



OKOTOKS EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

FREEDOM THAT UNITES

GALATIANS 5:7-15

OCTOBER 20, 2019

SERMON OUTLINE

Grace's Dangerous Secret

1 Corinthians 8:1-6

Knowledge D from L is dangerous (vs 1)

The secret is, there is no C,

but there are always C

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Freedom always P me back to J (vs. 6)

Grace's Heavy Responsibility

1 Corinthians 8:7-13

My knowledge of my R and F does me

no good, when it becomes a T for someone else
(vs 9-10)

My knowledge of God's ways C me to value O

more than my own F (vs11)

In community I S my freedoms for the

C G 1 Corinthians 10:23-24

Practical Examples:

What do I need to do with what I have heard today?

MAIN POINT

Christians have freedom in Christ but should take care to pursue wisdom and care for others within this freedom.

THINKING THINGS THROUGH

Connect the sermon to the study.

1. If you were without any obligations, how would you spend your time?
2. What does it mean to be set free by Christ? How does this compare to the world's view of freedom?

Leader: Freedom is valued in our culture. For many, the idea of freedom includes the ability to do anything one desires. However, as many of us know by experience, pursuing our desires with no boundaries does not lead to the true satisfaction that this view of freedom promises. However, there is a freedom that truly fulfills—and it is only found in Christ Jesus. Galatians 5 starts with a triumphant claim, “For freedom, Christ set us free.” Today, we will consider the reality that Paul stated in verse 15 of this chapter: this freedom is to be used for the purpose of fulfilling the law in loving our neighbor as ourselves.

DIGGING DEEPER

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GALATIANS 5:7-12.

3. Who was ‘cutting in on’ the Galatians and what were they adding to the simple gospel message? What are some unnecessary rules and regulations that we often impose on one another?

4. How might you determine whether a teaching is false or from God? What are some false teachings we are tempted to believe in the church that limits our freedom in Christ?

Leader: The Galatians were off track, pursuing and listening to a message of bondage. In these verses, Paul addressed the false teachers that were polluting the message of freedom in Christ. While our circumstances are quite different, we must take similar care today that we have a right understanding of the freedom we have been given.

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GALATIANS 5:13-14.

5. How were those in Galatia in danger of using their freedom for selfish gain? What did Paul mean by that? What are some modern day equivalents?

Leaders Note: The answer is found in the contrast in v. 14 (Love your neighbor as yourself). We need to look out for others and not indulge ourselves.

6. Why should our freedom in Christ lead us to a life of selfless love for others? How did Christ model this with His life?

Leader: Paul stated that freedom from the law does not do away with the obligations of holy conduct. The freedom we have been given does not allow us to freely sin, but a freedom from sin. We are no longer held captive or left to fight alone. Our freedom comes with the confidence that sin, hell, and death have been defeated by Christ. We have also been given the support of a free family—brothers and sisters in the faith fighting with and for us.

7. What are some ways we might defer our freedoms in order to love others well?

Leader: One of the great rewards of our freedom is the ability to rightly love and serve one another. This paradox of freedom to serve flows from God who has loved us completely in Christ. We love and serve not to earn God's favor, but because He has given it to us already. And we do not do this in isolation. Our freedom provides us with a community of believers with whom we should find support, encouragement, accountability, and aid. The Lord saved us so that we could love and serve others!

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GALATIANS 5:15.

8. In what ways have you seen people in the church “bite and devour one another”? How have you been guilty of this? What leads Christians to turn against one another in this way?

9. How might prizing one's freedom (from bondage to the law) over love for others lead to this type of conflict in the church? On the contrary, how does the selfless love of Christ lead to unity in Him?

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

Leader: The words Paul used in verse 15 bring to mind the picture of wild animals attacking one another. Yet, he was describing the nature of some who claim to have a relationship with Christ. The church cannot pursue unity in Christ if we are continually in conflict with one another. As we allow gossip, sarcasm, and maliciousness to endure, we will find a church in need of triage. We cannot claim the love of verse 14 while living out the carnage of verse 15. These two cannot coexist. The church must commit to one another as a family—building one another up, proclaiming love instead of judgment, and seeking to out-do one another in good works. In this way, we will truly glorify God with our freedom.

DOING LIFE TOGETHER

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

10. How can you free yourself from unnecessary rules and regulations that hinder your progression in your relationship with Christ?

11. Where do you need to pursue reconciliation with others who you might have imposed these regulations on? Oppositely, where have you shown a lack of care for others through a wrong perspective on your freedom in Christ?

Leader: Help group members think of examples of how a person might be careless toward others in exercising their freedom from the law. Examples might include drinking alcohol, celebrating Halloween, or practicing Yoga. While these examples may not be sinful in themselves, it is possible to enter into sin by pursuing these things with no concern for the effect on others.

12. Read Galatians 5:16-18. What is the connection between walking by the Spirit and loving others well in regards to our freedom from the law?

PRAYER

Thank God for the freedom we have been gifted in Christ. Pray that you would faithfully love and serve those around you. Pray for a right understanding of your freedom in Christ and a willingness to defer your own privileges for the sake of others.

MEMORIZE

¹³ You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. – Galatians 5:13

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PASSAGE

GALATIANS 5:7-15

5:7-10 The Galatians had started running the race of the Christian life well, but the Jewish teachers prevented them from continuing. The implication of the proverbial statement, A little yeast leavens the whole lump of dough, is that, even if the teaching of the Judaizers was initially accepted by only a few in the Galatian churches, it would spread quickly.

5:11-12 Apparently, a rumor from the Jewish teachers claimed that Paul still preached circumcision in certain circumstances, evidently a misunderstanding of Paul's actions designed to "become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some" (1Co 9:22). In that spirit, Paul had Timothy circumcised (Ac 16:3). But Timothy was circumcised to become a Jew ethnically so he could minister to Jews. This had nothing to do with becoming a Christian. Those who are disturbing you were the Jewish teachers who emphasized circumcision.

5:13-14 Paul expressed concern about the behavioral opposite of bondage: licentiousness (an opportunity for the flesh). He also expanded his initial reference to love. While it is foolish to "submit again to a yoke of slavery" (v. 1) in trying to keep the law, it is right to be servants to other believers "through love." Paul said that to love your neighbor as yourself fulfills the entire law.

5:15 The phrase bite and devour one another probably looks back to "an opportunity for the flesh" (v. 13) and looks forward to parts of the listing of "the works of the flesh" (vv. 19-21). Paul had apparently heard that there was serious dissension in the churches of Galatia. He warned them that such attitudes and behavior would destroy (Gk analisko; "to consume, eat up") them.