

# Free For A Purpose

Galatians 5:1-15  
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## Galatians 5:1-15

- vv.11,13-15: Freedom!
- vv.2-6: Circumcision and the Law
- vv.7-12: Do not be cut off

### vv.1,13-15: Freedom!

- v.1: "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."
- The law enslaves people

### vv.1,13-15: Freedom!

- ch.2: dying to the law, life in Christ
- ch.3: law as our *paidagōgos*, guardian for a time
- ch.4: adopted into the family of God, not slaves but heirs and firstborn sons, do not be enslaved by the law
- ch.5: law = slavery

## **vv.1,13-15: Freedom!**

- v.13: "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free."
- vv.13-14: "But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command 'Love your neighbour as yourself'"

## **vv.1,13-15: Freedom!**

- Flesh vs. Spirit
- Flesh: live outside the realm of the Spirit of God, to live out of step with Jesus Christ
  - Includes living by the law
- Love is the fulfillment of the law - "Love your neighbour as yourself." (v.14)

## **vv.1,13-15: Freedom!**

- Jesus - Two Greatest Commandments/ all the law:
  - "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind"
  - "Love your neighbour as yourself"

## **vv.1,13-15: Freedom!**

- v.15: "...bite and devour each other... you will be destroyed by each other."
- Our words/tone can wound
- love one another - we are Jesus' disciples (John 13)
- In Christ, we are free... to love God, one another, and all people

## **vv.2-6: Circumcision and the Law**

- v.2: "Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you..."
- "Read my lips," "let me be clear"
- You do not need to get circumcised:
  - v.6: "In Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love."

## **vv.2-6: Circumcision and the Law**

- If you get circumcised, you need to follow the whole law (v.3)
- Do not get circumcised - follow Christ

## **vv.7-12: Do Not Be Cut Off**

- v.7: "You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth?"
- Running - one's spiritual journey
- Cut off - disruptors, leading people astray

## **vv.7-12: Do Not Be Cut Off**

- v.9: "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough."
- A little bit of bad teaching affects the whole community
- Words to the disruptors: "pay the penalty" (v.10), "go the whole way and emasculate themselves" (v.12)

## **vv.7-12: Do Not Be Cut Off**

- Castration in this culture:
  - Eunuchs
  - Pagan practice, punishment, etc.
  - Different roles (ex: royal assistants)

## **vv.7-12: Do Not Be Cut Off**

- Castration in this culture:
  - Old Testament
    - Deuteronomy 23:1: eunuchs not permitted in the worshipping life

## **vv.7-12: Do Not Be Cut Off**

- New Testament:
  - Jesus: refers to someone who lives a life of celibacy, like a eunuch (Matthew 19) - positive association
  - Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8) - baptism, acceptance in community
  - In Christ - no hierarchies

## **vv.7-12: Do Not Be Cut Off**

- Paul is using polemical language (angry and combative) to make a point
- Do not be enslaved to the law, cuts us off from community
- Our freedom has a purpose - to love

## **Takeaways**

- Freedom in the ancient world:
  - Oppressed nation longing for liberation
  - Release from prison
  - Slavery
  - "...released from confinement or restriction. Their limitations were removed, and they could live with a new sense of self-determination."

## **Takeaways**

- Freedom - unrestricted energy, purpose and mission to thrive in the world and contribute generously and benevolently to society
- Human flourishing
- Christ-centred freedom - choose good and human flourishing for all

## **Takeaways**

1. Step into the freedom we have in Christ (from legalism, oppression, striving)
2. Free to love - move toward human flourishing for all
3. Our words/tone, the way we treat one another... matters