

Grace - Week 4

We love freedom. Who doesn't?

We want to be free to live how we want.

We want to be able to choose what and when we want to do.

The trouble comes when we only think of ourselves in our freedom.

Freedom tethered to nothing but personal desire can lead to happy moments, but it also creates selfish lives.

Galatians 5:13-24 ESV

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual

immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy,[a] drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do[b] such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Understanding freedom from a biblical perspective involves understanding the context it is associated with.

“To understand freedom in the biblical context—it would be required for us to look at the words found in the same sentences: words like truth, give, gift, grace, and Spirit.

Keri Wyatt said Freedom is always related to grace but also to obedience. ... Freedom is not passive but active. It manifests itself in actions that are directed by the Spirit, reflect the will of God”

Paul wants to stress to the Galatians that they have a freedom of life in Christ:

Galatians 5:13–15 ESV

“For 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.’ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh”

Sin binds us.
Salvation in Christ gives us freedom to live a life for him. We are no longer condemned by sin. But what do we do with this freedom?

“The glorious good news of justification by faith is that Christ has delivered us from servile bondage to the law and from captivity to the cosmic forces of evil. But the freedom we have received is not a static thing.

No, true freedom is realized only in the slavery of love. Paul’s action to mutual service is thus not a restriction on freedom but rather the very means of its actualization”

Paul warns the Galatians not to exchange slavery to the law for slavery to the flesh. True freedom is not self-indulgence, nor is it rigid rule-keeping — it’s the freedom to love through the Spirit. Paul is not promoting escape. He isn’t advocating for a new set of regulations or rejecting the body as bad — that’s not the gospel. He rejects both legalism and license.
Freedom comes with responsibility—to God and to others.

“It is ironical that, having urged the Galatians not to become slaves to law, Paul should now encourage them to become slaves of one another, for that is what ‘serve’ means.

It is a paradox, but the paradox is instructive.

The Galatians are to be slaves of one another, though this slavery is not at all like the first. In fact—this is the paradox—it is the Christian form of being free.

Paul explains that we too are enslaved. But we are enslaved to sin.

You see, sin promises us lies. It promises us good things, promises joy, happiness, safety, security and peace. Sin promises never to hurt us or betray us. And over and over again, we fall for the lies. We buy the false promise and are beaten up by sin over and over again. It deceives us and leaves us broken.

As a church, we would help these two brothers repeatedly. We rescued them over and over again....but they continued to return to the lie.

Paul tells us that we too have been rescued. We have been freed from the mastery of our temptations and addictions. We have been rescued by Jesus.

Jesus came to free us from the slavery of sin, not so we would return to our sins, but so that we can live freely by the Spirit.

For that reason, he says, do NOT use the freedom that Jesus purchased for us on the cross, to return to the desires of our flesh (and its slavery), but instead live lives in service and love for God and his Kingdom.

Slavery to sin is involuntary and terrible; a person is born into sin (Ps 51:5) and cannot escape it (Ro 7:18).

John 8:34 ESV

34 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave[a] to sin.

Slavery to law, which comes by choice, is foolish and burdensome.

On the other hand, slavery to one another is voluntary and a source of deep joy.

It is possible only because Christians are delivered through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit from the necessity of serving sin in their lives

The passage turns from inner tension to outward transformation.

The image is not sprinting alone — it's walking with the Spirit, side-by-side. Like people swaying together on a rope bridge — constant attention, mutual adjustment.

Paul's not being polite here. He is straight to the point. We don't sugarcoat the word— he's throwing the lights on. He does not allow for our eyes to adjust to the light. It's like a wake up call.

This is part of the Christian life. To live life by the Spirit, we must fight the desires of the flesh. We may not conquer them completely in this world, but even so, we are called to fight, grieve over and destroy our sin.

When we invest in this flesh-life, feeding the ego, life gets dark fast.

Faith turns fake - idolatry and witchcraft arise, two different symptoms of the same disease.

Relationships turn toxic: Anger flares, jealousy simmers, pride takes over, and we tear each other apart.

We chase pleasure and drown pain, hoping no one notices the emptiness inside.

This is self-destruction in turning away from God.

It is deeply bitter. And Paul's point is clear: if this is what your life smells and tastes like, it's not the Spirit's work —

no matter how religious it looks, it is not what Jesus died for, not the freedom the Spirit gives.

Fruit of the Spirit (vv. 22–23):

not achieved, but grown — a unified character of love, shown in joy, peace, patience...

on the other hand....

When we keep in step with the Spirit, something beautiful happens. We stop trying to force growth and start seeing fruit. Real fruit.

A life that tastes like love — not performance.

Joy that isn't fake.

Peace that holds when the pressure comes.

Patience where we used to snap.

Kindness that interrupts selfishness.

Goodness that costs something.

Faithfulness that sticks around.

Gentleness that heals.

Self-control that actually sets us free.

These aren't spiritual party tricks.

This is what the Spirit produces in ordinary people who say, "Yes — I'll walk with You today." And when a whole church walks that way? You can smell the grace in the room

We can tell what a church is like — what our church is like — by the flavour of its fruit.

Spirit-filled communities are sweet, nourishing, life-giving.

Flesh-filled environments are bitter, toxic, and hard.

To walk with the Spirit is not some magic experiences...

"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (5:24)

It is daily and deliberate work.

We tend the soil. We pull the weeds. We don't feed what was meant to die.

"When we came to Jesus Christ, we repented. We 'crucified' everything we knew to be wrong. We took our old self-centred nature, with all its sinful passions and desires, and nailed it to the cross... So, Paul says, if we crucified the flesh, we must leave it there to die."

So I ask you now church, Are you FREE?

What are you still a slave too?

If you are still a slave to something this morning.

I'm going to ask the worship team to come up (No longer Slaves song)

I invite you to come up.

I want you to understand that God has given us Grace. He has given us the option to be FREE.

Again the End times are coming and I don't know about you , but i want to make sure im free and not a slave to sin before he comes.

Tomorrow might be too late , after service may be too late.

No need to worry about the person around. Your salvation is between you and God.