

FREEDOM — IN THE — IN-BETWEEN

Introduction:

Paul's main point in his letter to the Galatians was that there is only one gospel (which we see in chapter 1). Any alteration of the gospel negates all of it. The gospel says, "God accepts us, so we follow him." Any change to that will cause it to say, "We need to do something so that God will accept us." Paul then spends the next few chapters illustrating the effects of the true gospel. Here in chapter 5, Paul reiterates the concept of freedom as a fruit of the gospel.

This Week's Main Point:

The gospel frees us to love God and others.

The gospel frees us from past, present, and future penalties for disobeying God. What we often miss is that the gospel also frees us and motivates us to *obey* God. Unfortunately, the Galatian Christians, just like we often do, had become convinced that to ensure they were part of the Christian community, they needed to add circumcision to their conversion. This may seem like a trivial matter, but we cannot add anything to Christ for salvation because he is sufficient in himself. **The act of circumcision was not the problem; it was the belief (doctrine) that accompanied the act.** When we believe that any action improves or establishes our relationship with God, we are in error and at risk of losing the gospel.

Sermon Response Question:

1) In what three ways did Pastor J.D. say the law serves as a guardian for believers?

Bible Study Questions:

Read Galatians 5:1-15

2) How does verse 1 summarize our study of Galatians so far? What is the main point this verse is making?

3) Look over verses 2-6. What are expressions of real, saving faith? What are *not* expressions of saving faith?

4) Verses 7-11 mention four important reasons why some Christians fall into doctrinal error. What are they?

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5) How does the gospel free us and motivate us to love God and others?

6) Look at verses 13-15. What sort of freedom is Christian freedom?

Application Questions:

7) How might we obey God for wrong or inadequate reasons?

8) Think about how you personally are prone to stop trusting in the gospel and instead trust in your own efforts. What are two things you can do to safeguard your reliance on the freedom that Christ has provided?

Prayer:

- Break up into pairs to pray.
- Ask God to:
 - Reveal what thoughts, beliefs, and actions may be hindering you from obeying the truth.
 - Show you what influences are persuading you to not trust in Christ and instead trust in yourself and your abilities.
 - Give you a fresh experience of the freedom that comes only by resting fully in the gospel.

Works referenced:

Galatians for You, Tim Keller

Galatians: Experiencing the Grace of Christ, John Stott

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