

Galatians 5:13-26

The Fruit of the Spirit

(or the right kind of freedom)

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Free...?

- ¹³ You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free.

Freedom??

- Removal of constraints
- Release
 - Release from addiction
- Escape from suffering
- Removal of restraint??
- Personal license??

Free From...?

- ¹⁸ But if you are led by the **Spirit**, you are not under the **law**.
- ²³ ... Against such things there is no **law**.
- **(Jewish) Law and custom**
- Failing to satisfy a holy God by perfect behaviour
- (Paul's mission to the gentiles...!)

Free To...?

x indulge the flesh^[a];

- serve one another humbly in love.

- walk by the Spirit

x gratify the desires of the flesh

”Flesh”?

- Greek: “sarx”
- Lit. “flesh” (as opposed to bone, blood, etc.)
- Here for Paul: “sinful nature”,
“human nature opposed to God”
- ¹⁶ So I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will not gratify the **desires of the flesh**. ¹⁷ For the **flesh** desires what is contrary to the **Spirit**, and the **Spirit** what is contrary to the **flesh**. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever^[c] you want.

Like Plato??

- Spiritual / meta-physical = good??
- Physical = bad??
- No, “earthy” and embodied, for example
 - Gen. 2:²⁴ That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one **flesh**.
 - John 6:⁵³ Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the **flesh** of the Son of Man and drink his **blood**, you have no life in you.

For example?

- ¹⁹ The acts of the *flesh* are obvious:
- sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;
 - *Sexual self-indulgence*
- ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft;
 - *Idolatry, i.e. putting not-God first*
- hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy;
 - *Bad relationships*
- drunkenness, orgies, and the like.
 - *Sensual self-indulgence*

Paul seems to care MOST about relationships

- ¹³ ... rather, **serve** one another humbly in **love**. ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “**Love your neighbor as yourself**.”^[b] ¹⁵ If you **bite and devour** each other, watch out or you will be **destroyed** by each other.
- ²² But the fruit of the **Spirit** is **love**, **joy**, **peace**, **forbearance**, **kindness**, **goodness**, **faithfulness**, ²³ **gentleness** and **self-control**.
- ²⁶ Let us not become **conceited**, **provoking** and **envying** each other.

Fruit?

- ²² But the fruit of the **Spirit** is
 - **love**, - to will & work for good for another
 - **joy**, - trusting confidence in God
 - **peace**, - wholeness, everything in right relationship
 - **forbearance**, - patience, tolerance
 - **kindness**, - acts of mercy
 - **goodness**, - generosity
 - **faithfulness**, - enduring in relationship
 - ²³ **gentleness** - non-violence
 - and **self-control**. – non-reactive

How?

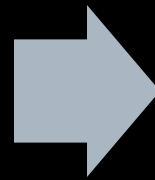
- ¹⁶ So I say, **walk** by the **Spirit**
- ¹⁸ But if you are **led** by the **Spirit**
- ²⁵ Since we **live** by the **Spirit**,
- let us **keep in step** with the **Spirit**.
- John 15:⁵ “I am the **vine**; you are the **branches**. If you **remain in me** and I in you, you will bear much **fruit**; apart from me you can do nothing.”

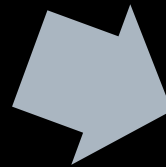
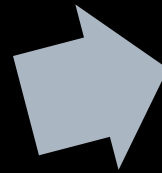
Turn around!

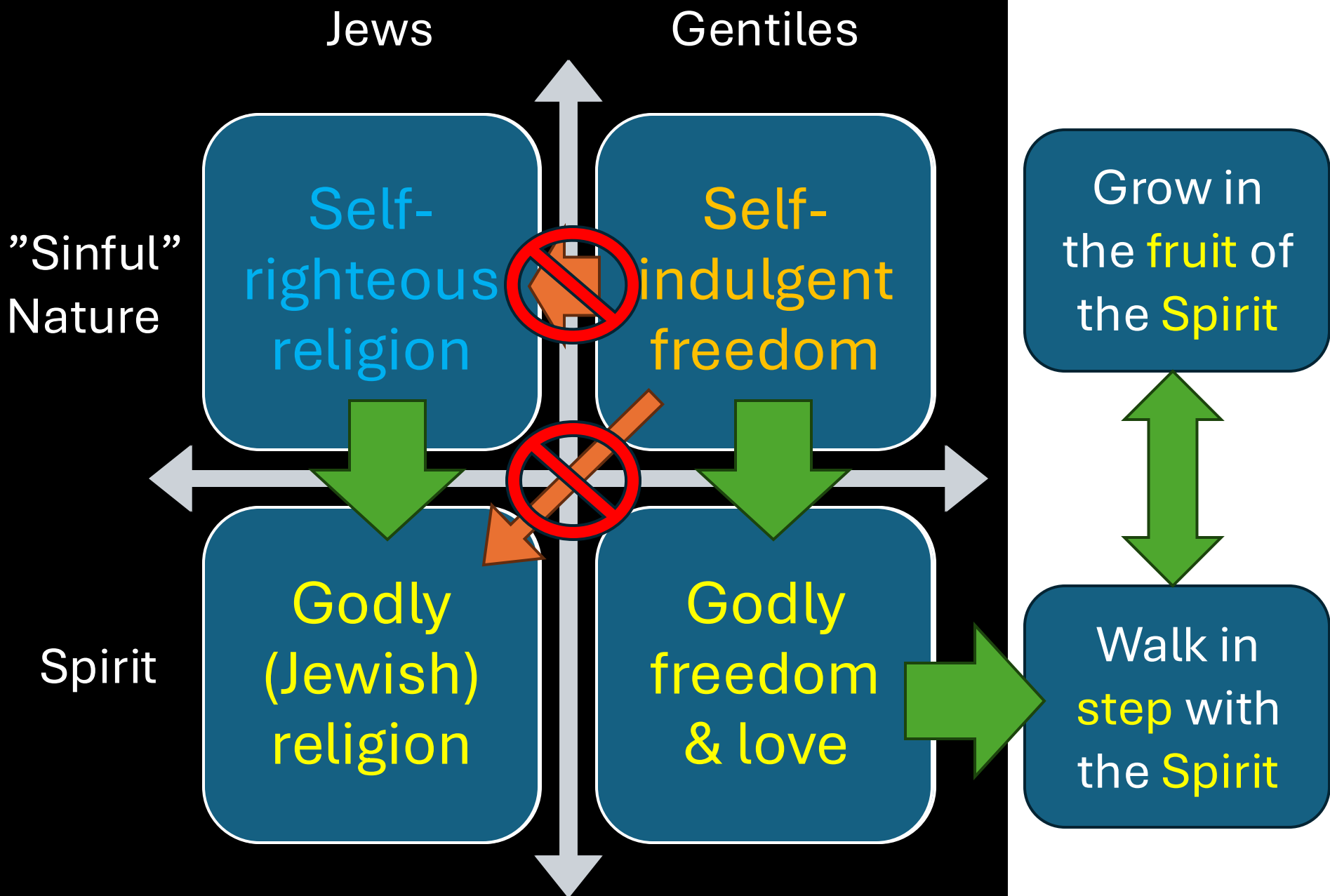
- Mat. 3: In those days **John the Baptist** came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, “**Repent**, for the **kingdom of heaven** has come **near**.” ... ⁸ “Produce **fruit** in keeping with **repentance**.”
- Mat 4:17 [After his baptism & testing] **Jesus** began to preach, “**Repent**, for the **kingdom of heaven** has come **near**.”
- Change of priorities...

Practically?

- **Turn around!** (“repent”)
 - Choose to follow **Jesus**
- **Copy Jesus**
 - Jesus’ **attitudes**, e.g. “gentle and humble”, everyone matters
 - Jesus’ **actions**, e.g. reach out to the outcast, prayerful
- **Trust God**
 - For **everything!**
 - E.g. happiness, safety, our future
 - Don’t need to grasp hold of what we feel we need
- Make **space** for **God**
 - **Pause**, slow down, listen, don’t just react
 - Be **honest** with ourselves
 - Know God at the **centre**, e.g. centring prayer







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