



## Lesson Goal:

For you to further your understanding and experience --

- ⇒ how love is empowered by faith and the Spirit
- ⇒ how we easily drift toward relying on our own sufficiency and righteousness
- ⇒ how we often live by vague feelings rather than believing the truth of the gospel



## 1. Listen to or watch the Lesson 8 talk.

Use the following transcript of the talk while you listen or watch.

### Faith Working Through Love

Josiah Bancroft

**“What does God want you to do today?”**

#### I. THE WORK OF GOD

1 This morning as we look at the Bible today we will be looking at Galatians chapter 5.  
 2 You might want to turn there. But as you're turning, I want to ask you a couple of questions.  
 3 What does God want you to do today? I think that's a good question. What does God want you to  
 4 do? Let's say it another way: what should you be doing that would please God that you're not  
 5 doing? Or we could ask the same question another way? Make it a statement: my spiritual life  
 6 would really just take off if I would... fill in the blank. I want you to hold onto those answers that  
 7 you got in your head. Maybe it's just one answer for each one of those, but I'd like you to hold  
 8 onto that for just a minute. I believe that Jesus gives us a very unusual, a jarring answer to that  
 9 kind of question.

10 Let me show you what I mean. Let me read to you from John chapter 6: **“Then they**  
 11 **asked Him, ‘What must we do to do the works God requires?’ Jesus answered, ‘The work**  
 12 **of God is this, to believe in the One He has sent’”**[verses 28-29]. I want you to notice that the  
 13 Jews asked the question, **“What must we do to do the works of God?”** *Plural*. And Jesus'  
 14 answer is *singular*: **“The work of God is this, to believe in the One He has sent.”** I think the

15 struggle of my Christian life in large measure is the struggle to accept that faith is enough. To  
16 believe what Jesus says here: that the work that God requires of me, the work from which all of  
17 the works flow, the work from which fruit flows, is the work of faith, is to believe in the One that  
18 He has sent. In other words, we could say it this way: that, really, in one way of looking at it, in  
19 the Christian life, is a single work which is faith, and even that is a gift by the Holy Spirit. And  
20 there's a single fruit of that faith and that's love. There's a single work, that's faith, and there's a  
21 single fruit, that's love. I was really helped by a professor I had at Covenant who pointed out (his  
22 name is John Sanderson)— he pointed out in his book on the spiritual fruits that there really is a  
23 single fruit, that the fruit is love, and that everything else is just an application of that. And so  
24 that's why I'm thinking this way. He was very helpful to me. There's a single work, and that's  
25 faith; there's a single fruit, and that's love.

## 26 II. RECEIVING FROM GOD

27 When we're talking about faith we're not speaking of working up enough emotions. I  
28 want to be clear about that. And we're not speaking about maintaining an emotional stasis so you  
29 don't feel much of anything. That's the more Presbyterian way of doing it maybe. It's not that  
30 we're going to get too worked up, it's not that we want to be flat enough to where we ought to be  
31 acceptable in every situation because we don't have much of a response at all. And we're not  
32 talking about some improved interior thought life so that by repeating certain things to yourself  
33 you'll eventually convince yourself of the reality of them by repetition. We're not talking about  
34 just working up feelings or confidence in your life.

35 When we talk about faith, what we're talking about is— maybe receptivity would be one  
36 way to talk about it; receiving from God the promises He has for you. Schaeffer describes it as  
37 an active passivity. We are working to remain open to God's Spirit. I love the example he uses of  
38 Mary in his book *True Spirituality*<sup>1</sup>. Have you read that? I really recommend it to you. He  
39 repeats it also in his new book *The Finished Work of Christ*<sup>2</sup> that has just come out, a  
40 compilation of his teachings on Romans 1 through 8; I'd recommend that to you as well. But in  
41 *True Spirituality* he notes that active passivity is really what God wants from us and his example  
42 is Mary. And he says, the angel appeared to Mary and said, "Mary you're going to have a child."  
43 And Mary asked the question, "How can that be, seeing as I have not been with a man?" And he  
44 says, "The Holy Spirit shall overshadow you and you're going to have a baby" [Luke 26-38].  
45 And so Mary went off in the corner and went, "Hmmm." How could she make a baby? By

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<sup>1</sup>Francis Schaeffer. *True Spirituality* (Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, IL, 1972).

<sup>2</sup>Francis Schaeffer. *The Finished Work of Christ* (Crossway Books: Wheaton, IL, 1998).



46 herself? What she said is the answer of faith: “Here I am. Do with me what you want. I am your  
47 servant.” It is the presenting of ourself before God; the giving of myself to the Holy Spirit so that  
48 He produces a new fruit in me. It is resting in that relationship of union with Christ in such a way  
49 that I’m not inactive. But that from that rest in Christ in His righteousness, His presence, His  
50 power, in my life flows new obedience, flows love.

### 51 III. THE EXPRESSION OF FAITH

52 There’s a verse in Galatians that we want to look at that points that out. Let’s look at  
53 Galatians 5, verse 6, **“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any**  
54 **value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.”** The only thing that  
55 counts are these two things: the single work of faith and the single fruit of love. Faith expressing  
56 itself— actually, a literal translation would say faith *working through* love, *working out of itself*  
57 love— faith that unites us to Christ so that love is produced. So what we are talking about is a  
58 heart of faith that is focused on Christ, that is walking in the Spirit, and from that comes a love  
59 response; and by the way, a love that fulfills the requirements of the law. You’ll notice that later  
60 in this chapter it says, verse 14, **“The entire law is summed up in a single command: love**  
61 **your neighbor as yourself.”** So this is not just a love that’s an interior feeling. It’s a love that’s  
62 expressed in what we don’t do: I don’t take my neighbor’s wife, and positively, what we do: I do  
63 work for my neighbor’s good. So this is a faith that expresses itself through love. It’s not a heart  
64 that is focused on rules and principles so that walking by redeemed self-effort I do better and  
65 better and get a better and better reputation. And there’s a part of me that wants to substitute that  
66 for faith all the time. There’s a part of my life that always wants to move from faith to some type  
67 of self-effort. Rather than trusting in Christ, what I want to do is I want to supplement faith--let’s  
68 put it that way. It’s not that I want to replace it or lose it, I just want to add to it. I want to bring  
69 something else alongside of it, so that my efforts are added to the work of Christ.

### 70 IV. THE OPERATION OF THE SINFUL NATURE

71 Now I do that a million ways, in all sorts of subtle ways. And when I work like this, I add  
72 good things. If I was to take a bad thing and try and add it to the work of Christ, you would say,  
73 “Oh no, you can’t do that.” And Galatians also talks about that. Verse 17 says, **“The sinful**  
74 **nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit.”** And it continues in verse 19; **“The acts of the**  
75 **sinful nature are obvious -- sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery. . .”** Well, let’s say  
76 that I decided that I wanted to add to the finished work of Christ, sexual impurity. Now we  
77 actually do that, don’t we? But a little bell goes off in your head when you do something like  
78 that, doesn’t it? Those two things can’t work together. Why? Because that sexual impurity,  
79 whether it’s in your life, or in David’s as he looks at Bathsheba; that look leads to voyeurism,



and voyeurism leads to lust, and the lust leads to murder and adultery. We recognize that that can't come from the Spirit of God; that is a work of the flesh and so when that starts, we'll interrupt that pretty quickly. We know you can't supplement God's grace with adultery, right? And it's very clear, **"Do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature"**[Galatians 5:13]. You cannot supplement God's grace with these sinful things. And that's clear to us.

## V. THE TWO FACES OF THE FLESH

What's not so clear is the flesh has two faces to it. The flesh doesn't just have the face of sexual immorality or sexual impurity. The flesh also has a second religious face, a face of self-effort. And this is the burden of the book of Galatians. What it's saying is, it's not just the obvious sins that we need to watch for. It's also those subversive sins that come in where we will supplement the grace of God with good things. If I pick a bad thing, we all know to say no. But sometimes I pick something that looks good, a religious work to add to the finished work of Christ. It looks okay to me. That seems to be a good thing instead of something dangerous. And this is the burden that Paul has in this letter. Look back at chapter 3 with me [verses 1-2]. We'll look at this a little later, perhaps. **"You foolish Galatians. Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you. Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law or by believing what you heard?"** Now what they heard was the gospel. How did the Spirit come to the Galatians? It came when they trusted Christ alone for their salvation and, as a result of that faith, the Spirit filled them. That's how they started the Christian life.

Well, how do you continue the Christian life? Paul continues his argument, **"Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?"** In Galatians 3:3, Paul says, "Are you trying to complete the work that was begun in you by faith by your own self-effort?" I really don't like this translation— *by human effort*. The Greek makes it much plainer and so does the King James, by the way. (I'm reading from the NIV and it's usually an excellent translation but here it could use some help.) The word is actually *flesh*. And so it ties us back to what we just read in Galatians 5: the deeds of the flesh are evident. Those deeds we recognize very easily but there are some that we miss in the church, I believe; some that we miss in our Christian lives. And what are those? Those are the deeds where we are doing good things to supplement the work of God. Will I now complete what God began by faith by adding something to the finished work of Christ? And so there are two faces of the flesh. There's this obvious face to us and there's this sneaky face. Look, it's the same snake, it's just coming in a different crack, okay?



## VI. LIVING BY THE SPIRIT

What we have to do is, we have to recognize it regardless of which face it wears. Whether it's the face of pride and religious service or whether it's the face of sensuality. And by the way those are the two things that Augustine mentioned as the two roots of sin. I think Luther was very helpful. Do you know what he said lay at the root of both of those? It was a faith issue. He said they both sprang from unbelief. And that's the point. The work that God calls on me to do is to receive. It's to say "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to the cross I cling" [from the hymn "Rock of Ages"]; to allow the Holy Spirit to fill that faith and to make of me something I cannot make of myself, even as a believer. That's what I'm called on to do. And there's some freedom and some power and really some reality in that in my life when I can remember it. What do I tend to do? I tend to fall off into sensuality or sometimes into religious self-effort and when I do, you'll never guess what happens. The fruit of the Spirit just dries up. Why? Because I'm operating in myself rather than walking by the Spirit. I think the church has not been real clear on these things, to its own detriment. What is the usual answer to sexual impurity in the church? Try harder, a list of rules, things to do. What's Paul's answer? "So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature" [Galatians 5:16]. We've got to understand that the moralism that so easily flows out of me has the same root as sexual impurity; they come from the same place. And you can't use one face of the flesh to face another. It just doesn't work. It just doesn't work at all. That's why in Colossians 2 Paul says that these outward observances of the law are of no value in dealing with fleshly indulgence. Why? Because they both come from the same place. They come from my flesh. So on the one hand, repentance looks like at least not looking at Bathsheba or whatever her name is. Right? That's one way that repentance looks. You know how else repentance looks? It looks like me putting no confidence in my answer to that question I asked earlier. What is it that you are going to do today that will make you all right with God? "I'm going to have a better quiet time." You know what? I want you to have a better quiet time. I really do. But that's not what's going to make you right with God. It's not what's going to produce love in your life. You know who produces that? Jesus does, as you hold onto Him by faith, as the Spirit inhabits that. How else could we answer that? God will be pleased with me if I just witness more. God will be pleased with me if I gave more. God will be pleased with me if I X, Y or Z. And, by the way, you probably ought to do all those things but we need to be clear. Those things are fruits, they are not the engine. They're the symptom, not the cause. What's the cause of all of these things rightly ordered in my life, coming from proper motive? The cause is the Holy Spirit dwelling within me as I put my faith in Christ.

By the way, I think it's important that we be careful about what our object of faith is here. Our object of faith is not the redeemed man. I want you to notice from Galatians 3 [verse 2], what Paul says; with faith the Holy Spirit fills. Look at what he says: **"Did you receive the**



149 Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?" Later in that same passage he  
 150 gives the content of what they heard and believed. In verse 6: **"Consider Abraham: 'He**  
 151 **believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.'"** So that when I believe in Christ  
 152 as my righteousness, the Holy Spirit fills that faith and begins to apply that righteousness in me  
 153 and through me and changes me deeply from the inside out. And I am really changed. What can  
 154 subvert that? When I move back to self-effort or sensuality, either one; the work of the Holy  
 155 Spirit is cut off in my life. And then all sorts of new fruit show up, like arguments and  
 156 dissensions and. . . right?— all these other wonderful fruits that you and I sometimes struggle  
 157 with; the deeds of the flesh that are so self-evident in us from time to time. A verse that ties these  
 158 two together? Back to Galatians 5, verse 6: **"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor**  
 159 **uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through**  
 160 **love."** This is a remarkable verse because who gave circumcision to the Old Testament church?  
 161 God did. He required it, didn't he? As part of what? As part of the ceremonial law that  
 162 distinguished between Jew and Gentile, as part of the external law that showed who was in which  
 163 camp. In Christ those externals have been done away with. A— I can't substitute things like  
 164 adultery in here— I can, with great help, substitute ideas that I would like to supplement the law  
 165 with. Let me show what I mean. For in Christ Jesus neither having a 20-minute quiet time or a  
 166 15-minute quiet time is of any value. What counts is faith expressing itself through love. For in  
 167 Christ Jesus neither being on time to church or being late to church is of any value. What counts  
 168 is faith expressing itself through love.

## 169 VII. FAITH APPLIED

### 170 A. The Problem

171 Let me give you an example from my life right now. We are in all sorts of struggles right  
 172 now with our landlord. Now he is a nice guy-- lives in another state. And it's not because he's  
 173 bad or we're trying to be belligerent that we're having this trouble. It's just a tough situation.  
 174 We're trying to pack to move overseas. We've got two kids that are moving in at colleges  
 175 elsewhere and we have piles of stuff that are going in every direction all over the house. Well,  
 176 he's decided to sell the house. So you see the conflict, don't you? He's got Realtors coming in,  
 177 and they're looking, and they're reporting back that it looks like a train station. So he's calling  
 178 us, "Clean the house." And we're saying, "Well, it's as clean as it's going to get until we move  
 179 out." And you know what comes up in my heart? Actually, this morning, I received an e-mail  
 180 from him and he's trying a new tack. Bless his heart. "Appreciate your kindness and your help,  
 181 Josiah, in getting the house straight. . ." — you know ". . . so the Realtors will be able to show it  
 182 well and we'll be able to sell it quickly, and. . ." You know, it's this "Thank you for your help"  
 183 type of e-mail. Well, I read that at about 5:30 this morning when I got up and I thought, *we really*



184 *need to do something about this. Our neighbor in the church who knows people. . . our neighbor*  
185 *in the area is the Realtor. . . three doors down is our Realtor. . . they're a Christian family. . .*  
186 *they know folks who attend the church where we attend. This is not good. We need to get this*  
187 *thing straightened out. And I'm going to be gone all day today and at 5 tonight more people are*  
188 *coming to look at the house.*

#### 189 **B. The Response of my Flesh.**

190       So what's the solution? I make Barbara coffee. And take it up to her early. And when she  
191 has drunk it and awakened, we have a conversation. "You know, sweetheart, I think I'll try and  
192 come home early this afternoon and take all those piles of computer cords and stuff out of the  
193 living room and put them in the garage. And see if we can't scrape up all the sewing stuff that's  
194 over in one corner and put it in the garage and scrape up all the bank stuff that's spread out all  
195 over the table as we're trying to get our five accounts reconciled and put that in the garage." And  
196 you can just see Barbara's blood pressure start to rise. What's going on in my heart? What's the  
197 point? You see, neither showing that house well nor not showing that house well matters at all. It  
198 doesn't count for anything. What counts is faith working through love, faith expressing itself in  
199 the way that I love Barbara and the way that we love the landlord as best we are able. That's the  
200 goal. And when I back up and I make smaller things my focus like my reputation, like worrying  
201 about what the landlord thinks about me, so that drives me rather than the righteousness of  
202 Christ; worrying about what the church is going to hear rather than that I'm safe in Christ. When  
203 those things start inhabiting my heart, guess what starts flowing out? Demands, pressure,  
204 requirements. Oh, I'm very good; subtly expressed, by the way. See there's not a whole lot of  
205 difference between me and the landlord who sent the note and said, "Oh please, thank you, we  
206 like you; clean the house." All I do is substitute a cup of coffee for the e-mail. You see what I'm  
207 saying? That's the same thing flowing out of my heart.

#### 208 **C. The Response of Faith.**

209       What is the answer for that? A longer quiet time? Well, that could be part of it if it really  
210 takes me to Jesus, because He's the One I need. I need to have a righteousness that's not my own,  
211 I need to be safe in Him. I need to be walking in the promises of the gospel. I need to believe  
212 the Holy Spirit will use me. I need to believe some very specific things at this point in my life. I  
213 need to believe things like God loves me even when I struggle like this. Right? I need to believe  
214 that God loves my wife and has called me to love her and that loving her is really what's  
215 important. And that God has called us both to love my landlord as best we're able and to work  
216 for his good. Now how do you balance all those things out? What my heart wants is a calculus of  
217 love. I want the diagrams. I want the overview. I want the step-by-step case law calculus of what



218 to do in every situation. Isn't that what you want? And the reason people come to courses like  
219 this is they're hoping that somewhere in that big old fat notebook will be the answer of what to  
220 do in situations like this. "When thou shalt have the landlord e-mail thou at 5:30 and thou in thy  
221 heart responds in this way, then in this case O yea verily thou shalt..." You know, that's what we  
222 want. That's what we want. As my heart is focused on building my own righteousness, my heart  
223 is focused on standing independent of God. What I want is some answer that doesn't require  
224 relationship with Him and moment by moment dependence. I want a calculus. I want a case law.  
225 I want circumcision to supplement what Jesus did for me. And you know what? God just won't  
226 get with the program. He keeps saying things back to me like Jesus is enough. Like I've given  
227 you Him and every spiritual blessing in Him. The Holy Spirit is in your life. You haven't been  
228 left alone. You know what you can do, Josiah? You could ask me to work in your heart, in your  
229 wife's heart, in the landlord's heart, and I will. Will you believe that? Would you trust me in this  
230 situation? And if you don't know what to do, if you will wait, if you will believe, if you will rest  
231 in the Spirit, I will lead you. I will step in and show you how best to love. And maybe you'll do  
232 that perfectly. And maybe you won't. But I'll be with you and I will help you through it. You  
233 know, I want something other than the Spirit of God. Circumcision is a lot easier. Well. . . ?  
234 Actually it is, because the pain of that is short-lived. And the pain of the death that it takes to my  
235 own desires, to my own self-effort, to my own righteousness which is very precious to me, is a  
236 lot more painful than just a little nip.

## 237 **VIII. LOVE WITH THE WHOLE HEART**

238 For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is  
239 faith expressing itself through love. We can illustrate this from Luke chapter 7. Let's turn there  
240 briefly. The reason I go to this passage is you really have people from two different backgrounds,  
241 but both with the same sin root in their lives. You have the sinful woman who is a prostitute and  
242 then you have Simon the Pharisee, both of them struggling with sin. Actually, though, we'll see  
243 that one of them has an easier time with it than the other one. Let's look at Luke chapter 7,  
244 beginning with verse 36:

245 **Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so He went to the**  
246 **Pharisees house and reclined at the table. When a woman who had lived a sinful life**  
247 **in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an**  
248 **alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began**  
249 **to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and**  
250 **poured perfume on them.**



251 When the Pharisee who invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a  
252 prophet, he would know who was touching him and what kind of woman she is—  
253 that she is a sinner."

254  
255 Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

256 "Tell me, teacher," he said.

257 Two men owed money to a certain money lender. One owed him 500 denarii, and  
258 the other 50. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the  
259 debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?

260 Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled."

261  
262 "You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

263 Then He turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I  
264 came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my  
265 feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this  
266 woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil  
267 on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many  
268 sins have been forgiven— for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little,  
269 loves little." ” Luke 7:36-47

270 Now I want to contrast these two folks in their response to Christ. You take the point as  
271 to why this is related to Galatians 5:6: "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself  
272 through love." Which one of these two people had faith expressing itself in love? Well it wasn't  
273 Simon was it? It was the woman. Both of them sinners. Both of them illustrating these two faces  
274 of the flesh. The one, the sensualist. The other, the self-righteous. The one who is caught in all  
275 sorts of license. The other who is caught up in a legal spirit. They both illustrate these two faces  
276 of the flesh. One of the advantages that the woman had though was that hers was recognized. She  
277 saw hers for what it was, didn't she? And she came for forgiveness to Christ and receiving that  
278 forgiveness, knowing by faith that she would receive, as she comes to Him, what is the  
279 outpouring of her heart? She loves Him, doesn't she? She loves Him with all her heart. Now let  
280 me ask you where in the Old Testament or where anywhere in the law does it say to weep at the  
281 feet of Jesus? Where does it say to do the exact things that she did? There's no rule book, is  
282 there? This passion in her heart, fed by the Holy Spirit, leads her creatively to acts of love that are  
283 appropriate. And by the way, are bold. She wasn't wanted in that Pharisee's house. She wasn't



284 on the guest list, I promise. The Pharisees would have crossed the road to keep the hem of their  
285 garments from touching the dust that her feet touched because they believed it would pollute  
286 them. And here comes in this walking pollution factory into Simon's house; everything she  
287 touches has got to be ceremonially cleaned. So when she goes around and touches Jesus, what  
288 does Simon think? Golly. If he were a man of God he'd at least have a clue. But you know Jesus  
289 knows something Simon doesn't. And that is the forgiveness in that woman's heart had changed  
290 her. Her faith had changed her. She came looking for forgiveness and found it and the faith  
291 changed her. And what was the expression of that faith? Love poured from her life to Christ.  
292 Forgiven much. Love much. Love poured from her life. Which of them would love Him more?  
293 The one who had the bigger debt canceled. Therefore I tell you her many sins have been forgiven  
294 for she loved much, but he who has been forgiven little loves little.

## 295 IX. FORGIVEN MUCH LOVES MUCH

296 I want you to know that for a long time I really struggled with misreading this passage.  
297 We could actually make kind of a little equation out of this. Forgiven much. Love much.  
298 Forgiven little. Love little. Now don't mistake me. It's not that you need to go out and sin more  
299 so you can be forgiven more. What I'm saying is even with the best that you can do, even with all  
300 your religious efforts, you still need Jesus, just like Simon did. Just like Simon did. Let's ask it  
301 this way. How many sinners were named as being at that table with Jesus? Was the woman the  
302 only sinner there? No, the text tells us that Simon's self-righteousness had kept him from seeing  
303 his own sin, from fleeing to Christ for forgiveness. And you know what else it had done? It had  
304 meant that there was no love for Christ or the woman or anyone coming out of his life. He did  
305 not even do the reasonable things to welcome Christ into his home. Now these seem odd to us  
306 but the text is like saying, "You didn't shake my hand at the door, you didn't introduce me to the  
307 guests, you didn't show me to the bathroom so I could freshen up before the meal. You didn't  
308 even treat me with ordinary courtesy, Simon. But this woman has gone over the top." Why?  
309 Why can one love and another not? Because one has experienced by faith the forgiveness that we  
310 have in Christ. And that faith by the power of the Holy Spirit has produced a new response.  
311 Faith working through love. Now I think the woman is a picture of it. I think Simon is a picture  
312 of what happens in my life. What is he worried about? What is everybody going to think? Right?  
313 How can He let her do this? Doesn't He know who she is? This is ruining my fine party. He's got  
314 all sorts of things running through his mind.

315 Forgiven little— love little. Forgiven much— love much. Did Simon need to be  
316 forgiven? Absolutely. You know if we went through and we looked at Simon's sins, they are  
317 huge. Let me name a couple of them to you. Anytime the only perfect man in the world is not  
318 good enough for you, you're a little judgmental. You know maybe, maybe, just a hair. The only



319 perfect man in the world comes to dinner and what does Simon do? Finds fault. You know if  
320 Jesus isn't good enough for you, you've got problems. Let me give you another sin that I see in  
321 Simon's life. And that's blindness. Anytime God shows up at your table, and you don't even  
322 know it, that's blind. Not only was he blind to the presence of God in his life, he was blind to his  
323 own sin. What blinded him to all those things? I believe it was his own efforts. I believe it was  
324 his circumcision. I believe it was his record. I believe it was those things in his life that blinded  
325 him to his need. His sin was sort of a sneaky sin, wasn't it? You know if you see a prostitute you  
326 know she's in sin. But if you see a church member, they're probably OK. And Simon looked at  
327 his own life and said, "Hey I'm probably OK. I'm doing all right. I'm not the best but I'm doing  
328 okay." Forgiven little— love little. Forgiven much— love much. The reason that's important is  
329 the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. And as your faith grabs hold of  
330 the finished work of Christ and as He forgives you for your sins which are many, the Holy Spirit  
331 will work in your life to create something new; faith expressing itself through love. Let's close  
332 in prayer.

333 Father, I ask that You would help me to see the two faces of my flesh. Father, I often see  
334 the obvious deeds of the flesh so quickly; the anger or the lust or the covetousness or the greed or  
335 the bitterness that sometimes flow from my flesh. I see those things. Lord I ask that You would  
336 help me never to make peace with those, never to think that they can supplement the work of  
337 Christ. Father, I also ask that you would help me see the other face of my flesh, and that's the  
338 face of pride which would take the place of Jesus; that would supplement the work that He did  
339 for me on the Cross with my own self effort, so that I might gain some of the credit. Father, that  
340 You would keep me from my own self-effort which would eventually be a substitute for Christ  
341 and take His place completely and subvert the gospel in this way. Lord, instead I ask that You  
342 would show me my sin and show me my Savior that I might learn afresh what it means that faith  
343 expresses itself through love; love for God and love for others that fulfills the law. We pray  
344 these things in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.



## 2. Memorize Galatians 5:6

**"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision  
has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing  
itself through love."**





### 3. Complete this Faith Working Through Love Exercise

#### PART 1: APPLYING GALATIANS 5:6

**“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision** [the Mosaic law Jews in the Galatian church wanted to impose on Gentiles to make them acceptable to God and Jewish believers ] **nor uncircumcision** [the Gentile believers resistance to this duty and obligation] **has any value** [or, “validity”; the root word in Greek is related to the ideas of strength and power; but in this context it takes on its more legal meaning of “validity,” as in the validity of a will<sup>3</sup>]. **The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself** [the root here has the idea of “working”] **through love.**” [true faith always bears this fruit]. Galatians 5:6.

Two underlying principles:

1. Where there is no faith, there can be no real love. Faith is the energy empowering love.
2. Where there is no love, there is no real faith. The absence of faith can be discerned most clearly through the absence of love.

#### PART 2: YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Apply Galatians 5:6 to current situations going on in your life.

- ▶ Next to “NEITHER” you should put the thing you might think or feel you ought *to do* in order to earn God’s approval.
- ▶ Next to “NOR” should be *not* doing that same thing in order to earn God’s approval..
- ▶ Next to “FAITH” should be an application of the Gospel that you need to be receiving in order to love in the specific situation. For example, for someone who has a habit of coming home late from work, not just, “I need to trust God to help me.” But something like, “He is present with me at work; He is in control and I’m not; my acceptance, approval, and identity rest in my union with Christ and not in people thinking highly of me; He is glorified when I receive his grace and respond with love and obedience”.
- ▶ Next to “EXPRESSING ITSELF IN LOVE” is your picture of what love should like when you’re receiving the gospel and empowered by the Spirit: What would real faith lead you to do in this situation?

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<sup>3</sup> For example, see *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* edited by Colin Brown, Vol. III, p. 713.