

Series: Grace Is Everything

Sermon: “Him Who Calls You”

Scripture: Galatians 5:7-15

This week Paul is going to tell us not only what’s worth breaking fellowship over, but also, (and this is *really* important for us in this hyper-charged rhetorical climate), what is simply not a dealbreaker. There are so many things we can and ought to forbear, even and especially when they cost us a great deal of grief and tension. You could say this week is about the way our “Grace Is Everything” value guides our “Community Is Family” value. The part where we begin to realize that the reason he’s spent so much time and energy here is because it’s not just a personal doctrinal issue. It has dramatic effect on our relationships. The second commandment is like the first.

⁷ You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸ This persuasion is not from him who calls you. ⁹ A little leaven leavens the whole lump. ¹⁰ I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. ¹¹ But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. ¹² I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

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.

[PRAYER]

I’m not a car guy. I grew up around motorheads and in garages, but it always felt like a strange club I wasn’t part of and I wasn’t particularly sad about that. It didn’t move me. The other day I was in a drive thru line behind a car that had clearly been modified and was super loud and all I could think about is how obnoxious that guy must be. But the other day I saw a clip of Jeremy Clarkson from the BBC show Top Gear doing an interview on a patio and in the middle of a sentence he stops in awe and says did you hear that? And proceeds to tell you all these specs of a car he didn’t even see. He just heard it. But he knows that sound, and it lights something up inside of him. I’ll still never love cars probably, but if I do it’ll be because of people like Jeremy Clarkson.

- I. Him Who Calls You
- II. Those Who Unsettle You
- III. The Voice You Echo

I. Him Who Calls You

⁷You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸This persuasion is not from him who calls you.

- The contrast: There are two voices. Only two. Saying the same things in a different order.
 - o Come to Jesus
 - o You are accepted
 - o Obey the truth
- Same things, different order. [Chariots of Fire]
 - o “God made me fast and when I run I feel his pleasure” – Eric Liddel
 - o “I’m forever in pursuit and I don’t even know what I’m chasing... I will raise my eyes and look down that corridor; 4 feet wide, with 10 lonely seconds to justify my whole existence. But will I?” - Harold Abrams, “Chariots of Fire”
- We are running toward someone who’s calling us. We don’t have to stir up his affection.
 - o “Not once are we told that God is provoked to love or provoked to mercy... Divine mercy is ready to burst forth at the slightest prick.” – Dane Ortlund, *Gentle and Lowly*
 - o We run toward a voice that takes pleasure in us, delights in us.
- If you’re hearing condemnation and accusations, that’s not his voice.
 - o John 5:45 - Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope.
 - o John 10:3 - The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”
- Persuasion versus calling
 - o Persuasion is about rhetoric and arguments.
 - o Calling is about trusting a voice.
 - Same thing, different order. Just because I’m using the same vocabulary doesn’t mean I’m saying the same thing.
 - “Hello, it’s me, I was wondering if after all these years you'd like to meet”
 - 15-time Grammy award winning female vocalist Adele?
 - I’ll never convince you of that.
 - On the flip side, she can’t hide.
 - o “Is God's voice the loudest voice in your life? That's the question. If the answer is no, that's the problem.” — Mark Batterson, *Whisper*

So, what happened? Who hindered you?

II. Those Who Unsettle You

⁹A little leaven leavens the whole lump. ¹⁰I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. ¹¹But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. ¹²I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

Why is he making such a big deal about circumcision?

- In the voice of God, circumcision is about inclusion, but in the voice of the enemy it's about exclusion.
 - o They want works of the flesh instead of the fruit of the spirit. The order is wrong. Obey the truth, then you'll be accepted.
 - They're modeling that by refusing to accept you unless you obey them.
 - o Inclusion club - the first rule is that you don't exclude anyone.
 - Like we have a big purple crayon and we're drawing lines between us everywhere, but the only thing you have to do to get into the club is to leave your crayon at the door. If you see someone in the club with a crayon, drawing lines everywhere, you know they're not in the club.
 - o They are hindering you because the gospel offends them. *What you judge other people for is what you think is saving you.* (not like those people).
- You can tell they twist God's word. They're twisting my words.
 - o *11 But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed.*
 - o I didn't just accidentally leave that part out; it's at the center. I used to draw the lines and now I don't. *It's the core of my testimony.* You can't just go back and find an old tweet I made that was like, "everybody needs circumcision #winning"
 - Habits of Grace – we push because we want you to hear HIS voice.
- Why do we believe lies? Because they sound like what we heard growing up.
 - o "It takes a lot of sermons and a lot of suffering to believe that God's deepest heart is "merciful and gracious, slow to anger." The fall in Genesis 3 not only sent us into condemnation and exile. The fall also entrenched in our minds dark thoughts of God, thoughts that are only dug out over multiple exposures to the gospel over many years." DO
 - o You were restless, you found rest, and now they're unsettling you all over again.
- *9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump. 10 I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is.*
 - o Leaven: (1 cor 5:6) – Passover - don't let the kid with a hacksaw into the lifeboat.
 - o There are some sins which so violate the fabric of society that they merit exile.
 - We don't tolerate it because it's contagious. (pandemic)
 - o Cut off – angry; priests of another religion; inability to bear fruit; cast out like leaven
 - o Ishmaels will always persecute Isaacs. Cast out the son of the slave!
- Cut OFF that voice, beloved. It is leading you astray. You don't have to be or do those things. Sometimes that voice is coming from the mouth of someone you love and trust. I'm not talking about cutting them off.
 - o "Do what needs to be done" - Matthew 18 go through the appropriate channels. Don't be like them. They are devourers.

III. The Voice You Echo

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.

- Mockingbirds imitate sounds that resonate with them, but they're not lifelong learners.

- Maybe this is part of why Jesus said we have to come as children. Not only so we can hear the voice of the one called Father but also so we can learn to imitate him.
 - John 5 – I only do what I see my father doing.
 - John 12 - I only say what I hear my father saying.
- And we need it. Even if I shut myself in a room by myself or go escape to the wilderness, I will still hear the voice of brokenness inside telling me that I am unloved and unacceptable.
- Freedom is not just a wider array of options for sin. Freedom is to will with God for good.
 - Freedom: there are not a million options. Having a million versions of everything else - that's having a million options on how to die.
 - There are two. Desperate dependence on Jesus, and everything else.
 - We are free to echo the words and works of God to one another.
 - But what if I were surrounded by people whose voices sounded so much like my father's voice that I was constantly reminded of his affection for me? People receiving your story rewires your brain. (Adam Young)
 - But when we take up the voice of the accuser, it bites and devours.
 - Because we have to justify ourselves, and we do this by distinguishing ourselves from others. We're echoing what we heard when we were young.
- We might do both. Hurt people hurt people, but free people free people. (Whole law)
 - It's possible the righteousness you are performing or the virtue you are signaling is louder than the grace your humble repentance would sing.
- I am afraid that instead of welcoming each other back with tearful and joyful reunion, in echo of the kind and gentle voice of God, that some of us might in word or in their hearts, imitate the biting exclusivity of Judaizers.
 - How dare you shout down the whisper of welcome in the ear of a sinner, tempting them to believe that your approval means more than that of Christ?
 - "The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?" — W. Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*
 - Do not hinder them – better a millstone
- And shame on us when we let that spirit animate our own voices. The spirit and the bride say come, not earn! And yet even then Jesus is dying to forgive us.

“Never had he thought, never once, that such a woman existed, one who stood so close to God that God's own voice poured from her. How far she must have gone inside herself to call up that voice. It was as if the voice came from the center part of the earth and by the sheer effort and diligence of her will she had pulled it up through the dirt and rock and through the floorboards of the house, up into her feet, where it pulled through her, reaching, lifting, warmed by her, and then out of the white lily of her throat and straight to God in heaven. It was a miracle and he wept for the gift of bearing witness.”

— Ann Patchett, *Bel Canto*