**Christian Freedom**

**Galatians 5:13-26**

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**Doug Guizlo**

**Last week: Unyielding Freedom**

*“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**

**Stand firm in your freedom by:**

* **Realizing from what you’ve been set free. (5:1)**
* **Realizing what’s at stake. (5:2-4) Paul says we could lose the benefits of trusting Christ, we’re obligated to keep the whole law and we’re cut off from the grace of Christ. Dangerous to think you can contribute anything to your salvation! It’s not Jesus + that saves you!**

***“He must be a perfect Savior, or he is no Savior.”* William Perkins, Puritan**

**JESUS PAID IT ALL!!**

* **Rejecting those who want to enslave you! (5:7-12)**

**This week: Christian Freedom How do you use your freedom?**

**UNIVERSITY STORY (Bedtime, eating right, going to class, drinking, partying)**

*“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**

**Galatians is our Declaration of Independence (FREEDOM)**

**PROBLEM: If it’s Jesus + nothing= Acceptance with God does that mean we can live any way we want?**

**3 things I want to show you in this passage:**

**1. What Christian Freedom ISN’T: (5:17, 19-21)**

**Ali’s story in Iraq. Prostitution, Drugs, all kinds of vices became available when Saddam fell. Ali grins and says, *“Now we have freedom!”***

**2 COLUMNS**

**The message of the Bible isn’t that you should be good, and God will accept you. That’s an unbiblical message right from the pit of hell!**

**Keeping the Law (SLAVE TO THE LAW) License to Sin (SLAVE TO SIN)**

John 8:34

Gal. 3:10

**READ! READ!**

**Am I living like “Well, I’m great a sin and God’s great at forgiveness- What a great combination!”?**

* **An ABUSE OF FREEDOM. License: A liberty of action, especially when excessive; disregard of law or propriety; abuse of freedom.**
* **An OPPORTUNITY for us to give in to our nature.**

**Flesh=Fallen, Sinful Nature**

* **About satisfying SELFISH DESIRES.**

**Verse 19-21 make it very clear what he’s talking about in v. 13: He gives us a list of vices. These come naturally to our human nature. In other words, we are good at this without any training whatsoever!**

**Some are behaviors: Sexual Immorality, impurity, sensuality, sorcery, drunkenness, and orgies. A lot of us pat ourselves on the back and feel pretty good about ourselves because we're not guilty of these. But then Paul gets to what some would call respectable or understandable sins. These are sins we tolerate, like anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions. Most churches won’t put up with sexual immorality but they’ll put up with anger and dissension. Paul puts them on the same list!!**

**Then he says in verse 21, “I warn you, as I warned you before that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” WHAT? I thought you said it was Jesus + nothing= acceptance with God.**

**Good works aren’t the basis of our acceptance with God but they are the result of it! Eph. 2:8-9**

**If Jesus is truly Lord of our life, then He will transform us so that this list doesn't characterize our lives.**

**God’s accepts us the way we are, but He doesn’t leave us there!**

**If you use your freedom from the law as an opportunity to sin, you’ve just entered a different kind of slavery. Slave to Sin!**

**Both of these lists are forms of slavery!**

**True freedom is not doing whatever you please!**

**2. What Christian Freedom IS: (5:13-14, 16, 22-26)**

* **It begins in the HEART. It’s inside-out. The gospel gives us a new heart! Love is the fulfillment of the whole law (I Corinthians 13:1-3)**
	+ **It’s all about LOVE! The law isn’t enough! (v. 13 & 14)**

**Can you keep a commandment without having love? Technically YES. Spiritually NO!**

* **It’s the work of the SPIRIT. The Spirit renovates our heart! V.22-23**

**Notice: It’s not called the fruit of the believer. It’s called the fruit of the Spirit. This is what the Spirit produces in our lives as we yield to Him.**

**JOHN MACARTHUR- says we need to be standing under the basket to receive our fruit. In other words, the other way to receive the fruit of the Spirit is to stay close to the Spirit. Eph. 5:18, “*be filled with the Spirit.”***

* + **Serving & Loving through the Spirit. True gospel freedom expresses itself in serving and loving! The law becomes something good when we’re transformed by the Spirit. Charles Spurgeon put it this way: *“What is God’s law now? It is not about a Christian-it is under a Christian. Some men hold God’s law like a rod, in terror, over Christians and say, ‘If you sin you will punished with it.” It is not so. The law is under a Christian for him to walk on, to be his guide, his rule, his pattern….Law is the road which guides us, not the rod which drives us, nor the spirit which actuates us. The law is good and excellent, if it keeps his place.”***
	+ **His Spirit in us produces fruit.**

**Again, we’re not under the law. We’re not free to indulge our sinful nature. Instead we’re free to love and be forever changed through the power of the Holy Spirit.**

**We don’t obey to be accepted by God, we obey as a result of our acceptance. Having been accepted, give God your all. As the song says: love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.**

**3. What do we do with all this?**

* **Keep the Gospel central. (Think back to verse 1- stand firm) Keep returning to what Christ has done. Don’t listen to different gospels.**
* **Consider your flesh dead. v. 24 (It’s actually mortally wounded) Don’t give your sinful flesh FIRST AID!**
* **Stay close to the Spirit. v.25 (This takes practice)**