

GALATIANS: Called To Freedom #16

Freedom without Mixture

I. Christ Has Set Us Free (Gal. 5:1; Luke 4:18)

“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, & do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” (Gal. 5:1)

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because...He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives...to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.” (Luke 4:18-19)

A. How?

1. Died to break the power of sin (Rom. 6:11)

“The death [Christ] died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin & alive to God in Christ Jesus.” (Ro 6:10-11)

Christians must realize that the mastery of sin has been broken in their lives. [ESV]

2. Paid the price we could not pay (Rom. 5:6, 8; 1 Pet. 3:18)

“At the right time Christ died for the ungodly...God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Ro. 5:6-8)

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God...” (1 Pet. 3:18)

3. Died the death we couldn't die (1 Pet. 3:18); to save us from God's wrath (Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6)

4. Redeemed us from the curse of the Law (Gal. 3:13)

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.’” (Gal. 3:13)

5. Redeemed from under Law (Gal. 4:4-5), ending the Law (Rom. 10:4)

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son...born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.” (Gal. 4:4-5)

“Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” (Rom. 10:4)

‘*End of the law*’ probably includes the idea of both goal & termination. Moses' law has reached its goal in Christ (it looked forward to & anticipated him), and the law is no longer binding upon Christians (the old covenant has ended). [ESV Note]

6. Redeemed from our former manner of life (1 Pet. 1:18)

“Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers...” (1 Peter 1:18)

B. Why?

1. **“FOR”** freedom – aim and/or purpose of His action—“For freedom Christ has set us free...” (Gal. 5:1)

2. To enable us to live in relationship with our Father (Gal. 4:6)

“Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Gal. 4:6)

3. To enable us to live by faith in the Son of God, having died to the Law (Gal. 2:19-20)

“Through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God...” (Gal. 2:19-20)

Paul has died to the law, probably meaning...the law can place no demands on him. Paul died to the law, he says, so that I might live to God. That is, since... in this new relationship with God he has found an amazing new freedom to live a life devoted to God. [ESV]

4. To enable us to live by the power of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16, 25)

“Walk by the Spirit, & you will not gratify the desires of the flesh....If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:16, 25)

C. Exhortation

1. “**Stand Firm**” in the freedom that Christ gained for us (Gal. 1:6; 2:4, 11, 14; 4:30)
2. “Do not submit again to a yoke of slavery”

II. No Mixture (Gal. 5:2-10)

A. What is the mixture?

B. Consequences of Mixture

1. Christ will be “**no advantage**” to you (Gal. 5:2)
“...if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.” (Gal. 5:2)
 - For the Galatians obedience to any one part of the Moses’ law for justification, then they are committed to obeying all of it perfectly for their justification (v. 3), something none of them can do. [ESV]
 - “To accept circumcision was to abandon Christ (Gal. 5:2-12)...What the [Judaizers] were actually offering the Galatian believers was a choice between circumcision & Christ, between the law & grace.” [James D. G. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, p.741]
2. We are **obligated to keep the whole Law** (Gal. 5:3)
“Every man who accepts circumcision...is obligated to keep the whole law.” (Gal. 5:3)
3. We are **severed from Christ** (Gal. 5:4a)
“You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law...” (Gal. 5:4a)
4. We **fall from grace** (Gal. 5:4b)
“...you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.” (Gal. 5:4b)

C. Rejecting Mixture--New Testament Believers are Justified (already) & Expect final Justification (future) by faith

1. New Testament believers already justified by faith in Christ (Rom. 5:1)
“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5:1)
 - *We have been justified* (Rom. 5:1). Romans chapter 5 begins with a ringing affirmation of the objective legal standing of the Christian—that the Christian, through faith in Christ, *has been* justified & declared righteous by God, once for all. The result of this is that the Christian no longer lives under the fear of judgment & the wrath of God but has *peace with God*, which is not merely a subjective feeling but an objective reality. [ESV]
2. New Testament believers expect (hope for) final justification (in the future, Gal. 5:5) also by faith
“For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.” (Gal. 5:5)
 - “*The hope of righteousness*” refers to the believer’s hope & expectation that God will declare that the believer is ...righteous at the final judgment [ESV]
 - “The end in view is God’s final vindication of His own—also an act of justification, of acquittal, in the final judgment. This is clearly implied...in the usual forward look of the verb ‘justify’, referring to the final judgment ...[Hence Paul’s] talk of the ‘hope of righteousness’ (or hoped-for-righteousness) as something ‘eagerly awaited’ (Gal. 5:5). This recognition of the ‘not yet’ dimension of justification by faith gives added force to Luther’s ‘simultaneously sinner & justified (at the same time)’.” [James D. G. Dunn, *Theology of Paul the Apostle*, p. 467]

D. Examples of Mixture

1. Leavening of the lump (Gal. 5:9) “A little leaven leavens the whole lump.” (Gal. 5:9)
2. Placing others on the same level as Jesus Christ (Luke 9:28-36)
Peter: “Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah” *God*: “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!” (Luke 9:33-36)
3. Combining old & new things (Luke 5:37; Heb. 8:13)

“No one puts new wine into old wineskins... the new wine will burst the skins, it will be spilled, & the skins will be destroyed.” (Luke 5:37)

“In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. What is becoming obsolete & growing old is ready to vanish away.” (Heb. 8:13)

III. **Freedom Explained** (Gal. 5:6, 13-14)

“In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.” (Gal. 5:6)

“You were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Gal. 5:13-14)

“*Called to freedom*”-- freedom from Moses’ laws, as represented by circumcision. Far from the Christian life being enslaving, it is the only way to resist the various slaveries offered by the world. But this doesn’t mean that Christians can do whatever they feel like doing (which is just another form of slavery). Rather, serving & loving others is the route to escaping bondage & fulfilling the ultimate content of the law. [ESV]

- A. Don’t live by the Law (legalism)
- B. Don’t live a self-indulgent life
- C. Serve others in love—“through love serve one another” (Gal. 5:13)