Standing Firm in Freedom

1 So, Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law.

“Christ has truly set us free” is the heart and soul of Paul’s message to the Galatian believers. “Now make sure that you stay free” means keep standing firm, stay where you are.” The Galatians had placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ who “set us free.” “Free” means they had been liberated from the guilt and bondage of sin. The goal of the redemptive work of Christ is that men be “free.” Living under the bondage produced by the law is inconsistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“And don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law” implies personal accountability on the part of the Galatians if they move away from grace to the works of law. Although the Judaizers were teaching them and attempting to lure them away from grace to legalism, the ultimate responsibility for not “making sure that you stay free” in what being in Christ had given them was theirs. “getting tied up” means “to ensnare.” The Galatians were close to being ensnared “in slavery to the law.” Paul was using this context in an unfavorable way suggesting restriction from freedom. Paul wanted the Galatians to think of this “yoke” as a yoke of slavery. The Law, like a great heavy yoke around the neck of an ox, causes the ox to bow down and carry a heavy weight. When the “yoke” is removed, the ox stands erect and is free. Like a yoked ox, Paul knew what it was to carry the weight of the law and be restricted from freedom. If the Galatians failed to “make sure that they stayed free” in the freedom of Christ, they would be tied up, burdened and restricted all their life.

Paul was telling them that Christ has set them free from Jewish ceremonial laws and regulations, but not from obedience to God’s moral standard; which is to live unselfishly for others. Therefore, the question is asked “Do you use your freedom in Christ to live for yourself or for others?”

The Way of Love

**13**For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.

Being a Christian means you are free from the Mosaic Law as a way of life. However, being a Christian does not mean you are free to live as you please. “Liberty,” or being free from the law, is not a license to sin. “Called into live in freedom” are four of the most precious words in the Bible. It means the Law has no claim on the believer. The popular imagine of Christianity today is a life of restriction and bondage. Real Christianity is not bondage to anyone or anything. It is grace and freedom in Christ. Paul wanted the Galatians to ignore the call to legalism by the Judaizers and remember they had “been called to live in freedom” in Jesus Christ. While Christian “liberty” is freedom from sin, it is not freedom to sin. That is what Paul taught when he said, “don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature.” Freedom from the law should never be used as an opportunity to indulge in sin. As Christians we’re not saved by good works, but rather saved to do good works (Ephesians 2:10).

“Instead use your freedom to serve one another” is the exact opposite of using freedom in Christ as an opportunity to use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. “to serve” means to help others. That is the essence of the Christian life. Grace does not free us to do as we please. Grace frees us to “serve” others. The gospel takes a man from the slavery of Law and sin and makes him a slave of grace and love. The world’s concept of freedom often results in man’s slavery to sin. However, the Christian is free to live according to God’s will because God has done a work of grace in his heart.

Young Ault Took – Over the next week within your family or on your job think about or reflect on something that happened that caused you to be critical of someone. Write down the things about them that are their strengths and remind yourself of Jesus command that we are love others as we love ourselves.

**5**So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law.

**2**Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: If you are counting on circumcision to make you right with God, then Christ will be of no benefit to you. **3**I’ll say it again. If you are trying to find favor with God by being circumcised, you must obey every regulation in the whole law of Moses. **4**For if you are trying to make yourselves right with God by keeping the law, you have been cut off from Christ! You have fallen away from God’s grace.

**5**But we who live by the Spirit eagerly wait to receive by faith the righteousness God has promised to us. **6**For when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, there is no benefit in being circumcised or being uncircumcised. What is important is faith expressing itself in love.

**7**You were running the race so well. Who has held you back from following the truth? **8**It certainly isn’t God, for he is the one who called you to freedom. **9**This false teaching is like a little yeast that spreads through the whole batch of dough! **10**I am trusting the Lord to keep you from believing false teachings. God will judge that person, whoever he is, who has been confusing you.

**11**Dear brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%205%3A1-15&version=NLT#fen-NLT-29134a)] if I were still preaching that you must be circumcised—as some say I do—why am I still being persecuted? If I were no longer preaching salvation through the cross of Christ, no one would be offended. **12**I just wish that those troublemakers who want to mutilate you by circumcision would mutilate themselves.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%205%3A1-15&version=NLT#fen-NLT-29135b)]

**13**For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. **14**For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%205%3A1-15&version=NLT#fen-NLT-29137c)] **15**But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another.