

The Law Fulfilled

Key Verse: “*For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*”
—Galatians 5:14

Selected Scripture:
Galatians 5:1-15

IN TODAY’S LESSON, Paul is writing to the brethren in Galatia, a region which contained a number of ecclesias who were not of Jewish origin that were developed as a result of his missionary tours. One of the issues Paul sought to

counteract was the Judaizing influence upon these believers who formerly were heathen and were being subjected to efforts attempting to compel them to follow various aspects of the Mosaic Law. Although addressed to the saints in Galatia, in principle, this epistle has been preserved for the entire church throughout the Gospel Age. Bondage would include not only submission to the requirements of the Law Covenant in Paul’s day, but it would apply to any form of sectarianism or unscriptural traditions that would bring us under condemnation once we have been justified.

To the extent that, as Christians, we are becoming conformed more and more to the will of God, the sanctifying influence of his Word will enable us to progress spiritually. However, sometimes there can be pressures both from within our fellowship and from the world outside to have our behavior or beliefs conform to standards which do not necessarily represent scriptural teachings on a given matter.—Gal. 5:1-3

During his ministry, for example, Paul was very clear

that justification, or being counted righteous by God, was not dependent upon the keeping of various ceremonial features of the Mosaic Law, but rather upon the acceptance of Christ's ransom sacrifice as the basis for consecrated believers to become sons of God.—Rom. 3:20

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?”—Gal. 5:4-7

It is of great importance that believers study and apply scriptural principles in the exercise of liberty with regard to both doctrinal understanding and behavioral practices in order to be acceptable to our Heavenly Father. We are to “prove all things,” and never to use liberty as “an occasion to the flesh.”—I Thess. 5:21; Gal. 5:8-13

Our Key Verse indicates that God's law is fulfilled in the lives of the consecrated by serving one another in spirit and in truth. As such, we continually strive to have our hearts and minds regulated in accordance with the precepts set forth by our Lord during his earthly ministry and also elaborated upon in various New Testament epistles.

Consecrated followers of Christ are under the law of liberty. Our love for God is demonstrated by willingly sacrificing our human rights and privileges in serving him and his cause. The Law Covenant came to an end for those Jews who accepted Christ's death as the means by which they could be freed from this yoke of bondage. Through his ransom sacrifice and keeping all features of the Mosaic Law perfectly, our Lord met all the demands of divine justice and thus the price has been paid to release us from our former condemnation.—Rom. 10:4 ■