

SUMMARY: The Galatians were falling from grace or a saved state by bringing part of God's old law into the new law. If we depart from the new law more than that, it would be logical to conclude we were in the same state of being out of the grace.

CONCLUSIONS FROM GAL. 5:4:

1. Galatians 5:4 gives a definitive example of falling from grace.
2. Having fallen from grace means that if you died in that state, you would go to hell.
3. Specific reasons were given for their falling from grace.
4. The reasons were simply trying to bring God's old law into the new covenant.
5. If a person departs from God's new covenant to an extent greater than the Galatians departure when they should reasonably know better, that person has fallen from grace; if they were ever in the grace.
6. Whereas we cannot judge that a person is going to hell or not, we have no business giving comfort to a person who teaches and/or practices departures from God's new covenant.

It is clear that even in the first century there were Christians who fell from the grace of God as is shown by the following verses:

"I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different Gospel; which is not really another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ." (Gal. 1:6-7)

"You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace." (Gal. 5:4)

The second verse tells us that the Galatians were falling from grace by adding the requirements of law to the teachings of Christ. It is interesting to read to the Galatians to see what things these people were doing to cause the falling from grace:

Gal. 3:3 "Are you foolishly now trying to be perfected by the works of the law?"

Gal. 4:9 "You desire to be in bondage to the Law."

Gal. 4:10 "You observe days and months and seasons and years."

Gal. 5:2-4 "You are seeking to be justified by the Law." (Specifically condemns circumcision for religious reasons.)

It is interesting to note that while these Christians were not willing to submit to the will of God, they were not adding new or strange "improvements" to the church. They were only bringing forward a part of God's old Law. Certainly, it is reasonable to conclude that there is

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a general principle involved here: if you do not submit to the will of God as it is given to us, you will fall from grace. (Rev. 22:18-19, Gal. 1:8-9)

A second way of looking at the Galatians is to consider what the author Paul did not say about them. He did not say that they were not: good moral people, sincere in what they were doing, hard working, prominent in the church, generous, knowledgeable, people you would like to associate with, or more energetic than you or I are.

The fact that Paul said that Christians who could have had all of the good characteristics mentioned in the previous paragraph could still fall from grace is distinctly different from typical contemporary religious teachings.

This means that being a "good" person is not enough. You must submit to God's will.

With more than 300 different churches around, this makes it important for each of us to study the word and make sure we are submitting to God's will and not other sincere beliefs, practices, or teachings.

If you look at the pattern of the church set up in the New Testament and the church you attend departs from this pattern more than the departure of the Galatians, you should be concerned that you are not in the grace of God.

The New Testament pattern includes such things as: baptism by immersion after confession of sins and for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-41 & Acts 8:35-39); all Christians called saints (Phil. 1:1); no man called father (Matt. 23:8-12); celebrating communion on the first day of each week (Acts 20:7); singing from the heart rather than with instrumental music (Eph. 5:19); and local autonomy of churches under the control of elders (Titus 1:5-9 & I Tim. 3:1-13).

If your church has developed practices other than these or other New Testament teachings, we urge you to study your Bible and submit to the pure word of God.