

Live Free 05: "Limited Liberty"
Galatians 5

August 18, 2024

Main Idea: The transforming freedom we have in Christ is limited only by the Spirit’s work within us.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 begins with another recap of the entire letter to the Galatian churches – “We have been liberated from the penalty of sin, the power sin has in our lives, and an accusing conscience. We are free!” Why do we get so wrapped up in various rules of behavior, standards and policies in the church, and competition for righteousness?

Many outside the church see Christianity as a long list of dos and don’ts. This makes the embrace of authentic faith all the more difficult for them. With others in mind, Paul prescribes limitations that are placed upon our liberty, and how the Spirit enables us in the struggle.

Limits on my Liberty

- 1. I am NOT free to indulge myself (v.13).** Complete disregard for personal righteousness is evidence of self-sovereignty and inauthentic faith.
- 2. I am NOT free to use others for my gain (v.14).** Jesus said plainly, “Love each other.” Ours is a culture that loves things and uses people. Ours is a counter-cultural calling.
- 3. I am NOT free to offend others to the point of rejecting the Gospel (v.15).** I don’t have to please everyone, but I do need to be aware that my life and behavior should never turn someone away from the gospel of Christ.

NOT an “Either/ Or” Proposition

The Bible is very realistic about our ongoing struggle. Followers of Jesus will wrestle with sin, but we can win. We will stumble, but we can still bear fruit. The faithwalk is not an either/ or proposition. Some days I win and some days I lose. Sometimes I do the right thing; sometimes I do the wrong thing. My relationship with God and my eternal reward through His Son does not depend on my winning or losing. We are called to an intentional lifestyle, one that enjoys the liberty found only in Christ while at the same time remains aware of the limitations on that liberty.

Culture Clash (5:16ff)

In contrast to the various works of self-sovereignty listed in vv.19-21, the body of Christ is a community personified by the gracious qualities listed as “fruit” in vv.22-23. A cursory comparison between popular culture and the church reveals the obvious differences. Our culture is built on sexual immorality, discord, selfish ambition, etc. (vv.19-21). In a church that is free you will find love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, etc. (vv.22-23) – not because they are the rules we must follow, but because we are free to allow God's Spirit to work in and through us.

Family Night Big idea – Read Galatians 5:16-26

Focus on the fruits of God’s Spirit listed in vv.22-23. Explain that following Jesus produces fruit in our lives.

- **Elementary School** – Ask, “How can we keep from gratifying our personal desires (v.16)? What are the fruits of the Spirit (vv.22-23)? What have people who follow Jesus crucified (v.24)?”
- **Middle/ High School** – Ask, “What does ‘walk by the Spirit’ mean (v.16)? Why does that matter? What does my flesh most often desire (v.17)? Which ‘fruit’ do you recognize in yourself? How do we ‘crucify the flesh’ (v.24)?”

Prayer: "Heavenly Father help us bear the fruits of your Spirit within us. Amen."

Velocity (Middle and High School Students)

Velocity: At the church this Wednesday, Aug. 21, 6:30pm.

Gravity: Today in both services.

Today’s Songs

All My Fountains.....Chris Tomlin

Hosanna.....Hillsong

A Thousand Hallelujahs.....Brooke Ligertwood

KidsJAM Science Night

Kids are invited to the church this Wednesday, August 21st, for Science Night. This event is from 6-7:30. A light supper is included. Sign up at the KidsJAM Check-in Desk.

CLC Needs Your Help

Candler County Christian Learning Center is a Christian World View Class for students at Metter High School that GCC is supporting. They need snacks and drinks for morning class, and they are looking for van drivers to transport students from MHS to Guido’s and back. If you can help, contact Tyler.

Baptism

Our next Baptism Sunday is October 6th. If you are interested or have questions, please use the Communication Card on the other side of this program and either Pastor Mike or Tyler will contact you.