

## WHAT DO WE DO WITH FREEDOM?

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Galatians 5:13-16 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

### I. Opening

#### A. Pursuing freedom

1. Dieting
2. Chasing after something continually
  - a) *But then you accomplish your goal*
  - b) *What now?*

### II. Freedom is a funny thing

#### A. Everyone says that they want it

1. But most don't know what to do with it
2. For many – Freedom is the freedom to do whatever they desire.
  - a) *This mindset leads them to believe that they are able to do anything and there are no consequences.*
  - b) *They use the freedom they have been granted to violate the rights of others and then they end up losing their freedom in prison*
    - (1) You're not born a prisoner – you're not destined to be an inmate – the choices that you made put you behind bars

*c) Blame the environment – but for those that have failed there are also those that succeeded.*

B. Freedom comes with responsibility

1. If you want to remain free then you have to conduct yourself in a way that will not cause you to lose your freedom.

*a) Those that are free from alcohol – must not drink or they will again find themselves slaves to the bottle*

*b) Those that are free from drugs must not use – otherwise they will find themselves in bondage to drugs again*

III. Christian Freedom

A. Likewise for Christians that have been set free by the power of Almighty God

1. There are responsibilities that we have to live up to in order to maintain that freedom.

*a) I have never understood the once saved, always saved, doctrine.*

*b) Once shaved – always shaved?*

(1) If I don't shave then I grow a beard – I am no longer shaved

(2) If we don't continue in God's will then we will no longer be saved.

B. Fearful of losing freedom

1. I am not saying that you always must be in doubt about your spiritual condition

*a) Look at it from the aspect of modern laws*

*b) We know what is a crime and what is not in our society*

*c) Jail is reserved for those that commit crimes*

- (1) Those that abstain from crime do not have to worry about going to jail
- (2) Recently I passed a cop car sitting on the side of the road
- (3) About 15 seconds after I passed the cop car it's lights came on and it pulled out into traffic behind me.
  - (a) I looked down at my speedometer but I was not speeding. I slowed down and eased over to the shoulder... The cop car flew on by me, lights flashing and siren wailing
  - (b) My point is that I could have lost my freedom if I had conducted myself in a way that was contrary to societal rules

#### IV. We are free to...

##### A. As I said, Freedom comes with responsibility

##### 1. Paul states not to use "liberty" as an occasion to the flesh

##### *a) What constitutes an occasion of the flesh*

(1) Paul gives us a clear and concise list in verse 19.

(2) Reading from the New Kings James Bible

Galatians 5:19-21 ( NKJV ) 19Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: ~~£~~adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21envy, £murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

*b) Often times it's easy to spot these shortcomings in others...*

*c) But sometimes it's not so easy to spot these failures in ourselves*

B. Easy to spot the Big Ones

1. We pick up on adultery, fornication, sorcery, murders, drunkenness

*a) Those are “Big Sins”*

(1) Those will send you to spiritual “jail”

*b) But what about the others?*

(1) Enough traffic tickets and you lose your license, eventually your freedom

(2) Enough “small sins” and you lose your spiritual freedom

(a) Let that hatred grow inside you unrepentant

(b) Like those traffic tickets piling up

(c) Let the envy, jealousy, or contentions continue

(d) Keep losing your temper

(e) It’s like those traffic tickets piling up in your spiritual life.

C. Our freedom is based on resisting our flesh

1. Recognize that your flesh is at war with God

*a) Understand the nature of your flesh and how it is contrary to God always*

2. Call on God for His strength

*a) When I am weak, then I am strong*

3. Just Say “No”

*a) Just say “NO” to the flesh*

V. Free to love

A. The flesh is self centered

1. It is continually concerned with only itself and what it can get for itself

a) *But love is concerned with others*

b) *I do not believe that you are truly able to “love” the way God intended until you have come out of the bondage of flesh*

B. We love by serving others

1. Paul tells us that we are free – then tells us that we are servants

a) *If you are in prison then you can't help anyone*

b) *But if you are out of prison then you are free to help anyone at all.*

(1) Love is a natural outgrowth of freedom

(2) Who gives the most talent, finance, and attention to third world countries?

(a) This land of freedom – America

(b) We are free to love the World

2. The church is FREE to love the World

a) *Free to support your neighbor*

b) *Free to help the sinner*

c) *Free to pray for the lost*

d) *Free to give to the church*

(1) Jesus made it clear that He wanted us to be servants

Matthew 20: 25-27 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great

exercise authority upon them. 26But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

C. We love by building each other up

1. If we bite and devour each other then we shall be consumed

a) *If we constantly fight with one another then the church will die*

b) *If we cannot forgive and forget then we will end up withered and dead*

2. If we allow discord and confusion to reign among us then we will lose our liberty.

VI. Walk in the Spirit

A. We maintain our freedom to sin by walking in the Spirit

1. A walk is a constant motion

a) *A walk in the Spirit is daily prayer*

b) *Daily Bible Study*

c) *Daily witnessing*

d) *Daily dying out to the flesh*

B. What do we do with Freedom?

1. We keep it!

After Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery in 1849 she immediately became involved in the abolitionist movement. She organized meetings and spoke out against slavery. But that wasn't enough for her. She returned to the South to help other slaves find freedom. If she had been caught she would have become a slave again or been killed as an example to other potential runaways. Tubman returned to the South 19 times and she helped rescue some 300 slaves. One

woman with Freedom used it to bring freedom to 300 others. What could one saint with freedom in God do?

2. What do we do with Freedom
3. We bring others to it