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**“Christ set us free, so that we should remain free.” (Gal 5,1) –**

**Biblico-theological Reflections**

**on the Relationship of Law and Freedom**

**in the Old and the New Testament\***

1. **How to define the relationship between law and freedom**

"*Legum denique idcirco omnes servi sumus, ut liberi esse possimus*. That’s why we all are finally slaves of the law, so that we can be free.”[[1]](#footnote-1) That’s how the Roman orator, philosopher and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero expressed it in his speech *Pro Cluentio*. This statement sounds paradox, because it seems to contain a contradiction. Not only since the modern era, but already in Antiquity freedom is the great objective of the human being. This striving for freedom runs right through the entire history up to our present time. The modern human beings want to be free, want to be able to do what they want, want to realize themselves. How does that go together with Cicero’s demand for a slavish commitment to the law as a precondition for the freedom of the human being? Doesn’t it rather correspond to our awareness of life that laws ruin the freedom of the human being or at least reduce it? How must we therefore define the relationship between law and freedom? Are they contradictory or complementary concepts?

In the following biblico-theological reflections it’s our aim to throw a glance at the **statements of the Holy Scriptures on law and freedom** and to define the **relationship between the two conceptions**. For doing that we proceed in the following structure: In the first part of the lecture we have a look at examples of statements of the Old Testament on law and freedom. Starting from the question: “What does Thora mean?”, I will try to define the relationship between law and freedom by means of the example of the Decalogue. The second part deals with Jesus’ position on the law and his understanding of freedom. For that the logion of Jesus in Mc 2, 27f. and the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mountain in Mt 5, 21-48 are used as examples. In the third part finally the topic of law and freedom in St. Paul’s works is treated. Before the background of his biography the apostle’s position on the law and his understanding of freedom are presented referring to Gal 5, 1-12.

1. **Law and freedom in the Old Testament**
2. **What does Thora mean?**

“For this [Law](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6916) which I am laying down for you today is neither obscure for you nor beyond your reach.It is not in heaven, so that you need to wonder, "Who [will](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=12332) go up to [heaven](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5593) for us and bring it down to us, so that we can hear and practise it?" Nor is it beyond the seas, so that you need to wonder, "Who [will](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=12332) cross the seas for us and bring it back to us, so that we can hear and practise it?" No, the word is very near to you, it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to put into practice.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

These verses rhetorically phrased and poetically tinged at the end of the book Deuteronomy express the Jewish understanding of Thora in the Old Testament succinctly. They don’t speak about a law, but about a commandment which is near to the human being and can be fulfilled. Thus the text transports the genuine meaning of Thora, without quoting the word explicitly. The term Thora originally denotes a concrete instruction of parents for their children or of a teacher of wisdom for the human beings so that their lives are successful and they are warned against dangers.[[3]](#footnote-3) Starting from this profane usage the concept advanced in religious contexts to become a *technical term* for the instruction of the priest for the people[[4]](#footnote-4) and of the prophet for his disciples[[5]](#footnote-5). Because of this development the content of the meaning has been enlarged. Thora also means “norm”, “order”, “rule”, even “law” besides “instruction”.

The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, renders the Hebrew Thora by *nomos* and thus reduces the Thora to a law. That restriction of the concept was particularly received in the Christian tradition and has led to a one-sided understanding of Thora as a book of laws.[[6]](#footnote-6) Yet especially in Deuteronomy, literally translated the “second law”, a much more complex understanding of Thora is shown. In the last book of the Pentateuch the term Thora doesn’t only refer to the legal passages, but also to the narrative passages and thus comprises the whole history of God with his chosen people. In Deuteronomy **Thora** therefore means “**the whole of the revelation of God’s will to Israel”**[[7]](#footnote-7) or, still more precisely, Thora is the expression for **the** “**one, comprehensive will of God in written form”**[[8]](#footnote-8). That the contents of the Thora doesn’t only consist of God’s commandments and laws, but also of his actions in history, can be very well shown by means of the Decalogue. At the same time that example is very suitable for defining the relationship between law and freedom.

1. **How can one define the relationship between law and freedom by means of the example of the Decalogue?**

The Decalogue, literally translated “ten words”, has been preserved in two passages of the Old Testament. The older version can be found in Dtn 5, 6-21, the younger one in Ex 20, 2-17.[[9]](#footnote-9) Both versions agree by not starting the Decalogue with a commandment. **Before the ten commandments** there is put a **preamble** both in Ex 20, 2 and in Dtn 5, 6, which is identical even in the wording and consists of two parts. In the first part JHWH introduces himself: “I am JHWH, your God.”[[10]](#footnote-10) The emphasized “I” as the first word of the Decalogue expresses the exclusivity of JHWH: He and nobody else is Israel’s God. In addition to that it becomes evident without any misunderstanding at the very beginning of the Decalogue that JHWH acts totally free and sovereign. In absolute freedom of his will JHWH has chosen Israel as his people, has revealed himself to them and has entered a special relationship with them, which is manifested in the covenant and is articulated in the so-called formula of alliance again and again. JHWH is Israel’s God, Israel is JHWH’s people.[[11]](#footnote-11) Between JHWH and Israel thus exists a close community, which is shown in a relation of Me and You: I, JHWH, your God.[[12]](#footnote-12)

This **personal relationship between JHWH and Israel** is based on the event which is mentioned in the second part of the preamble and which is connected to JHWH’s self-introduction by a relative clause and continues it: “I am [Yahweh](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6291) your [God](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5217) who brought you out of Egypt, where you lived as slaves.”[[13]](#footnote-13) Here the central event of salvation in the history of JHWH with his people Israel is quoted and not only recalled, but moreover made present: the liberation of the people of Israel from the slavery in Egypt. In the **exodus experience** **JHWH proves to be the saviour and liberator god per se**. By leading Israel out of the slave house Egypt JHWH saves his chosen people and frees them from slavery.

It is more than significant that in the preamble of the Decalogue, before the single commandments are enumerated, JHWH’s action of liberating is referred to so explicitly. That’s exactly where in my opinion the hermeneutic key to the correct interpretation of the Decalogue can be found. If JHWH introduces himself first of all as he who leads the Israelites out of slavery and into freedom, the following commandments appear under quite certain circumstances. The commandments don’t want to enslave the people of Israel, but “they are basic instructions, how Israel should live as JHWH’s people and how it can preserve the freedom granted by JHWH permanently.”[[14]](#footnote-14) Through the preamble of the Decalogue it becomes clear that the commandments don’t restrict the human being, but rather want to make the freedom granted by God possible after all and guarantee it permanently. Therefore that means: Law and freedom don’t exclude one another, but they condition one another. **God‘s law is the guarantee for the freedom of the human being**.

That liberation-theological connection is also shown in the **commandment on the Sabbath in the Decalogue** according to Dtn 5, 14f.. While the version in Exodus justifies the Sabbath with God’s rest on the seventh day and thus with the theology of creation[[15]](#footnote-15), the commandment on the Sabbath in the version in Deuteronomy runs as follows: “Observe the [Sabbath](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10265) day and keep it holy, as [Yahweh](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6291) your [God](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5217) has commanded you. Labour for six days, doing all your work, but the seventh day is a [Sabbath](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10265) for [Yahweh](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6291) your God. You must not do any work that day … Remember that you were once a slave in Egypt, and that [Yahweh](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6291) your [God](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5217) brought you out of there with mighty hand and outstretched arm; this is why [Yahweh](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6291) your [God](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5217) has commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.”[[16]](#footnote-16) After the preamble here for a second time in the Decalogue the fate of the people of Israel in Egypt and the Exodus experience are referred to, this time for justifying the Sabbath. The Israelites should remember their slavery in Egypt and the fact that JHWH has saved them with mighty hand from slavery and led them into freedom. That’s why the **Sabbath** must be kept and remain sacred. It’s the **day of the salvation and the liberation**.[[17]](#footnote-17) By this example it’s once again shown nicely that it’s not JHWH’s intention to put a burden of laws on the Israelites and thus to make their lives unnecessarily difficult. The very opposite is the case. JHWH is a god of freedom. He grants his chosen people the freedom and wants to guarantee this freedom to them permanently by obliging them by means of the commandments. Therefore **God’s commandments don’t have an enslaving, but a liberating meaning for the human being**.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Both the preamble with the JHWH’s self-introduction as the god of salvation and liberation of his people of Israel and the commandment on the Sabbath with its liberation-theological justification by referring to the Exodus experience make it clear that the Thora doesn’t only consist of God’s commandments, but also his salvation acts. To his son’s question for the meaning of the commandments such as in Dtn 6, 20 the father is to answer: "Once we were Pharaoh's [slaves](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10887) in Egypt, and [Yahweh](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6291) brought us out of [Egypt](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=4193) by his mighty hand. Before our eyes, [Yahweh](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6291) worked great and terrible signs and wonders against Egypt, against Pharaoh and his entire household. And he brought us out of there, to lead us into the country which he had sworn to our ancestors that he would give us. And [Yahweh](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6291) has commanded us to observe all these laws and to fear [Yahweh](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6291) our God, so as to be happy for ever and to survive, as we do to this day.”[[19]](#footnote-19) Before the father in his answer begins to speak about the keeping of the commandments, he makes the son aware of the events of the Exodus and the conquest of the land and in this way makes him conscious of God’s salvaging activity. That order is of decisive importance for the correct understanding of the Thora. **At the beginning there is the salvaging and liberating activity of God. Out of this present there arises for the human being the task of keeping God’s commandments, so that he/she can preserve the freedom granted by God permanently and life succeeds in the long term**.[[20]](#footnote-20) After those reflections on the relationship between law and freedom in the Old Testament it is interesting and exciting at the same time to follow this line and to ask which role the law plays in the New Testament and how the Jewish understanding of freedom in the Old Testament is developed in Christianity.

1. **Law and freedom with Jesus**

Let’s begin our observations by a short semantic analysis. The concept of “law” turns up rather seldom in the Gospels[[21]](#footnote-21), about “freedom” Jesus doesn’t talk at all. Even if those linguistic results appear very sobering, that doesn’t necessarily lead to the assumption that the law was only of little importance for Jesus and that freedom was no topic for him. For sure Jesus was no political Messiah who wanted to free the people of Israel from the foreign empire of the Romans. But he both in his message by words and by deeds dealt with questions of the law implicitly and also explicitly took position on the law as well as propagated a certain understanding of freedom, which I want to demonstrate by two examples.

1. **First example: Jesus‘s logion in Mk 2, 27f.**

At the beginning of the Gospel according to Mark it is told in five consecutive episodes how Jesus gets into conflict with the Pharisees and the scribes. The question is of the so-called Galilean disputes in Mk 2,1-3,6, which are constructed according to a fixed scheme. A provoking situation raises the objection of Jesus‘s adversaries. To this protest Jesus reacts by means of a provocation in the form of a pithy statement, in order to justify the offensive behaviour and give reasons. After healing a man including the pardoning of his sins in Mk 2, 1-12, Jesus‘s meal with customs officers and sinners in Mk 2, 13-17, the debate on the question of fasting in Mk 2, 18-22 the following case of conflict is described in Mk 2, 23-28: Jesus’s disciples walk through the corn fields and pluck ears. All that happens on a Sabbath. That offensive behaviour provokes the protest of the Pharisees. Plucking ears on a Sabbath is forbidden, because this form of activity – plucking ears is considered as work – offends against rest on Sabbath and thus against keeping the Sabbath sacred. In his answer Jesus takes on the responsibility for the behaviour of his disciples. He justifies their behaviour first with a hint to David’s unjustified behaviour, who in a time of need ate the loaves of offering together with his comrades and thus quenched his hunger. After that he expresses his attitude towards the Sabbath in the final word Mk 2, 27f. succinctly: “The [Sabbath](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10265) was made for man, not [man](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=7463) for the Sabbath; so the Son of [man](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=7463) is master even of the Sabbath.”

In the first part of this apophthegmatic logion Jesus argues with the order of the creation “the Sabbath was made” and he defines a relationship. It was not the human being that was made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbat was made for the human being, i. e. the Sabbath is there for the human being, not the other way round. By this top statement Jesus makes it unambiguously clear that the **commandment on the Sabbath doesn’t want to restrict the human being** by imposing on him/her what is allowed and what is forbidden on a Sabbath. It is rather **directed towards the freedom of the human being**, in so far as the well-being of the human being is to be guaranteed.

In the second part of the logion Jesus goes one step further and proclaims himself as master of the Sabbath, too. Thus he doesn’t only claim an unheard-of authority, but also emphasizes his uninhibited freedom in front of the law.[[22]](#footnote-22) For Jesus the law doesn’t constitute a sacrosanct and uncontested instance, according to the motto: the law must be kept under all circumstances, because it is the law. On the contrary **Jesus breaks the law quite consciously**, in order **to show its genuine meaning** and **to unveil its liberating effect for the human being**.

This intention of Jesus is also shown very well in the following story, which is the conclusion and at the same time the climax of the Galilean disputes. According to Mk 3, 1-6 Jesus heals a man on a Sabbath and by this offensive action this time doesn’t provoke a verbal protest of his adversaries, but provokes the decision of the Pharisees to kill him. Even if the note in Mk 3, 6 less reflects the historical reality, but is rather due to Mark‘s editing activity, the radical attitude of Jesus towards the law emerges from it. Regardless of his adversaries and the consequences which his provoking behaviour causes in them, Jesus fights against a legalistic understanding of the law – the law must be heeded for the sake of the law – and speaks up by means of his words and even more by means of his deeds for the liberating effect of the law to be recognized. For Jesus the law in the end aims at the comprehensive freedom of the human being.

1. **Second example: The antitheses in Mt 5, 21-48**

In the context of the Sermon on the Mountain there can be found in Mt 5, 21-48 the so-called antitheses, six in number, which are all structured on the same pattern. Against a thesis which contains the word of God addressed to the people of Israel Jesus juxtaposes his own word with an absolute authority and power. The first antithesis runs as follows: “You have heard how it was said to our ancestors, You shall not kill; and if anyone does kill he must answer for it before the court. But I say this to you, anyone who is angry with a brother [will](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=12332) answer for it before the court.”[[23]](#footnote-23) In the thesis first the fifth commandment is quoted: “You shall not kill!”[[24]](#footnote-24) Then a sanction is formulated, how he should be treated who kills somebody: He must answer for it before the court.[[25]](#footnote-25) To God’s commandment Jesus opposes in his antithesis that he who is angry with his brother will answer for it before the court.[[26]](#footnote-26) How can Jesus’s position on the law be described starting from this antithesis? What does he do with the Thora? Jesus doesn’t cancel the commandment of the Old Testament or abolish it. The fifth commandment of the Decalogue continues keeping its validity. Jesus doesn’t criticize that commandment, either, or offer a new interpretation, how it should be interpreted. On the contrary, he transcends the commandment and lifts it up to a new level by radicalising it. Not only killing, but already being angry at one’s brother causes having to answer for it before the court.

Such an understanding of the Thora can also be observed in the second antithesis. It says: “You have heard how it was said, You shall not commit adultery. But I say this to you, if a [man](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=7463) looks at a [woman](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=12437) lustfully, he has already committed [adultery](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=247) with her in his heart.”[[27]](#footnote-27) Here again in the thesis a commandment of the Decalogue is quoted, in this case the sixth commandment: “You shall no commit adultery!”[[28]](#footnote-28) To that word of God Jesus opposes his own word antithetically, which says that already he commits adultery who looks at a woman to desire her. Here again Jesus doesn’t cancel the commandment of the Old Testament or abolish it. The sixth commandment of the Decalogue continues keeping its validity. Jesus doesn’t criticize that commandment, either, or offer a new interpretation, how it should be interpreted. In analogy to the first antithesis he transcends the commandment in the second antithesis, too, and lifts it up to a new level by radicalising it. Adultery doesn’t start with the deed, but already in the heart.[[29]](#footnote-29)

From those two examples **Jesus’s position on the Thora** in general becomes evident, as it emerges from the preamble to the antitheses explicitly: “Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the [Law](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6916) or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them.”[[30]](#footnote-30) It couldn’t be brought to words more clearly. **Jesus’s point is not abolishing, but fulfilling the law**. His provoking behaviour together with his conscious breaking the laws and his authoritative words together with an obvious **radicalisation of the laws** are directed **against a legalistic thinking** and aim at making the **human being fulfil God’s will** **with all his/her powers** and become in all his/her existence, i. e. with all his/her external and internal powers, a morally good being. Jesus’s main concern finally was not to overcome the law, but the legality and to free the human being from legalistic thinking and acting.[[31]](#footnote-31) To that purpose Jesus either broke the law consciously (first example: Galilean disputes) or radicalised it (second example: antitheses).

At this point the justified question is put, if Jesus doesn’t ask too much of the human being by radicalising the Thora. Or to put it differently: **Can the human being live the radical ethics of Jesus at all** and put it into practice or isn’t that only a theoretical conception? The demands formulated by Jesus in the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mountain – you may e. g. beyond our two examples think of the renunciation to answering force (5th antithesis) or, still trickier, of the call to loving your enemy (6th antithesis) – constitute something hard to swallow for the human being and cause great difficulties for the experts, too, concerning the interpretation. A short glimpse at the history of interpretation shows that in the course of time different models have been developed in order to explain the difficult content of the text. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) designed an ethics of two classes in the Middle Ages and in it he distinguished between commandments for all (*praecepta)* and counsels for few ones (*consilia*). Among the commandments for all he counts the Ten Commandments, among the counsels for few ones the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mountain. The latter ones therefore constitute an exceptional ethics for the perfect ones, i. e. for priests and monks. The great mass of the faithful is not concerned by it. For Wilhelm Herrmann (1846-1922) Jesus’s radical demands must be seen as an ethics of attitude. Jesus is less concerned with ethical acting than with sincere attitudes, that is to say the internal mindset of the human being. Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) interpreted the antitheses as an interim ethics. Jesus lived in the expectation of an immediate end and uttered his radical demands in a certain exceptional situation, namely in the intermediate time until the near end of the world. None of these three models does justice to the biblical text. Jesus’s demands are not directed at perfect ones, but at all human beings. Moreover, they do not only aim at the attitudes of the human being, but at his/her entire moral acting. After all, those are not temporary, but permanently valid instructions.

While in all models of interpretation the tendency can be noticed of neutralising and alleviating the uncomfortable demands of Jesus, it is in my opinion necessary to take the radicalism of the statements seriously and to locate it in the context of Jesus’ message. Jesus of Nazareth proclaimed the beginning of God’s reign: “God’s *basileia* is near!”[[32]](#footnote-32) From this basileia message Jesus’ instructions can be qualified as eschatological ethics. God accepts the human being unconditionally and grants his salvation. From this **indicative of grace** there follows the **ethical imperative**. **The human being is called to answer to the salvation granted to him/her** (responsorial ethics) and to orientate his/her behaviour by God’s goodness: “You must therefore be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.”[[33]](#footnote-33) The **radicalism of Jesus’s instruction remains**. But **because of the eschatological context of the basileia message of Jesus** the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mountain appear in a different light. They **don’t ask too much of the human being, but nevertheless are a great challenge to the human being**, which he/she must take up in responsibility with regard to God and the fellow human being.

1. **Law and freedom in St. Paul’s letters**

Contrary to Jesus Paul much more often talks about the law[[34]](#footnote-34) and uses the concept of “freedom”[[35]](#footnote-35). In the letter to the Galatians and particularly in the letter to the Romans the Apostle of the Gentiles develops his understanding of law and freedom and explains the relationship between these two concepts. In order to be able to classify and to understand these statements it is necessary to throw a short glimpse at the biography and the activity of the apostle.

1. **Paul: from law-abiding Jew to missionary of the gentiles free from the law**

Paul was a Jew. He was born at Tarsus in Cilicia, in the South of today’s Turkey, around the turn of time, and thus has his origin in the Jewish diaspora. In Jerusalem, the centre of Judaism, he was educated by Rabbi Gamaliel I. to be a teacher of the Thora. In his letters Paul again and again emphasizes his Jewish origin as well as his fervour for the law: “Circumcised on the eighth day of my life, I was born of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrew parents. In the [matter](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=7732) of the Law, I was a Pharisee; as for religious fervour, I was a persecutor of the Church; as for the uprightness embodied in the Law, I was faultless.”[[36]](#footnote-36) It is interesting and informative at the same time that Paul here in Phil 3, 5f. as well as in Gal 1, 13f. mentions his faithfulness to the law in the same breath as his activity as a persecutor: “You have surely heard how I lived in the past, within Judaism, and how there was simply no limit to the way I persecuted the Church of [God](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5217) in my attempts to destroy it; and how, in Judaism, I outstripped most of my [Jewish](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6511) contemporaries in my limitless enthusiasm for the traditions of my ancestors.”[[37]](#footnote-37) For Paul, the Jewish zealot for the law, obviously the mission to the gentiles, free from the law, was the decisive reason for the persecution of God’s church. The Jew Paul, who followed the law strictly, was not able and didn’t want to take it that in the mission to the gentiles the law didn’t play any role at all, and therefore he destroyed the Christian communities, until the day which was to change his convictions up till then and his whole life fundamentally.

Damask, beginning of the 30ies: Paul is called by God to be an apostle. He himself describes that so-called Damask experience as an apparition of the resurrected Christ[[38]](#footnote-38) and interprets it theologically as a revelation of God, which for him is connected with the order of the mission to the gentiles: “But when God, who had set me apart from the [time](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=11571) when I was in my mother's womb, called me through his [grace](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5305) and chose to reveal his Son in me, so that I should preach him to the gentiles, I was in no hurry to confer with any human being.”[[39]](#footnote-39) His **being called** as the apostle to the gentiles leads Paul to a re-evaluation of values and to the new insight that **the justification of the human being results from faith, not from the acts of the law**: “But what were once my assets, I now through [Christ](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) [Jesus](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) count as losses. I [will](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=12332) go further: because of the supreme advantage of knowing [Christ](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) [Jesus](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) my Lord, I count everything else as filth. (…) if only I can gain Christ and be given a place in him, with the uprightness I have gained not from the Law, but through [faith](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=4554) in Christ, an uprightness from God, based on faith.”[[40]](#footnote-40) While the law had up till then taken a central position in his life as a Jew, Paul realizes in the course of his vocation that it is of no more importance for him. The apostle henceforth practises the mission to the gentiles free from the law in his missionary activities, which leads to tensions or even conflicts with Jews and Jewish Christians. At the apostles‘ meeting in Jerusalem Paul pleads vehemently for not having to oblige gentiles to follow the Jewish law in order to be Christians.[[41]](#footnote-41) For the apostle that is not the question of an inconsequential trifle (circumcision yes or no), for him on the contrary the truth of the Gospels[[42]](#footnote-42) is at stake in this dispute. In the end Paul can officially push through his position with the other apostles. Thus the way is open to the **mission to the gentiles free from the law**.

1. **Paul’s position towards the law**

Paul‘s radical turn in life, caused by his vocation, from law-abiding Jew to missionary for the gentiles free from the law is the **biographical reference point** for the apostle’s theological statements on the law in the letters to the Philippians and to the Romans. Besides that there is also a concrete cause for Paul to present his position on the law particularly in the letter to the Galatians. **In the Galatian communities** the so-called **Judaists** arise. Those are strict Jewish Christians who demand of the Galatians to **return to the observation of the law** and want to oblige them particularly to practise the circumcision[[43]](#footnote-43) and also to observe the times of the cult[[44]](#footnote-44). Against this background one must read the statements in the letter to the Galatians and then in the letter to the Romans as well. There Paul’s position towards the law appears to be ambivalent. On the one hand the apostle makes positive statements on the law: He calls it in Rom 7, 12 “holy, upright and good”. He talks about “God’s law”[[45]](#footnote-45) and also about the “law of the Spirit which gives life”[[46]](#footnote-46). He denies a contradiction between God’s promises and the law.[[47]](#footnote-47) On the other hand Paul utters negative statements about the law: He sees it as a catalyst for sin[[48]](#footnote-48) and talks about the “law of sin”[[49]](#footnote-49) respectively about the “law of sin and death”[[50]](#footnote-50). In the letters to the Galatians and to the Romans he again and again emphasizes that the human being is not justified because of acts of the law, but because of the faith in Jesus Christ.[[51]](#footnote-51) He makes it unmistakably clear that the law is not a path to salvation, otherwise Christ would have died in vain;[[52]](#footnote-52) on the contrary Christ is the “fulfilment of the law”[[53]](#footnote-53). Because of that ambivalence the questions arises inevitably: How must these statements by the apostle be evaluated? Are these contradictory remarks or can one develop out of them a unified conception consistent in itself?

To be able to answer this question one must start from the usage of the term. Paul uses *nomos* in different ways, either as a name for the Pentateuch[[54]](#footnote-54) or even for the whole Scripture[[55]](#footnote-55), but particularly for the Mosaic Law and especially for the Decalogue[[56]](#footnote-56). Besides that he uses the term in a metaphorical sense in the meaning of “directing instruction” “lawfulness”, “rule”[[57]](#footnote-57). Paul also creates idiosyncratic formulas, when he for ex. talks about “doing what the Law tells”[[58]](#footnote-58) or about “the law of faith”[[59]](#footnote-59). Finally the apostle can also personify the law, when he writes that the law “speaks”[[60]](#footnote-60), “produces”[[61]](#footnote-61), “controls”[[62]](#footnote-62). It is more than significant that **Paul in spite of all the different usages of the term never uses the plural, but always only the singular a**nd thus understands the **law as a unified entity**.[[63]](#footnote-63)

As another constant one can state that the **apostle throughout utters criticism on the Thora of Moses**. Even if the law was given by God and therefore in itself is holy, just and good[[64]](#footnote-64), following it doesn’t lead the human being either to justification or to eternal life. On the contrary the law causes anger[[65]](#footnote-65) and shows up sin: “What should we say, then? That the [Law](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6916) itself is sin? Out of the question! All the same, if it had not been for the Law, I should not have known what [sin](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10849) was; for instance, I should not have known what it meant to covet if the [Law](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6916) had not said: You are not to covet. But, once it found the opportunity through that commandment, [sin](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10849) produced in me all kinds of covetousness; as long as there is no Law, [sin](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10849) is dead. Once, when there was no Law, I used to be alive; but when the commandment came, [sin](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10849) came to life and I died. The commandment was meant to bring [life](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=7101) but I found it brought death.”[[66]](#footnote-66) As a consequence of his experience of vocation **Paul comes to realize that the law is not the path to salvation, but enslaves the human being**, unveils sin and in the end leads to death. Since his encounter with the resurrected Christ the apostle knows he is no more under the Mosaic Law, but under Christ’s law, which frees him from the law of sin and death to a life according to the Spirit: “Thus, condemnation [will](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=12332) never come to those who are in [Christ](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) Jesus, because the [law](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6916) of the [Spirit](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=11004) which gives [life](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=7101) in [Christ](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) [Jesus](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) has set you free from the [law](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6916) of [sin](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10849) and death. What the [Law](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6916) could not do because of the weakness of human nature, [God](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5217) did, sending his own Son in the same human [nature](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=8348) as any sinner to be a [sacrifice](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10284) for sin, and condemning [sin](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10849) in that human nature. This was so that the Law's requirements might be fully satisfied in us as we direct our lives not by our natural inclinations but by the Spirit.”[[67]](#footnote-67)

Those few remarks were to show that Paul didn’t design a doctrine on the law in the strict sense. The apostle rather reflected about the significance of the law, at the instigation by his vocation experience and by the concrete situation in the Galatian communities. In the course of this process of reflection different statements on the law are formulated, which partly seem to be contradictory, but in their core make a unified conception recognizable. Paul doesn’t refuse the law per se, but for him it is not a path to salvation. Not the law, but the Christ experience, i. e. Jesus’s death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead, justifies the human being and makes a life in genuine freedom possible for him/her.[[68]](#footnote-68)

1. **Paul and freedom**

In connection with his statements on the law Paul again and again talks about freedom, too, and he uses this concept more often than all the other authors of the New Testament. Thereby the apostle differs decisively from the classical concept of freedom. While the Greeks are concerned with the freedom of the individual in the polis as such, for Paul the concept has **no political** c**onnotation**. Contrary to the Stoics the apostle **doesn’t propagate** **any philosophical understanding of freedom** which aims at the external withdrawal from the fictitious world and at the internal self-realization in agreement with the logos of the world. Paul, however, takes up the **social conception of freedom**, when he in his letters opposes the status of the free person to that of the slave.[[69]](#footnote-69) Paul‘s conception touches the **understanding of freedom in the Old Testament** in so far as the **gift of freedom is bound to the donor**. In the Old Testament it’s JHWH who leads his people out of the house of slavery Egypt and grants them their freedom. In the New Testament it’s Jesus Christ who by means of his death on the cross liberates the human being from the enslaving power of the law and grants him/her a new life in God’s spirit.

In taking up the conception of the Old Testament and on the basis of the experience with Christ the apostle develops his proper conception of Christian freedom. In Rom 5-8 Paul describes the freedom and the glory of God’s children with vivid words.[[70]](#footnote-70) The **letter to the Galatians** is even more strongly marked by the theme of freedom and liberation, so that this letter can justly be called the “**Magna Charta of Christian freedom”**[[71]](#footnote-71). The main theological statement on it is found in Gal 5 and reads as follows:

“**Christ set us free, so that we should remain free**. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be fastened again to the yoke of slavery. I, Paul, give you my word that if you accept circumcision, [Christ](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) [will](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=12332) be of no benefit to you at all. I give my assurance once again to every [man](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=7463) who accepts [circumcision](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=2977) that he is under [obligation](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=8611) to keep the whole Law; once you seek to be reckoned as upright through the Law, then you have separated yourself from Christ, you have fallen away from grace. We are led by the [Spirit](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=11004) to wait in the confident [hope](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5889) of saving [justice](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6550) through faith, since in [Christ](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) [Jesus](https://www.catholic.org/clife/jesus) it is not being circumcised or being uncircumcised that can effect anything -- only [faith](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=4554) working through love. (…) After all, brothers, you were called to be free; **do not use your freedom as an opening for self-indulgence, but be servants to one another in love,** since the whole of the [Law](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6916) is summarised in the one commandment: You must love your neighbour as yourself.”[[72]](#footnote-72)

After Paul has warned the Galatians in the preceding chapter against a relapse into the old slavery of heathenism[[73]](#footnote-73) and has shown them by means of an allegorical proof taken from the Scripture that the law enslaves and the Gospel sets free[[74]](#footnote-74), he in Gal 5 appeals to the insight of the Galatians **to preserve the freedom given by Christ and not to lose it**. He reminds the Galatian Christians in the form of a programmatic statement, which almost sounds like an apodictic theorem, that Christ has set them free.[[75]](#footnote-75) How this liberation happened, the apostle has explained again and again in his letter[[76]](#footnote-76) and formulated in Gal 4,4f. like that: “But when the completion of the [time](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=11571) came, [God](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5217) sent his Son, born of a woman, born a subject of the Law, to redeem the subjects of the Law, so that we could receive [adoption](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=224) as sons.” By means of his death on the cross Christ has set the human beings free from the curse of the law and granted them genuine freedom.

That great gift of freedom caused by Christ‘s salvaging deed needn’t only be accepted, but also lived and preserved. That’s why Paul asks the Galatians urgently to be definite in freedom and not to let again a yoke of slavery be put on them.[[77]](#footnote-77) Thus he confronts the Galatians with the **alternative**: either **freedom because of the Gospels or slavery under the law**. The Galatians are probably just going to give in to the Judaists and to accept being obliged by the law. Against this background the apostle warns the Galatian Christians with all his authority against the devastating consequences of an obligation by the Mosaic Law. If they let themselves be circumcised, then Christ will not be of use for them.[[78]](#footnote-78) For Paul circumcision and the faith in Christ cannot be compatible. Who accepts being circumcised, is obliged to keep the entire law with its 613 commandments and prohibitions.[[79]](#footnote-79) The consequence of this strict observation of the law is obvious for the apostle. If the Galatians want to become just by means of the law, they are separated from Christ and drop out of God’s grace.[[80]](#footnote-80) They lose the freedom granted in Christ. To them Paul opposes those who don’t trust in the law, but in grace and put their hope in God‘s salvaging acts in Christ.[[81]](#footnote-81) Their lives are characterized by the work of God’s Spirit and by their faith in Jesus Christ. In him the question of being circumcised or not being circumcised is of no importance for the justification and redemption of the human being, but the faith working through love is.[[82]](#footnote-82) Such a faith is for Paul “the description of the central essence of being Christian. Confiding in and relying on what God has done for us in Christ, that’s what sets free to commit one’s life for others. That’s the freedom to which Christ has set us free.”[[83]](#footnote-83) Thus **the gift of freedom** becomes **the ethical task for the human being**, which he/she has to fulfil out of his/her Christian responsibility.

After that theological argumentation Paul in Gal 5, 13f. gives a practical instruction. Now he is concerned with the **responsible forming of a life in freedom**. At the beginning of this paraenetic, i. e. admonishing passage the apostle reminds the Galatians of their vocation to freedom by going back to Gal 5, 1.[[84]](#footnote-84) After this testimony there follows in one breath the warning: “Do not use your freedom as an opening for self-indulgence, but be servants to one another in love, since the whole of the [Law](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6916) is summarised in the one commandment: You must love your neighbour as yourself.”[[85]](#footnote-85) By those words Paul wants to meet a misunderstanding of the essence of Christian freedom. **The freedom granted by God in Christ must not be mistaken for ethical libertinism, permissiveness without limits, arbitrariness without responsibility**. A Christian is not allowed to do and to leave whatever he wants and to take the freedom as a pretext for the flesh. In Gal 5,19 the apostle enumerates the works of the flesh: “sexual vice, impurity, and sensuality, the worship of false gods and sorcery; antagonisms and rivalry, jealousy, bad temper and quarrels, disagreements, factions and malice, drunkenness, orgies and all such things.” By means of this catalogue of vices Paul illustrates which wrong human behaviour a wrongly understood freedom could lead to.

To such a danger of the misuse of the Christian freedom Paul opposes the appeal: **“Be servants to one another in love**.”[[86]](#footnote-86) Those words first sound paradox, because the appeal to serve seems to contain a contradiction to the essence of freedom. That impression is even strengthened because the apostle had used the verb “serve” up to that line in the letter to the Galatians in a negative meaning.[[87]](#footnote-87) By means of the dative object “one another” and the modal adverbial “in love” serving gets a positive connotation here in Gal 5, 13. The service which Paul demands of the Galatians therefore is **no service of a slave, but a service in love**. For Paul’s understanding of freedom that means: The freedom to which the Galatians have a vocation is the freedom to love. **The free human being is the loving human being**. For Paul, by the fulfilment of the commandment to love the entire law is fulfilled.[[88]](#footnote-88) In that way the faith working through love is realized.[[89]](#footnote-89) This love consists in serving one another according to Jesus’s example and in loving one’s neighbour. Out of that another aspect of Paul’s understanding of freedom is shown. Freedom is no absolute, but a relational concept. The human being cannot claim freedom for him/herself and own it for him/herself. On the contrary Christian freedom only comes into being face to face with some “You” and becomes effective in the relationship to the fellow human beings. **Only he who frees himself from the Ego and turns in love to some You is completely free**.[[90]](#footnote-90)

In the theologically arguing passage of Gal 5, 1-12, caused by the dispute with the Judaists, Paul contrasted freedom and law and appealed to preserve the freedom granted in Christ and not to fall back into the old slavery. For **the law doesn’t make the human being just and doesn’t constitute a path to salvation. It’s through faith working through love that the human being achieves justice and salvation**. Thus love is for the apostle the fundamental category per se of being Christian and the ethical measure by which the freedom to which Christ has set us free will have to be measured again and again.

With his admonishing sentences in Gal 5, 13f. Paul gives an answer to the questions what lived freedom is like. After he has warned the Galatians against a misuse of the freedom granted to them, the apostle makes it clear: Life in freedom is life in love. The reason for it is God’s love in Jesus Christ. As God has given himself away in love out of his free will, **love is never restriction, but realization of freedom**. **Freedom lived in love fulfils God’s law and is at the same time the basis for a responsible living together of the human beings**, be it in the family, at school, at the workplace, in society, in the world.[[91]](#footnote-91)

1. **Instead of a conclusion: doing away with three misunderstandings**

At the end of these biblico-theological reflections on the relationship between law and freedom in the Old and New Testaments there is no classical conclusion. It’s rather my intention to do away with three misunderstandings and to gain a differentiated view at the two concepts of law and freedom and their relationship to one another.

Misunderstanding number one: The Thora enslaves the human being and restricts him/her in their freedom. My explanations on law and freedom in the Old Testament have shown that the Thora mustn’t be reduced to the law, but contains God’s will which is also and first of all manifested in his deeds in history. So in the preamble and in the commandment on the Sabbath there is an explicit reference to the exodus experience and the liberating acting by JHWH is qualified as the decisive category of interpretation for the correct understanding of the law. According to that the **commandments don’t constitute** **a legal burden for the human beings** in the sense of “you have to” or “you are not allowed to”, which restricts them in their freedom. On the contrary those are **instructions that make the freedom granted by God possible at all for the human beings and guarantee it permanently**.

Misunderstanding number two: Jesus has abolished the Thora and pronounced a new law. From my observations on law and freedom with Jesus it has turned out that Jesus breaks the law consciously in order to show its deeper meaning and its liberating effect for the human being. **The law is there for the human being, not the human being for the law**, based on Mk 2, 27. For Jesus the law keeps its entire validity. He doesn’t abolish it, he doesn’t criticize it, either. **Jesus radicalises the law**, as the antitheses in the Sermon on the Mountain impressively prove. By this radicalisation Jesus **wants to set the human being free from a legalistic thinking and instigate him/her to become comprehensively good** and to fulfil God’s will. Instead of alleviating Jesus’s radical demands the **human being is called to face this big task and to shape his/her life in ethical responsibility to God and to the fellow human beings.**

Misunderstanding number three: Paul refuses the Thora and propagates an unrestricted freedom. My explanations on law and freedom in Paul’s works have made it clear that the Jew Paul doesn’t refuse the Mosaic Law. In the course of his vocation experience he acquires the insight that **the law is no path to salvation**. It’s on the contrary the **faith in Christ that justifies and redeems the human being**. That’s why the apostle calls upon the Galatians in Gal 5, 1 to preserve the freedom granted by Christ and not to lose it by relapsing under the slavery of the law. “**Christ set us free, so that we should remain free.”**[[92]](#footnote-92) Freedom from what? From the power of the law, of sin, of death. Freedom through what? Not through the proper accomplishment of the human being, but through the death of Jesus on the cross. Freedom for what? Not for ethical libertinism and unrestricted arbitrariness, but for a faith working in love, concretely in the service to one’s neighbour. **Such a freedom working in love doesn’t make the human being,** as Cicero states in the word quoted at the beginning, **a slave of the laws, but God’s slave, who fulfils God’s will and makes his/her contribution to a responsible living together of the human beings.**

Translated from German into English by **Wolfgang Rank**

(The quotations of Bible texts were taken from the Catholic New Jerusalem Bible.)

1. \*This essay is the adapted version of a lecture given in French at the Annual Meeting of the European Federation of Christian Teachers (SIESC) at Trier on July 27th, 2018.

   Cicero, Pro Cluentio LIII, 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Dtn 30,11-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Cp. Prov. 1,8; 4,1f.; 6,20-23; 13,14; 28,4.7.9. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Cp. Hos 4,6; Jer 2,8; Ez 7,26. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Cp. Jes 1,10; 8,16.20; Mi 4,2. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Cp. Tonelli, Debora, Der Dekalog. Eine retrospektive Betrachtung, Stuttgart 2017, 90f. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Thus Veijola, Timo, Leben nach der Weisung. Exegetisch-historische Studien zum Alten Testament, Göttingen

   2008, 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Thus Tonelli (cp. note 6), 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. That’s the assessment by Assmann, Jan, Exodus. Die Revolution der Alten Welt, München 2015, 268. On the debate about the possible origin, dating, and history of the tradition of the Decalogue cp. Wehrle, Josef, Der Dekalog. Text, Theologie und Ethik, Berlin 2014, 29-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ex 20,2a; Dtn 5,6a. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Cp. the various wordings of the formula of the alliance, e. g. Ex 6,7; Lev 26,12; Dtn 26,7f. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Cp. with it Wehrle, Dekalog (cp. note 9), 41f. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ex 20,2b; Dtn 5,6b. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Thus the correct assessment by Finsterbusch, Karin, Deuteronomium. Eine Einführung, Göttingen 2012, 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Cp. Ex 20,8-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Dtn 5,12-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Cp. on that Wehrle, Dekalog (cp. note. 9), 103-107. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Cp. Assmann, Exodus (cp. note. 9), 267-269. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Dtn 6,21-24. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Cp. Veijola, Leben nach der Weisung (cp. note 7), 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. 14 references in the Gospel according to John, 9 references in the Gospel according to Luke, 8 references in the Gospel according to Matthew, no reference in the Gospel according to Mark. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Cp. Pesch, Rudolf, Das Markusevangelium. Erster Teil: Einleitung und Kommentar zu Mk 1,1-8,26 ((HThK.NT 3), Darmstadt 2000, 178-186. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Mt 5,21f. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ex 20,13; Dtn 5,17. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Cp. Ex 21,12; Lev 24,17; Num 35,16ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Cp. Mt 5,22. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Mt 5,27f. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Ex 20,13; Dtn 5,18. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Cp. Mt 5,28. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Mt 5,17. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Cp. for that Gnilka, Joachim, Das Matthäusevangelium. Erster Teil: Kommentar zu Kapitel 1,1-13,58 (HThK.NT 1), Darmstadt 2000, 150-164. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Mt 4,17 parr. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Mt 5,48. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Among the 191 references in the New Testament 119 are found in Paul’s letters. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. The substantive appears 11 times in the New Testament, among them 7 times in Paul. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Phil 3,5f. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Gal 1,13f. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Cp. 1 Cor 15,8; 9,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Gal 1,15f. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Phil 3,7-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Cp. Gal 2,1-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Gal 2,5. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Cp. Gal 5,3.11f.; 6,12f. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Cp. Gal 4,3.9f. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Rom 7,22. 25; 8,7. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Rom 8,2. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Cp. Gal 3,21. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Cp. Rom 3,20. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Rom 7,23. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Rom 8,2. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Cp. Gal 2,16; Rom 3,28. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Cp. Gal 2,21. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Rom 10,4. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Cp. e. g. Gal 4,21. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Cp. e. g. Rom 3,19. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Cp. e. g. Rom 2,14. 17; 7,12; Gal 5,3. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Cp. e. g. Rom 3,27; 7,21. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Cp. e. g. Gal 2,16; Rom 3,28. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Cp. e.g. Rom 3,27. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Cp. Rom 3,19; 7,7. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Cp. Rom 4,15. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Cp. Rom 7,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Cp. with it Broer, Ingo, Art.: Gesetz (NT), in: Bibeltheologisches Wörterbuch, 237-240. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Cp. Rom 7,12. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Cp. Rom 4,15. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Rom 7,7-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Rom 8,1-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Cp. Eckstein, Hans-Joachim, Christus in euch. Von der Freiheit der Kinder Gottes. Eine Auslegung des Galaterbriefes, Göttingen 2017, 139-146. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Cp. 1 Cor 7,21f.; 12,13; Gal 3,28; 4,22. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Cp. Rom 8,21. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. That’s the fitting expression used by Eckstein, Christus in euch (cp. note 68), 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Gal 5,1-6.13f. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Cp. Gal 4,8-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Cp. Gal 4,21-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Cp. Gal 5,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Cp. Gal 1,4; 2,20; 3,13 u. a. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Cp. Gal 5,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Cp. Gal 5,2. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Cp. Gal 5,3. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Cp. Gal 5,4. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Cp. Gal 5,5. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Cp. Gal 5,6. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Thus Walter Klaiber, Der Galaterbrief, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2013, 160. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Cp. Gal 5,13. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Gal 5,13f. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Gal 5,13. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Cp. Gal 4,8.9.25. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Cp. Gal 5,14. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Cp. Gal 5,6. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Cp. Franz Mussner, Galaterbrief (HThK.NT 4), Darmstadt 2002, 366-369. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Cp. Klaiber, Galaterbrief (cp. note. 83), 166f. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Gal 5,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)