

**Context**

- 1] Slaves ... redeemed from under the Law (4:1, 5).
- 2] God, by His Spirit, has made you a son and heir (4:6, 7).
- 3] You are not a slave of Law (Hagar/Ishmael) but are free (Sarah/Isaac) (4:21 ff)

**Main point** *Faith in Jesus that sets people free is evidenced by acts of love and is completely independent of religious law keeping.*

**Key verse** *'The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself as love' (5)*

**Don't - (legalism) (1-6)**

- 1] Freedom (1)

*Nb Christ redeemed from curse of sin (3:13)*

*I.e. Stand (Eph 6:13) not Yoked (Lev 26:13; Matt 11:29)*

*\*You have a choice – stand firm on the grace of Jesus OR succumb to Law\**

*\*Jesus set us free to be free!\**

- 2] Circumcision (2-4)

b) I Paul (cf 6:11)

a) either/or law/Christ (2)

*\*The choice is either or – Grace and Jesus OR Law and rule keeping\**

b) the Law - all or nothing (3)

*\*Law keepers must achieve perfection\**

c) trying to be justified by Law – falling away from grace.(4)

*cf fall from (cf Heb 6:6)*

*\*To chose Law is to reject Jesus.\**

*\*In Christ you are 'under grace' G\**

- 3] The alternative - By faith – the Spirit – righteousness – we hope. (5)

*Cf righteousness (2:21; 3:6; 3:21(2 Cor 5:21))*

*I.e. by faith (Eph 2:8; Heb 11:3ff)*

*Hope is certain (Heb 11:1)*

*\*Belonging to Jesus is independent of religion G\**

- 4] The reality in Christ (6)

a) circumcision immaterial (6a)

*cf 6:15. Circumcision not required of Christians (Acts 15:1, 5)*

b) faith in Jesus expressing itself as love (6b)

*nb love (1 Cor 13:1ff)*

*\*Jesus is areligious!\**

**Who? - (the heretics) (7-12)**

- 1] Who

a) 'cut in' (7) cf 2:2(1 Cor 9:24))

*\*Obeying the Truth is different from Keeping the Law\**

b) not to be persuaded by the truth (8)

*cf God called you by grace (1:6) - The truth of the gospel (2:5)*

*\*'Persuasion' / pressure does not come from God?\**

c) like a little yeast in dough (9(1 Cor 5:6,7))

\*A little 'legalism' soon takes over\*

2] confident in the Lord (10)

- a) You will take no other view
- b) confusers thwarted / penalised

Nb *causing little ones to sin* (Lk 17:2)

\* there is severe judgment for those who mislead God's children\*

\*The Lord gets His way\*

3] the opposers (11,12)

- a) Paul - Pro-circumcision?!
- 1) Persecuted

*Nb circumcisers are persecuting those who won't submit (6:12) Ishmael persecuted Isaac (4:29) cf Everyone who lives a Godly life will be persecuted (2 Tim 3:12)*

\*Preaching 'grace' leads to persecution by the religious.\*

2) cross abolished

\* Don't be coy about enemies of the Gospel of grace\*

- b) Agitators ?!! - Circumcision group (2:12)

*nb Cybele Phrygian Goddess – priest / devotees self castration*

*?intemperate because 1<sup>st</sup> trip, 1<sup>st</sup> converts, all going 'wrong' even Barnabus (2:13)*

## **'Do – (Love) (13 – 15)**

1] Called to be free

*Nb not worked to be free*

\*God calls us\*

2] Response –

- a) not serve sinful nature

*nb Shall I sin that grace may abound (Rom 6:1)*

- b) serve one another

\*True freedom in Jesus is expressed in Love for our neighbour\*

3] the authority (14)

*cf Love your neighbour as yourself (Lev 19:10)*

*The second command is like it (Matt 22:39)*

4] A warning (15)

\*Animosity amongst believers in Jesus is self destructive.\*

## **Conclusion**

*Resist the slippery slope of religious legalism*

*Enjoy the freedom God gives in Jesus*

*Show gratitude to the Lord by loving one another*