

Title: Freed by Christ to love and serve others

Passage: Galatians 5:6-15

Galatians - Key Themes

1) if you want to be right with God, all you need is faith in Christ.

- justification by faith alone through grace alone through Christ alone

2) This message is not something newly created out of personal interpretation but rather a message that is consistent from the Old Testament from Abraham/Moses through Jesus.

3) In response to fear that you are not doing enough: You are not only saved by grace but should walk your life *through* grace alone. Always remember God is keeping you in His grace and mercy. Once He saves you, He gives you the desire, will and the power to do good works that honor Him.

Overview:

I. Freed by Christ through faith alone (v. 6-12)

II. Freed by Christ through faith alone to love and serve others (v. 13-15)

I. Freed by Christ through faith alone (v.6-12)

- meaning: works have no value for salvation.

- analogy: trying to grow bananas in Alaska. It simply doesn't work despite best intentions and efforts. Climate is not made of it.

- likewise: you can never save yourself through works. Why? Essentially, you are trusting in yourself.

- analogy: what if someone wanted to marry you but only if you had an inheritance? That is not love but rather being used.

- likewise: when trying to save yourself through your own works, you are really *using* God for your purposes. That's not loving God.

- Then, how are we to live? Keep your perspective on the cross (v.7-10)

- instead of looking at others and thinking it is out of your own effort.

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Colossians 3:1-3

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Persecution will occur in light of the Gospel message of faith alone (v.11-12)

- people dislike hearing that they cannot save themselves or have the ability to affect their salvation/standing before God out of their own effort.

Galatians 5:11-12

But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

II. Freed by Christ through faith alone to love and serve others (v.13-15)

Galatians 5:13-15

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.

- Paul shifts gear and addresses the question: I can live however I want after being saved through faith alone? Yes and no.
- response to people thinking they can then take advantage of "freedom" to permit licentious behavior.
- analogy: people playing a game of basketball. With no rules, there is chaos and disorder out of selfishness (people kicking balls, no teamwork or coordination).
- likewise: we need a proper perspective of the Gospel and its implications (think less of self and more of God as well as others)

Two main kinds of laws in this world:

1) Satan's or 2) Christ's.

1) Satan: you are "free" to do whatever you want to do but really it is continued bondage to sin.

2) Christ's: true freedom is doing God's will by loving other's selflessly

- this is done through the different nature in you by the power of the Spirit.

- reflects what He designed you to do.

- freedom: from pleasing others and ourselves.

- true freedom: out of loving God and loving others.

Also see Paul's prayers

- notice emphasis: once you see God's love clearly, it compels you to love others.

Ephesians 3:14-19

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Philippians 1:9-11

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Colossians 3:12-14

Put on then, as *God's chosen ones, holy and beloved*, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.