

Galatians Chapter V

Translation, The Orthodox New Testament, Holy Apostles Convent, Buena Vista, CO, 1999.

5:12 Would that those unsettling you make themselves eunuchs!

On people who lead the faithful astray away from Truth a.)

“Observe how bitterly he speaks here against their deceivers . . . If they will, let them not only be circumcised, but even mutilated . . . And you should remark his wisdom in the manner in which he admonishes and chastens the former as his own children, and as capable of receiving correction, but their deceivers he cuts off, as aliens and incurably depraved (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5).

13 For, brethren, you were called to freedom; only use not the freedom for an occasion to the flesh,

Free will does not mean we are to be lawless

What is the meaning of, "Use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh?" Christ has delivered us, he says, from the yoke of bondage, He has left us free to act as we will, not that we may use our liberty for evil, but that we may have ground for receiving a higher reward, advancing to a higher philosophy. Lest any one should suspect, from his calling the Law over and over again a yoke of bondage, and a bringing on of the curse, that his object in enjoining an abandonment of the Law, was that one might live lawlessly, he corrects this notion, and states his object to be, not that our course of life might be lawless, but that our philosophy might surpass the Law (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5).

but by love be serving as slaves to one another.

1. The fault of pride leads to divisions

“Here again he hints that strife and party-spirit, love of power and presumptuousness, had been the causes of their error, for the desire of power is the mother of heresies. By saying, "be serving as slaves to one another," he shows that the evil had arisen from this presumptuous and arrogant spirit, and therefore he applies a corresponding remedy. (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5).”

2. On the way Paul indirectly corrects them

“ (Paul) does not openly express their fault, but he openly tells them its corrective, that through this they may become aware of that; as if one were not to tell an immodest person of his immodesty, but were continually to exhort him to chastity. He that loves his neighbor, as he ought, declines not to be servant to him more humbly than any servant. As fire, brought into contact with wax, easily softens it, so does the warmth of

love dissolve all arrogance and presumption more powerfully than fire. Wherefore he says not, 'love one another,' merely, but, 'be servants one to another,' thus signifying the intensity of the affection. (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5)."

14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one utterance, in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:36-40) 15. But if you bite and devour one another, be taking heed that you be not consumed by one another.

The severity of inflicting injury to a soul

"And the words which he uses are expressly significant; he says not merely, 'you bite,' which one might do in a passion, but also 'you devour,' which implies a bearing of malice. To bite is to satisfy the feeling of anger, but to devour is a proof of the most savage ferocity. The biting and devouring he speaks of are not bodily, but of a much more cruel kind; for it is not such an injury to taste the flesh of man, as to fix one's fangs in his soul. In proportion as the soul is more precious than the body, is damage to it more serious . . . For those who commit injury and lay plots, do so in order to destroy others; therefore he says, Take heed that this evil fall not on your own heads. For strife and dissensions are the ruin and destruction as well of those who admit as of those who introduce them, and eats out every thing worse than a moth does. (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5)."

16. But I say, be walking in the Spirit, and in no wise shall you fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Walking in the Spirit destroys evils

"Here he points out another path which makes duty easy, and secures what had been said, a path whereby love is generated, and which is fenced in by love. For nothing, nothing I say, renders us so susceptible of love, as to be spiritual, and nothing is such an inducement to the Spirit to abide in us, as the strength of love. . . And what is this, what is the destruction of the evils we have spoken of, but the life in the Spirit? Hence he says, 'Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.' (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5)."

17 For the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and these are opposed to one another, that whatsoever you may be wishing, you may not be doing those things.

1. The body and soul are not at war – the "flesh" refers to a depraved will

"Here some make the charge that the Apostle has divided man into two parts, and that he states the essence of which he is compounded to be conflicting with itself, and that the body has a contest with the soul. But this is not so, most certainly; for by 'the flesh,' he does not mean the body . . . but the depraved will, as where he says, 'But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,' (Rom. 8:8-9) and again, 'They that are in the flesh cannot please God.' . . . it is the earthly mind, slothful and careless, that he here calls the flesh,

and this is not an accusation of the body, but a charge against the slothful soul. (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5)."

2. Soul and Body in Unity comprise a human being

" he means two mental states. For these are opposed to each other, namely virtue and vice, not the soul and the body. Were the two latter so opposed they would be destructive of one another, as fire of water, and darkness of light. But if the soul cares for the body, and takes great forethought on its account, and suffers a thousand things in order not to leave it, and resists being separated from it, and if the body too ministers to the soul, and conveys to it much knowledge, and is adapted to its operations, how can they be contrary, and conflicting with each other? For my part, I perceive by their acts that they are not only not contrary but closely accordant and attached one to another. It is not therefore of these that he speaks as opposed to each other, but he refers to the contest of bad and good principles. (Compare Rom. vii: 23.) To will and not to will belongs to the soul; wherefore he says, "these are contrary the one to the other," that you may not suffer the soul to proceed in its evil desires. (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5)."

18. But you are being led by the Spirit , you are not under the Law.

When living in the Spirit – the devil is defeated

If it is asked in what way are these two connected, I answer, closely and plainly; for he that has the Spirit as he ought, quenches thereby every evil desire, and he that is released from these, needs no help from the Law, but is exalted far above its precepts. He who is never angry, what need has he to hear the command, Thou shalt not kill? He who never casts unchaste looks, what need hath he of the admonition, Thou shalt not commit adultery? Who would discourse about the fruits of wickedness with him who had plucked up the root itself? For anger is the root of murder, and of adultery the inquisitive gazing into faces. Hence he says, 'If ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law;' wherein he appears to me to have pronounced a high and striking eulogy of the Law, if, at least, the Law stood, according to its power, in the place of the Spirit before the Spirit's coming upon us. (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5)."

19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, 20 idolatry, use of drugs, potions or spells, enmity, strifes, jealousies, fits of anger, intrigues, divisions, heresies, 21 envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and things like to these; of which I tell you beforehand, even as I also said previously, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

We are judged by our actions not by our nature

"If these things belonged to nature and not to a bad moral choice, his expression, 'they practice,' is inappropriate, it should be, 'they suffer.' And why should they be cast out of the kingdom, for rewards and punishments relate not to what proceeds from nature but

from choice? (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5).”

22 But the fruit of the Spirit

“He says not, ‘the work of the Spirit,’ but, ‘the fruit of the Spirit.’ Is the soul, however, superfluous? The flesh and the Spirit are mentioned, but where is the soul? Is he discoursing of beings without a soul? For if the things of the flesh be evil, and those of the Spirit good, the soul must be superfluous. By no means, for the mastery of the passions belongs to her, and concerns her; and being placed amid vice and virtue, if she has used the body fitly, she has wrought it to be spiritual, but if she separate from the Spirit and give herself up to evil desires, she makes herself more earthly.

You observe throughout that his discourse does not relate to the substance of the flesh, but to the moral choice, which is or is not vicious. And why does he say, ‘the fruit of the Spirit?’ It is because **evil works originate in ourselves** alone, and therefore he calls them ‘works,’ but good works require not only our diligence but God's loving kindness. He places first the root of these good things, and then proceeds to recount them, in these words, "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." For who would lay any command on him who hath all things within himself, and who hath love for the finished mistress of philosophy? As horses, who are docile and do every thing of their own accord, need not the lash, so neither does the soul, which by the Spirit has attained to excellence, need the admonitions of the Law. Here too he completely and strikingly casts out the Law, not as bad, but as inferior to the philosophy given by the Spirit. (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5).”

is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, 23 meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 But they who are of the Christ crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also be walking by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another.

Galatians Chapter V Part 2

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19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, 20 idolatry, *use of drugs, potions or spells, enmity, strifes, jealousies, fits of anger, intrigues, divisions, heresies, 21 envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and things like to these; of which I tell you beforehand, even as I also said previously, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

We are judged by our actions not by our nature

“If these things belonged to nature and not to a bad moral choice, his expression, ‘they practice,’ is inappropriate, it should be, ‘they suffer.’ And why should they be cast out of the kingdom, for rewards and punishments relate not to what proceeds from nature but from choice? (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5).”

- “Use of drugs, potions or spells”. Pharmakeia from pharmakon, a drug, the ministrations of drugs. Sorcerers used the word for a time in their magical arts and in connection with idolatry. (The Orthodox New Testament, p. 260)

“So that poisoning and sorcery might not appear to be condoned in the New Testament, they are included among the works of the flesh. This happens when people love and are loved through magical arts. (Blessed Jerome).”

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, 23 meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

1. The soul is king

“He says not, ‘the work of the Spirit,’ but, ‘the fruit of the Spirit.’ Is the soul, however, superfluous? . . . By no means, for the mastery of the passions belongs to her, and concerns her; and being placed amid vice and virtue, if she has used the body fitly, she has wrought it to be spiritual, but if she separate from the Spirit and give herself up to evil desires, she makes herself more earthly.

2. Moral Choice

You observe throughout that his discourse does not relate to the substance of the flesh, but to the moral choice, which is or is not vicious. And why does he say, ‘the fruit of the Spirit?’ It is because **evil works originate in ourselves** alone, and therefore he calls them ‘works,’ but good works require not only our diligence but God’s loving kindness. He places first the root of these good things, and then proceeds to recount them, in these words, “Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.” For who would lay any command on him who hath all things within himself, and who hath love for the finished mistress of philosophy? As horses, who are docile and do every thing of their own accord, need not the lash, so neither does the soul, which by the Spirit has attained to excellence, need the admonitions of the Law. Here too he completely and strikingly casts out the Law, not as bad, but as inferior to the philosophy given by the Spirit. (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5).”

3. The 9 graces of the Spirit

“As a manifestation of the nine graces, love, joy, peace show the Christian character as an inward state; longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, show it is an expression towards man; faith, meekness and temperance, show it as an expression towards God. (C.I. Scofield, D.D. Notes on Galatians 5:22)”

4. The Saints

“The Saints are those ‘who are born of God by the Word through grace in the Spirit and who keep the likeness of God, their Father’ ...[St. Gregory] Palamas expressed this ‘identity with the Father’ in striking phrases...However, his essential thought is borrowed from St. Maximus: man ‘becomes by participation that which the archetype is as cause; he becomes God by grace.’ As a result the life of God becomes his life, and God’s existence his existence. Hence St. Maximus had written ‘God and the saints had one and the same energy.’ Not only did they themselves rejoice in the presence of God, but that presence was manifested to others through them. So deification is not only an individual gift of God, but constitutes a means of manifesting Him to the world. ‘The saints participate in God; not only do they participate, but they also communicate Him.’ (John Meyendorff, A Study of Gregory Palamas.)

24 But they who are of the Christ crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts.

“For that which is crucified is dead and inoperative, but he indicates the perfect rule of life. For the desires, although they are troublesome, rage in vain. Since then such is the power of the Spirit, let us live therein and be content therewith, as he adds himself. (Chrysostom, Homily, Galatians, Chpt. 5).”

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also be walking by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another.

“...let us be content with the power of the Spirit, and seek no succor from the law. (Chrysostom, Galatians Chpt. 5)”