



Negative Volition, Human Good and Sin

Negative volition is expressed first in the changing of yourself from a thing that is positive to a thing that is negative. In Galatians 1:6, “deserting” is the present middle indicative of μετατίθημι (metatithēmi) in the Greek and means to transpose, transfer, to desert. It means that the people doing it will be affected by their actions.

"I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;" (Galatians 1:6, NASB)

You cannot participate in negative volition and not expect to participate in its side effects. Negative volition is never satisfied to dwell by itself. It always seeks to get others involved. This is usually done by the agitation principle. In Galatians 1:7, “disturbing” is ταρασσω (tarassō) and means to stir up, doubt, to bring anxiety. This is a favorite trick of negative volition - just to get you to question the teaching.

"which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ." (Galatians 1:7, NASB)

Negative volition is expressed by an attempt to corrupt the message of the communicator and cast suspicion on his person. This comes from the term “distort” is μεταστρέφω (metastrephō) in the Greek and means to corrupt. Negative volition is not satisfied to influence the ones who are receiving the message, but extends to the corrupting of the message if possible and also that of the person and his motivations.

Negative volition always has its own production which can only be sin, human good and evil. In Galatians 1:13, the context of this manner of life was that of excellent, superabundant production and much promotion. Of course, this is human good operation all the way and of no account in the eyes of God.

"For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it;" (Galatians 1:13, NASB)

The production of human good and the negative volition function are seen to have many shades and sides. Satan is not without his program of success as well as God. We find the following to be ingredients in the human good expression of negative volition.

Religion: The Jews’ religion, Judaism in the Greek, refers to the religious system and the practices attached to the human good system. This reveals the true character of human good as religious and that religion is also a human good system.

Persecuted: This is the principle of “self-appointment” to straighten everyone else out. Those screaming “love everyone” are the last to love anyone. Those yelling for “free speech” are the first to heckle in a public meeting. Those yelling for “equal rights” are the first to walk or sit on the rights of others. Negative volition in its human good expression believes that it is doing God a favor by giving all others their just persecution.

Overthrowing: Negative volition is not satisfied to differ with another’s position, nor to just influence others against it, nor to just persecute those embracing it, but it finds it necessary to completely overthrow it. The English term “wasted” means in the Greek to “overthrow.” People in America today



have been brainwashed into thinking that we can live mutually inclusive of those who oppose us. This is not true. The human heart is just as diabolical as it ever was. Negative volition in the life of a man has not changed either.

Advancing: This is the Greek meaning of the English word “profited.” It is the concept of promotion and advancement. It is a false conclusion to assume that there is not promotion, advancement, position, status, etc. in the human good circles of religion. The ladder climbing concept has always been in Christianity and much of the supposed blessing of God today on local churches is no more than a repeat of the advancing principle of Galatians 1:14. This gravy train has many passengers and will lead directly to the same destination, the Judgment Seat of Christ, with a full load of wood, hay and straw. Man in his human good will have enough fuel to stoke the fires of hell for a 1,000 years.

"and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions." (Galatians 1:14, NASB)

Zealous: Negative volition is able to spark an intensity of interest and motivation that often makes the categorical doctrinal believer look like a very carnal Christian. People will tithe their incomes while their families starve. They will go without the necessities of life as an evidence of their spirituality. They will accept the taboos of others and abandon their own Christian liberty under the motivation of Christian service. There is no lack in religion and negative volition human good production for the principle of dedication. Negative volition and human good production not only have a certain character about them, they usually follows a definite pattern of mechanical expression.

Utilization of the Reputation Principle: This has two ideas. First, there is the idea of using another’s reputation to gain recognition for yourself. Secondly, there is the reliance on your own reputation to acquire stature for your mischief. The Judaistic legalizers sought first to identify with those of notable reputation in Jerusalem, then to parade their own supposed reputation. This is reputation by association. Paul, however, smelled them out. Gal. 2:2-7.

"It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain. But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage. But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you. But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me. But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised" (Galatians 2:2-7, NASB)

Infiltration: This is seen by the terms “secretly brought in, sneaked in, and spy out.” “Secretly brought in” means to be secretly brought in by someone. “Spy out” indicates their purpose for coming. Infiltration always implies disguise. They were patient in their disguise, but it didn’t work.

Domination: Negative volition in human good production has the ultimate goal of total domination of the life of the person. This is indicated by the term “bondage.” Negative volition, being the opposite of positive volition, therefore, seeks to ensnare not to liberate. Denominations and church organizations for decades have not sought to teach people the truth which would liberate them, but rather they have sought to control and legislate programs of actions and life to bring the person around to their position. Negative volition and human good production is never designed for the benefit of those subject to it, but



rather to those initiating it.

Separation: For centuries the legalists have loved and revered the doctrine of separation in the Scriptures. However, their understanding of the true doctrine of separation is quite limited and grossly misapplied. This aspect of human good is found in Galatians 2:12-13 with the terms “withdrew” and “separated.” From this chapter alone, if nothing else was in the Word, we could determine that not all separation from people and practices is bona fide. The meaning of “withdraw” is to draw back. The meaning of “separated” is to separate and limit.

The Bible does teach the principle of separation, but from believers who are disobeying the content of doctrine and doctrinal issues. In Galatians, the issue was not one of doctrine but one of Jewish tradition. This was a taboo carry-over. How often today the issues of separation are not doctrinal issues but personal background issues. Separation from someone who dances, smokes, goes to movies, swims with the girls, wears short skirts, plays cards, drinks booze, etc. becomes the issue and the real issues of doctrine are left in the lurch.

"For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy." (Galatians 2:12-13, NASB)

Dissimulation: This is the “split-up” concept. The natural, logical result of negative volition and human good is not unity but division. Negative volition attacks the “assembling of the saints” for Bible doctrine. Churches have split into ineffective groups because of choirs, dress, programs, finances, personalities, and as a result have fragmented in unity and stability. This is not to say that Satan does not have his unifying factors, but true unity in fellowship of a local church is not a result of human good production but rather content of doctrine being taught and the resulting spiritual growth of the congregation.

Many can be influenced to follow this hypocrisy, while again, many will feign a compliance with it and use it as a means of personally abandoning the ship. Since negative volition renders a believer out of fellowship with God, it leaves man with only the ability to accept the principle of approval as embraced by the world of mankind. This principle of approval in the human realm is that of justification by works. Man is impressed with what man can do. Therefore, the believer operating under negative volition and in legalism applies the same principle to God that he applies to man. Paul alludes to this concept in Galatians 1:10 where he says, “Am I trying to please or impress man or God?” The legalist impresses man by his works, therefore, he is deluded into thinking that God is no doubt impressed also. He is wrong and stupid.

"For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ." (Galatians 1:10, NASB)

Negative volition has two ways to go in the life of a believer. The two fold expression of negative volition will be that of human good or that of sin. Now that Paul has hit the human good angle, he moves to hit the sin angle. The very system that the negative volition believer takes renders him a transgressor. Sin occurs in several ways in the text, the normal being the concept to “miss the mark.” Here the transgressor term means one who has violated the law of God, therefore, the thing is sin.

The issue of sin as an expression of negative volition has been taken care of on the Cross by the work of Christ. Christ bore all personal sins on the Cross and faith in Christ puts the believer into a position no longer responsible to pay for them with some human system of good. This is Galatians 2:20 with the



relationship of the believer perpetuated by faith through the Christian way of life.

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me." (Galatians 2:20, NASB)

Negative volition and its expressions of human good and sin are said to “nullify” the grace of God in Galatians 2:21. The believer in fellowship does not do this. The term “nullify” means to act toward anything as though it were annulled, or nullified, or to slight it. The believer in negative volition and human good or sin is actually turning their back on the grace of God. God honors the faith of the believer. Negative volition turns to a works principle which man honors. This is loving the praise of man more than the approval of God.

"I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly." (Galatians 2:21, NASB)

Negative volition and human good production know how to appeal to the trends and facets of the old sin nature. It capitalizes on your susceptibilities. One of the trends or lusts in the old sin nature is that of approbation or the lust for praise or approval. This is found in the term “bewitched” in Galatians 3:1 and in the Greek means to bring evil on one by feigned praise, to charm, to bewitch. This is the old public relations gimmick where someone tells you how great you are and that only you could do the job, that you are such a testimony that you can’t really afford to not do that, etc.

"You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?" (Galatians 3:1, NASB)

Negative volition and human good production will dull the senses of the person in remembering the true basis for any relationship, fellowship, or production before God. This is found in Galatians 3:2-3, with Paul’s rhetorical questions. The seriousness of this is underlined in 2 Peter 1:8-9.

"This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:2-3, NASB)

"For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins." (2 Peter 1:8-9, NASB)

The negative volition, human good, and sin issue raises the question of the two sources of power in the life of the believer. The two sources are the Holy Spirit and the flesh or old sin nature. This identifies the two sources for production, the true source being the Holy Spirit and the source of human good and sin being the “flesh.”

The Scripture in Galatians 3:22 makes it clear that a person who expresses negative volition and enters human good production does not stay with that but moves eventually into the realm of actual sin. Human good production is worthless in God’s sight as far as production is concerned. If it is done out of fellowship, it is human good and worthless. The point of Galatians 3:22 is that man moves from human good to sin with all being shown to be in sin.

"But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." (Galatians 3:22, NASB)

Negative volition and human good legalism does not begin as curtailment of overt specified sins in the



Scripture. For a believer to refrain from designated sins is only common sense and they are a fool not to. These may be mental attitude sins, sins of the tongue, or overt sins. The term “element” in Galatians 4:3 refers to the fundamental principles of an art or discipline. These are legitimate principles of life. The legalism enters the picture when the believer takes normal life practices of common sense or discipline and makes the practice of these things either salvation or the spiritual way of life. Honesty is a principle of life, but it is not spirituality. Decency is a principle of life but it is not spirituality. Morality is a principle of life but it is not spirituality. Tranquility is a principle of life but it is not spirituality.

"So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world." (Galatians 4:3, NASB)

Success is a principle of life but is not maturity. Reputation is a principle of life but is not maturity. Endurance is a principle of life, but is not maturity. Discipline and sacrifice are principles of life, but they are not indications of some great arrival of spirituality. Col. 2:18-23.

"Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God. If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" (which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence." (Colossians 2:18-23, NASB)

The believer in negative volition and human good production does not learn by experience. Gal. 3:3. They classify their failures as tests. They call their pressures persecution. Their ignorance they call simplicity. Their legalism they call dedication. Their tenacity they call endurance. Their programs they call production. Their reticence they call objectivity. Their personality they call spirituality. Their carnality they call personality. Their taboos they call doctrines. Their tastes they call principles.

"Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3, NASB)

In Galatians 3:4, the first class condition in the Greek indicates that the person has suffered all these things truly in vain. The first class condition is “if” and it is true. The believer in negative volition and human good production based on a works system is shot down from the very beginning. The very system that they seek to embrace will rise up and curse them. When the Law or some legalistic system is adhered to, the problem lies in the inability to perform in entirety. Within the human good system there will be parts that are completely beyond the person’s ability to perform.

"Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?" (Galatians 3:4, NASB)

The legalist in human good production must keep everyone approving them. They must keep their children in line, their dress in line, their money in line, their possessions in line, etc. Somewhere along the path, some feature will be glaringly deficient and then the friendly system will rise up and smite them. Gal. 3:10.

"For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."" (Galatians 3:10, NASB)



Human good can never replace God's grace system. No matter how much we desire to alleviate the human suffering, the human need, correct the human injustices, the only proper way to approach it is through the grace system. Gal. 3:17.

"What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise." (Galatians 3:17, NASB)

Now, we come to the real issue of negative volition, the human good system. It is the counterfeiting of a true system. The Law in Galatians was given for specific purposes. The Judaistic legalists took the Law from its original purposes and gave it other functions. The Galatian believers were doing the same thing. The human good system is actually a counterfeit system of spiritual production. All counterfeit systems base themselves on a former mold or impression. Therefore, they often have to use the same language, the same structure, propagate the same overt objectives, etc. Human good expresses itself in prayer, giving, church attendance, writing, preaching, witnessing, evangelizing, just like the bona fide production of the grace system of spiritual gifts under the filling of the Spirit.

In Galatians 4:8, we have the slavery concept which has been removed at the initial faith in Jesus Christ at the point of salvation. In Galatians 4:9, we have the term "turn back" which means to return, turn back, or come back. Human good production of a believer is actually a return to pre-salvation means of production. The believer in negative volition who perpetuates their production reverts back to their manner of life before salvation.

"However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?" (Galatians 4:8-9, NASB)

Not only is there a return to the pre-salvation human good system, there is also a decided drive to do it. The term "desire" in Galatians 4:9 means to be resolved, determined and hold a purpose. Negative volition does not remain passive, but takes an active role in the human good production. It is not just an omission, but rather an object and purpose to be pursued.

In Galatians 4:10 we have the English term "observe." This term in Greek means to keep scrupulously, to neglect nothing requisite to this religious observance. In other words, nothing is too dear to sacrifice to be able to maintain their overt observance of their program. They will give up their favorite television show, bowling, even friends in their fanaticism for human good production. Overt observances center on the idea of "special things." We are living in a day when ministers capitalize on this same concept. They have a Labor Day message, Thanksgiving message, Christmas message, New Year's Day message, and one for Lincoln's birthday, Washington's birthday, the 4th of July, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Veteran's Day, Flag Day, Safety Week, Ecology Week, Conservation Week. The list is never ending.

"You observe days and months and seasons and years." (Galatians 4:10, NASB)

In Galatians 4:17-18, we get an inside look into the human good expression of negative volition. This is found in several terms, "eagerly seek" and "shut you out." This term "eagerly seek" in the Greek means to "seek to draw over to one's side." One of the keynote objections of the human good system of negative volition to sound doctrine is to subtly draw you over to their way of thinking. This would be comparable to legalistic believers who infiltrate otherwise sound Bible teaching categorical churches and attempt to draw various people over to their way of thinking concerning programs, and other gimmick systems of the local church which they wish to promote.



"They eagerly seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out so that you will seek them. But it is good always to be eagerly sought in a commendable manner, and not only when I am present with you." (Galatians 4:17-18, NASB)

When Paul picks an illustration of legalism, negative volition in religion, he uses the Old Testament concept of Hagar and Sarah. He refers to Hagar as a bondwoman and Sarah as a free woman. He is making an analogy to the nature of human good production as compared to that of the divine good spiritual production. The production of those two women in each case was a child, one boy each. God recognized the production of Sarah because it depended upon grace and rejected the production of Hagar because it depended on human ingenuity. This is developed in Galatians 4 extensively.

The Law is seen as a bondage system if looked at as a way of salvation. The term 'slavery' in Galatians 5:1 refers to the grievous burdens the Law puts on its adherents. Human good is a slavery system because it does not free mankind, but rather it puts on them grievous burdens too heavy to bear. Churches saddle pastors with all kinds of human good responsibilities in the ministry. They include such things as attending funerals, doing house to house visitation, entertaining in the parsonage because it belongs to the church as property, frequenting social functions in the community to show the church's interest in the community life, calling at hospitals at the birth of babies and so-called tragedies, giving well wishes at graduations, participating in local clubs, groups, serving on a multitude of committees, taking leadership in fund raising for charity, etc. These are some of the grievous burdens that churches bind on pastors which cuts them almost totally out of their ministry of study and teaching the Word and shepherding of their flock. If the shepherd doesn't know how to tend his own sheep, since when do the sheep outline his care procedures?

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1, NASB)

In Galatians 5:1-6 we have two more terms pertinent to the understanding of human good production. This is the term "yoke" and the term "circumcision." The term "yoke" means troublesome laws or bureaucratic red tape. The human good system seeks to control and curtail positive volition to Bible doctrine by getting things tied up in the legal or administrative procedures. Denominations for decades have tied the hands of pastors who very well understood the function of their ministry, but the structure of their constitution or association or fellowship or denomination hierarchy has suppressed them with controls. This is the yoke of troublesome laws.

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love." (Galatians 5:1-6, NASB)

The second term "circumcision" deals with the ritual concept. What the legalist is not able to tie up with administrative controls and policies, they tie up with ritual necessities. Circumcision was a ritual which had a bona fide meaning used in the context of its proper function. When this ritual was taken from this function, then it became a tool in the hands of the legalist to manipulate other believers. Baptism and communion are rituals also and for centuries churches have controlled whole assemblies and held them virtually in limbo by their singular adherence to that church's concept of water baptism or communion.



Many Baptist churches have held their entire bodies together on the principle of baptism and this is true of others also. Others relate communion to the elite of the church membership, etc. This is the misusing of the ritual concept.

Not only does human good attempt to frustrate grace principles with red tape and ritual, it seeks to cut off the opportunity to proceed. This is found in the term “hindered” in Galatians 5:7. This word in the Greek means a cutting made in a road to hinder an enemy in pursuit, to create a diversion to delay them. These are gimmicks in the human good system that are designed to divert attention, to delay, to detour the attack of sound doctrine from overtaking their devices. This diversion from them is accomplished by persuading you against the truth.

"You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?" (Galatians 5:7, NASB)

This diversion technique in the Greek is called a “deceptive and treacherous persuasion.” In the English it is the term “persuasion” and is found in Galatians 5:8. One of the features of sound doctrine is that it is active and is on a search and destroy mission for all false doctrine. The book of Galatians in itself is a demonstration of this principle. Titus 1 sets forth the aggressive role of sound doctrine that is designed to stop the mouths of those gainsayers who do not hold the truth. This diversion is designed by the devil to divert the believer on to another course so his pursuit will lead to someone other than the legalist.

"This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you." (Galatians 5:8, NASB)

In Galatians 5:9 we encounter the term “leaven.” This feature of legalism emphasizes the powerful subversive effect of “just a little goes a long way.” The term “leaven” in the Greek means mental and moral corruption, the tendency to infect others, influence thoroughly pervading a thing, a pernicious influence, a single sin corrupting a whole church, a few false teachers leading a church into error. Isagogically, “leaven” was used in the making of bread.

"A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough. " (Galatians 5:9, NASB)

Some of the factors concerning leaven are: It took time to fulfill its function. It occurred unseen over a period of time. You could see the effects of it, but not the process. It rendered the bread better to the taste as the unleavened bread was said to be insipid in taste.

In Galatians 5:10, we have the term “disturbing you” which is a participle in the Greek and thus presents the characteristic of the legalist. He is a natural troublemaker. In the Greek, the term means to render one anxious or distressed by suggesting scruples of doubt. This is the same as in Galatians 1:7.

"I have confidence in you in the Lord that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you will bear his judgment, whoever he is." (Galatians 5:10, NASB)

"which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ." (Galatians 1:7, NASB)

In Galatians 5:13, we find another term pertinent to an understanding of human good and legalism. This is the term “opportunity” and means a base of operations, a launching pad from which to pursue their attack. This is the concept of finding one facet that violates the legalistic system then using it as a base to find greater things to differ with. Paul talks about this in Galatians 2 where he unveils the spy concept in Jerusalem designed to spy out his liberty. Hoping to catch Paul, in this feature, they hoped to use it to discredit his ministry. A legalist only needs one thing upon which to set up shop and from which he can direct a more full and varied attack. This is the military tactic of establishing a beachhead. In Galatians 5:13, the grace oriented believer is not to use their liberty, on the other hand, to do the same thing.



"For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." (Galatians 5:13, NASB)

So Galatians 2 is a reference to the Jerusalem incident. In 2 Corinthians 12:12, he uses it of misdirected believers in the Corinthian church who would have pounced on the money sent to Paul. Again, Paul beat them to the punch and didn't make finances an issue.

"The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles." (2 Corinthians 12:12, NASB)