

## **THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH (What Really Counts is the Right Kind of Faith)**

Galatians 5:6 (NKJV)

6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision **avails** anything, but **faith** working through love.

Galatians 6:15 (NKJV)

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision **avails** anything, but **a new creation**.

To “avail” means “to profit,” or “to benefit”. The book of Galatians was written to defend the GOSPEL OF GRACE and to refute false teachers who were claiming that faith in Jesus is not enough for salvation or sanctification. They were claiming that in addition to Jesus, one also needs to keep the Mosaic Law.

In particular, these false teachers (called Judaizers) were emphasizing that circumcision was essential. They saw it as the gateway rite by which a person enters into the covenant family of God. Throughout the book, Paul blasts away at this error from various angles.

In Galatians 5:6 and 6:15, Paul in using similar language of contrast shows what really COUNTS before God and what doesn't! Whether a person is circumcised or uncircumcised makes no difference at all regarding salvation. What COUNTS before God is FAITH. Paul belabors this point throughout the book.

**Galatians 2:16 (NKJV)**

16 “knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but **by faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have **believed in Christ Jesus**, that we might be **justified by faith in Christ** and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Of course, a vital and living faith works – it works through love. The fruit of a true saving faith is love. A faith that never demonstrates itself in love is not genuine. What really avails is FAITH – the kind of faith that works through love (cf. Gal. 5:6; Jn. 13:34-35; 1 Jn. 3:14, 4:7).

Building on availing faith, Paul in Galatians 6:15 states that what really counts is being a NEW CREATION. Religious ritual, as represented in circumcision, has nothing to do with it. Religious rites and rituals avail NOTHING. What does avail is faith resulting in being a new creation.

Before God, people are called upon to believe in Christ and are accountable to believe (cf. Jn. 3:18). When we receive Christ by believing in Him, at that moment we are BORN OF GOD (cf. Jn. 1:12-13). Human responsibility is involved in believing, but God alone is involved in New Birth. We believe (by grace) and God makes us a new creation (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17). This alone is what ultimately AVAILS. This alone is what COUNTS before God.

Note that availing faith and being a new creation go together. This is the very same flow of thought as is presented in John 1:12-13.

**John 1:12–13 (NKJV)**

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who **believe in His name**:

**13** who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Before God, what ultimately matters is not whether or not religious exercises are performed, but rather that we have true faith, which results in being born of God as a new creation!

The acid test of true Christianity is whether or not one has a FAITH that works in LOVE, and thereby exhibits the reality of being a NEW CREATION.

-Only one Problem: SIN. (Rom. 3:23, James 2:10)

-Only one Solution: A SAVIOR. (1 Tim. 1:15-16; 2:4-6)

-Only one means of Appropriation: FAITH. (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:8-9)