

Intro: What is Freedom? Look up definition you will find something like this:

Freedom is *“the ability to act, believe, change, think and behave without constraint or limitation.”*

Freedom includes BOTH a release from the things that would hold us back, AND the ability to pursue our best life!”

For the next 8 or 9 weeks we are going to work our way through the book of Galatians. If you were to try and distill all 149 verses of Galatians down to one word: FREEDOM! And if you were to find one verse that covers it all: Gal 5:1 *“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.”*

I want you to notice here that there is both the freedom from something...and freedom TO something in this verse.

- Freedom from any and every kind of bondage: *People, Sin, Self, Expectations, Law of Moses*
- Freedom to pursue the life that God gives you in Jesus Christ. *Serve, Contribute, Bear Fruit, Flourish*

As we work our way through Galatians we are going to learn where and how to find freedom from those things that would hold us back, as well as learn how to tap into the power God gives us to live our best life!

To begin, let's get just a little background on the book itself, so we can understand where and when and why fits. In this study I want to challenge you to do something with me. I want to challenge you to memorize the key verse in the book of Galatians; 5:1 *“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free....Stand firm then, and do not let yourselves be....*

Today we are going to talk about Freedom From Pleasing Others! Amazed when people say, bible out of date! Hardly anything I can think of MORE common than people feeling burdened...trapped...shackled...Pleasing Others. Take bibles and turn with me to the book of Galatians Chapter 1, and let's talk about Freedom From Pleasing Others

1. Know Where True Freedom Comes From.

Gal 1:1-5

Very first thing Paul does in this book is lay the foundation for true freedom! He is dealing with pressures, limitations, burdens and expectations from ALL sides...Everyone from the original disciples/apostles, Jewish leaders he used to be a part of, the churches he founded and wrote to, internal expectations for himself and external false teachers...So he plants his flag early...and he plants his flag HARD!

Listen to me: Paul knew WHO and WHY He was...and that knowledge gave him true freedom!

- Apostle: I saw and knew Jesus personally: Damascus Road experience
- Not from Men: My commission is not from anyone other than Jesus: I was SENT by HIM
- Not of Men: I didn't learn what I'm saying from anyone else/history/book/teacher: JESUS
- Product of Grace: Delivered by GRACE: *“To rescue, to pull or pluck from danger, to tear away!”*
Jesus delivered me from Bondage to Sin...and EVERYTHING and EVERYONE else...

We sometimes are confused about where true freedom comes from.

- Money: Health: Job: Young comes moving out: Not responsibility: *I know people slaves to money/health*
- If I just had...or if I just was...or if they just would
- Freedom...true Freedom...Begins with understanding WHO you are in Jesus. Your Spiritual identity! Once you have that nailed down...Then you are FREE! Paul was FREE when in Roman Prison: BEST MINISTRY!

If you want true freedom...then you HAVE to get that foundation in place. If you don't know WHO and WHY you are in Jesus...then you are going to be slave to whatever the loudest voice, the biggest need, the best offer or the encouragement and direction of the crowd and culture around you.

2. Understand The Strategy Used To Steal Your Freedom.

Gal 1:6-10

Here is what the bible says: Satan comes to “steal, kill and destroy.” And one of the things He wants to do TO you is to steal your freedom in Christ. If He has lost the battle for your soul...then He is going to try and limit your impact. He does that holding you in bondage to anything He can find to tie you up and hold you back. 3 Strategies

- Desert: Tempts you to follow something other pure Gospel: *“Transferring self; move or turn away”*
I am STUNNED you have so quickly turned away...You did it to yourself!
- Different: Changes Truth Altered; Strange, Different in Character or Spirit (Left the truth...followed lie!)
- Distort: Pervert: To turn completely around: Corrupt, Make it the opposite of what originally was

There are ALWAYS people who want to tell you HOW to follow Jesus: THEIR WAY! Put you in bondage to Them!

Illus: Here is the background of what is going on here...and literally everywhere Paul preached established Church

- Paul would travel, preach, teach, establish a church: Leave for another place
- A group of people called Judiazers would come behind him: Paul's not one of the 12: (Vs 1)
- Paul doesn't really understand...If you want to be a follower of Jesus: First keep Jewish law! BONDAGE
- So in effect, they are saying...you are saved by keeping the law AND Jesus!
- That is almost always the strategy: Need Jesus and Books of Joseph Smith, or Watchtower, or Whoever

Paul is having NONE of that nonsense! He calls them out clearly VS 8

Illus: My Story: This was the first verse God used in my life to show me His will

- Non Christian: 1 VBS Who was Jesus Drugs Friends Missionaries Special knowledge: Friend School

Applic: Every single one of us have someone...often multiple someone's that want to tell us how to live. And many of us are in bondage to those people...their ideas...their beliefs...they actions...NOTHING to do with Jesus! Sometimes we are in bondage to something in our past, or something happened to us, a person that wants to control or a belief that Satan has whispered in our ear, like: 'You can't; You aren't smart enough, Strong Enough, Wise enough...' Jesus said He has come to set us free...but we aren't living in that freedom because we allow ourself to be turned away, and His truth to be altered and distorted. You have to break Free from that if you are going be FREE in Him

Applic: Sometimes, like the Galatians, we do it to ourselves. It's a Jesus AND! Jesus And Money, Jesus AND Sports, Jesus AND that man, woman, that drug, that hobby...ANYTHING YOU ADD TO JESUS...PERVERTS GOSPEL

I don't know who or what wants to keep you in bondage today...But here is what I want you to know. There is FREEDOM in Jesus Christ. And you only have ONE person to please...that is Him! And while there may be 1000 voices, and people and expectations laid on you by others...sometimes yourself: ONLY HAVE TO PLEASE HIM!

Illus: George Whitefield said it better than anyone I know: I am content to wait til the day of Judgment for the clearing up of my character, and after I am dead I desire no other epitaph than this: Here lies George Whitefield, what sort of a man he was the Great Day will discover!" He was NOT in bondage...whole world against him at times!

3. Seek Confirmation of the Gospel, Not Conciliation or Consensus. Gal

The temptation we face sometimes is to compromise on the essence of the Gospel in order to get along. We don't want to be seen as harsh, or as judgmental, or as uncompromising or unbending. And we shouldn't be...except with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is absolutely NO room for movement here.

And I have to say, today, the American Church is experiencing pressure like never before...and to our shame, many are compromising! They are compromising on issues of salvation, sexuality, gender, marriage, the list is long...and growing! Anytime you are willing to compromise on the truth of the Gospel, you are in spiritual danger of bondage!

Paul was very clear. He went to other spiritual leaders...but he went in order to receive confirmation...not consensus!

- Paul KNEW the Gospel: 1Cor 15:1-5 That is the essence: He unfolds the rest in his letters
- PROPLE OF HIS PAST: Paul wasn't going to surrender to the Jews...though he was one! 1:13ff
- THE POWERFUL: Paul wasn't going to surrender to other Apostles
- THE CROWD: Paul wasn't going to surrender to the Judean churches
- SPIRITUAL LEADER Paul wasn't going to surrender to Peter!
- FALSE TEACHERS Paul wasn't going to surrender to the Judiazers

Paul uses a couple of key phrases in this extended passage you should focus on

- Revelation: vs 12 Directly from Jesus! (That process now done: Illumination of what there: Not NEW)
- Consult: vs 16 To submit something to another for approval
- Set before: 2:2 To declare something, to explain and present

Paul didn't go up to get their approval. He went up to do a sanity check! He went up to make sure He wasn't off base 2Peter 1:20 No private interpretation. He wanted to make sure they were all on same page! They were...

Illus: If you are the ONLY one that has ever seen it in Scripture...maybe...but more likely...there...or wrong!

Applic: There is a balance in the Christian life that we all have to walk. It is the balance between being in relationship with others...hearing from them, allowing them to speak into our lives...we all need that. And being controlled

Peter was doing well until he got intimidated by the Judiazers...and Started Compromising...Jesus PLUS the Law of Moses! That is when Paul called him out...Wasn't a personal issue..it was a Gospel issue!

CONCL: Is there anyone in YOUR life today that wants to keep you in bondage....That seeks to keep you from pursuing the life Jesus wants for you?

- **Parent:** When I told my Father I was going to train for ministry....
Not telling you teens you can do whatever you want...
Bible also says honor your Father and Mother
- **BoyFriend/GF** Keep you from Church
- **Teacher** Changing the truth of Gospel (Addition or OMMISSION)
- **Past Issue:** Something or someone that holds the key to your mind, thoughts, actions..need to be free

That Freedom comes from Jesus....and Jesus Alone!

1. **Make sure you are in relationship with Him!**
2. **KNOW the Truth! (Comes from being in the Word of God! STUDY!)**
A 5 min devotion, a 2 min prayer and 20 mins of praise music
Church a couple times a month...NOT enough!
Setting yourself up for spiritual failure
3. **Starts down at the Altar...asking Jesus to set you free....and then determining to walk in that freedom**