Yoke of Circumcision: Race and Leaven.

WHO: “You were **running** (trecho/ impf.a.ind.2pl) **well who hindered** (egkopto/ a.a.ind.2pl) you from obeying (peitho/ p.m.infin) the truth?” (Gal.5:7/ 5:8) [by the Judaizer’s false teachings] (Titus 1:10-11)

WHAT: “A **little** leaven leavens (zumoo/ p.a.ind.3ps) the **whole** lump of dough.” (Gal.5:9-10) The Judaizer’s doctrinal position on circumcision was disrupting and disturbing the church body.

CHRIST SET US FREE FOR FREEDOM

THEREFORE KEEP STAND FIRM FOR SPIRITUAL FREEDOM!