

let yourself get sidetracked or dissuaded from this only sure foundation of the whole of our salvation. So Paul also stresses in our text passage to walk in the Spirit and watch for and fight against the least sin and lust and temptation which will draw you away from ever looking to Christ and abiding in Him and His Word.

What Paul also further makes clear is that in the ongoing walk in the way of the gospel of faith AND works, your life becomes purposeful and fulfilling, and by God's grace, your life does become fruitful to God's praise and your neighbor's good when living in true faith in Christ. Living in the gospel way by faith working through love, you become inventive and proactive even, being compelled by Christ's love known by faith to show God's love. Then you desire as one expressed,

Make me a channel of blessing today,
Make me a channel of blessing I pray;
My life possessing, my service blessing,
Make me a channel of blessing today.

And you know what else then is so special in the ongoing walk in this gospel way of faith and works? As you seek to walk in the gospel way of faith working through love, God will make you a blessing even when you hardly think you can be much of a blessing. When you do what you can in the service of God's love, it will never be in vain. God's people living by faith become instruments in God's hands for the wellbeing of others, even eternally, and are used for the increase and extension of God's church and kingdom. For sure, your life becomes so useful and fruitful when abiding in Christ living always in faith working through love.

So let me end this message emphasizing true confession of faith is trusting in the gospel of faith AND works and reflecting it too by God's grace in your life. This Christian way is the most beautiful and wonderful and fruitful way to live for it is living always in view of Christ and living in the way of endless grace, endless love, and endless blessing in and through the Saviour. Oh, what a gospel is the Christian gospel of salvation by grace alone through faith alone with a faith that is not alone by God's grace. "*For in Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*" Does and you're your life too reflect the gospel truth of Galatians 5:6? Amen

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

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Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



FAITH AND WORKS

In this message we consider together, dear friends, the subject of Christian faith AND works. In Galatians 5:6 the apostle Paul, by God's Spirit, states, "*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but faith which worketh by love.*" This is a great text teaching what will be our theme for this message, "The Gospel of Faith AND Works!" Today there is a lot of confusion on this topic but listen to the Christian gospel message as Paul knew it and proclaimed it and showed it. The true gospel believed and lived by has power and impact and beautiful fruit that cannot be unnoticed. See with me the overwhelming worth of this gospel, the outstanding work with this gospel, and the ongoing walk by this gospel.

"*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but faith which worketh by love.*" What is the overwhelming worth of this gospel that Paul here is declaring? It is that Paul here teaches, and stresses even, that on the one hand salvation is all by the grace of God alone, without any works on our part whatsoever, and yet, at the same time, where there is true faith in Christ Jesus, it will prove itself in so working through love. How does Paul actually teach that here? When he says, "*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything...*" he means here that works by Jew or Gentile don't count at all, never ever, in becoming truly and eternally saved through Jesus Christ, but we become saved only always by faith alone in Christ Jesus. Paul makes this point especially also in the context of the book of Galatians where he is battling against false teachers who were in one way or another promoting a salvation by our works and by deeds of the law on our part in any way.

However, that could lead to the charge which more often is given, that such a free and complete salvation apart from any works or efforts on our part can and will result in people living in sinful ungodly lives because salvation obtained is apart from works anyways. But now here, as elsewhere, the Apostle makes clear that is impossible because when you have true Spirit-worked faith in Christ in your heart, then being joined to Christ the Saviour, the fruit always certainly will be that your faith is a "*faith which worketh by love*"! True faith joined to Christ **for** salvation becomes by Christ a faith **working** in thanksgiving on account of His salvation. It is impossible that such not be the case because so great is the Saviour Jesus Christ and His salvation for us, that when joined to Him in true faith, you are

never the same anymore and your life becomes transformed after His image. You can say it this way too, those whom God justifies He also sanctifies! In the Christian gospel way, your and my full salvation is all of grace through faith without any works, but it also results in a life of works as fruit of faith in Christ.

In this verse we can see Paul teaching exactly the same as James taught in his book that true faith shows itself in works of thanksgiving, and faith without such works is dead, or just not true faith, not really joined to Christ the Saviour. As one put it, “both [Paul and James] see faith as a principle of practical energy, as opposed to a barren, inactive theory.” The Christian faith is a faith given by God the Holy Spirit in our hearts that joins us to Christ and that through Him, saves truly and unquestionably, and results in faith working through love, steadfastly and increasingly so even.

Isn't that most wonderful, that when saved it results in faith working, faith exercising itself, showing itself through love? Dear friends, hearing this gospel of faith AND works, are you attracted to this gospel and its worth and are you living by this gospel and reflecting it in your life too? Imagine if the Christian gospel was a gospel of faith alone that remains alone without the fruit of good works, it would not be a complete gospel but defective and deficient surely, indeed, another false gospel. On the other hand, if it would be a gospel like with all other religions where our works are what is needed and what contributes for our salvation, it would be another hopeless useless gospel. But the Christian gospel of overwhelming worth is a gospel of faith AND works, proclaiming salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone with a faith that is not alone, by the grace and Spirit of God, for Jesus' sake! Infinitely blessed are God's people living in faith in Jesus Christ and reflecting through Him faith which worketh by love.

To see this more, let us move on from learning from our text the overwhelming worth of the gospel of faith AND works, and consider next it's outstanding work. Paul describes the Christian faith looking to Christ for salvation as “*faith which worketh by love*”. Here what is taught is that the outstanding work of faith as fruit of faith in Christ Jesus is love. The energy from faith in Him is love. In Christ Jesus as the once crucified and now risen and exalted Saviour you find such an infinite display and picture of true love, and when truly joined to Him in faith the result is faith working through love in your thoughts, words, and deeds, showing forth Christ-like love! The outstanding work of faith is active Christian love, showing God's love and sharing God's love, and glorying in God's love and giving out God's love.

Isn't that something most wonderful indeed? Think of it, love is keeping God's commandments, love is the greatest of graces, love and showing true love before God and others is the best of the best of blessings. Where there is love to God, there God is honored and good is done; where there is love for people, there others are enriched and you are so blessed as

well! With faith which works by love and through love, you love the Triune God and Christ the Saviour and God's Word. You love whatever is good and noble and God-honouring and whatever most promotes the glory of God and the expansion of His church and kingdom, and gospel. Your life becomes then indeed, when living in true faith, a life characterized by and immersed in this outstanding work of love. The fruit of the Spirit is love, Paul says in Galatians 5. True faith in Christ worked by the Holy Spirit motivates you in living and always wanting to live in ceaseless love to God and your neighbor and, in fact, you become sad and repentant when you don't so live in love, failing too often still.

Do you know and show this faith which worketh by love? True faith is not without works but faith which works through love as a fruit of being joined to Christ the Saviour and Lord of His people. Does not the true believer confess even with longing, “Lord let there be more love for You and others and for Your church and kingdom in my heart and life. Forgive me for still being all too often so unloving actually.” And isn't it true, also for the Christian, every fresh look in faith to God in Christ and His matchless love, energizes you again in the way of love to God's glory and praise. Faith which works by love draws from Christ an endless supply of love in looking time and again to Christ Jesus in Whom and from Whom the love of God shines forth most brilliantly forevermore.

The outstanding work of faith working through love, do you see it too and agree in your heart how wonderful to confess faith in Christ and live as our text speaks in the way of this Gospel of faith AND works. The opposite of living with faith working through love is living in sin and evil in the works of the flesh and even just Paul's mentioning of those works of the flesh in verses 19ff of Galatians 5 show how ugly and destructive and wicked those works are. But how different and excellent God's way is and the Christian gospel of faith AND works by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Living in true faith in Christ means the way of blessing and being a blessing as you go forward by God's grace, in the way of His love, step by step, day by day.

Here we come to our third main point on our theme of the Gospel of faith AND works! We have seen the overwhelming worth of this gospel and something of the outstanding work with this gospel, and now yet consider briefly only the ongoing walk in this gospel way. Looking at the context, Paul makes clear the ongoing walk in the way of this gospel of faith AND works is not without challenges and battles. The Christian walk is a battle with all kinds of enemies from within and outside of us. In the Galatian church there were false teachers confusing the gospel of grace and promoting more a works religion of their own doing rather than of true faith which as fruit also works in the way of love. The danger is always there to build somehow on ourselves rather than only always on Christ and His Person and once for all saving work which becomes ours by grace alone through faith alone. Don't