

The Proof of Freedom - Serving!

Lessons We Have Learned

1. Christians are meant to enjoy freedom.
2. Our freedom is to be expressed properly.

Think about this...

If, as a Christian, you would be free to do anything you wanted with no consequences, what would you do?

The Story Line of Galatians

Many Jews had moved to the area of Galatia and met Jesus Christ through the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

False teachers taught these Jews that as Christians, they still needed to follow the law.

Paul, furious at this teaching, helps these new converts understand how to be unchained and enjoy their freedom.

What Has Been the Progression of Our Learning?

Week 1 — Many people (even Simon Peter!) fall back into trying to keep the law even though it can't save them. Sometimes we hurt the faith of others by doing this. (Galatians 2:11-14)

Week 2 — Why did God give the law if it can't save us? Because it points us to Jesus Christ who can save us! (Galatians 2:15-16)

Week 3 — When we realize what Jesus has done for us, we ought to be so thankful that we allow Him to live through us! (Gal. 2:20-21)

Week 4 — We need the power of the Holy Spirit to allow Christ to live through us.

Today we learn how to identify someone who is filled with the Spirit.

The Command

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." - Galatians 5:1

1. Don't give ground on this one!
2. Don't allow anyone to lead you back into slavery.

The Choices

1. **Legalism** — It says that if you do (or don't do) certain things God will accept you.

"Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law."
- Galatians 5:2,3

- Legalism deals with our physical body.
- Legalism deals with our diet.
- Legalism deals with our dress codes.
- Legalism deals with externals.

Legalism is an extreme that we need to avoid!

2. **License** — It says that since I'm free, I can do anything I want and no one can judge me.

"You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love." - Galatians 5:13

- License is not the way that Jesus lived.
- License is self-centered and selfish!
- License usually leads to conflict and extremes.

"As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!" - Galatians 5:12

License is an extreme that we need to avoid!

3. **Liberty** — It says that since I'm free, I choose to serve others that they may come to know the same freedom.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." - Galatians 5:6

"You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." - Gal. 5:13

- Liberty considers others first.
- Liberty avoids extremes. (5:6)
- Liberty has one "law" — Love others!

Liberty is the lifestyle that Christians should choose!

The Conclusion

1. This can be a divisive issue!

"If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other." - Galatians 5:15

2. But more than anything else, Liberty (serving others) will bring people to Jesus!

"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." - Matthew 5:16

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