

Sunday, August 20, 2023—Galatians 5:6 Faith Which Worketh By Love

Galatians 5:6

- **For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.**
- This verse is indicative of a dispensational change.
- Galatians 3:26-29
- Colossians 3:11
- Genesis 17:9-14—God required physical circumcision in His dealings with Israel. It was required.
- Colossians 2:11-12—the circumcision and baptism that matters today is spiritual not physical.
- Ephesians 2:11-12—the distinction between Israel and the Gentiles is the fundamental feature of time past.
- During the Dispensation of Grace, all “time past” directives were removed.
 - Romans 6:14
- **but faith which worketh by love**—note the contrast “but.” It is not “circumcision” or “uncircumcision” that avails anything but “faith which worketh by love.”
- According to Noah Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language* the verb “avail” carries the following relevant meanings.
 - AVA'IL, verb transitive [Latin valeo, to be strong or able, to profit, to be of force or authority; Eng. well. The primary sense is, to stretch or extend, whence strength, value.]
 - AVA'IL, verb intransitive To be of use, or advantage; to answer the purpose; as, strength without judgment will rarely avail Generally, it signifies to have strength, force or efficacy sufficient to accomplish the object; as, the plea in bar must avail that is, be sufficient to defeat the suit; this scheme will not avail; medicines will not avail to check the disease; suppositions, without proof, will not avail.
- So, while “circumcision” is of no avail, faith “worketh” i.e., energizes (*energeō* in Greek) by love. Put another way, faith energized by love is what avails today during the dispensation of grace.
- Galatians 5:5—note the use of “hope.”

- Galatians 5:6—includes both faith and love.
 - I Corinthians 13:13
- Throughout the book of Galatians Paul has been using “circumcision” as emblematic of the Law. Don’t miss Paul’s point in Galatians 5:6, the Law avails nothing and is not to be the energizing factor in the life of a believer. While faith that works by love is.
 - II Corinthians 5:14
- Colossians 1:4—love and good works do not produce salvation; they result from salvation.
- Regarding Galatians 5:6, J. Vernon McGee stated the following in *Thru The Bible*:
 - “No legal apparatus will produce a Christian life. The formula is simple: “faith which worketh by love.” As we advance in Galatians, Paul will give us the modus operandi, but let us remember that it is a simple formula: “Faith which worketh by love.” That is the way to live the Christian life. Faith will work by love. Love will be the fruit of the Holy Spirit.” (McGee, 185)
- Galatians 5:13-15, 22-26—are previewed in verse 6. We will have more to say about those verses when we reach them in our study.