

**ETHAN TEMPLE MINISTRIES TOOLS FOR  
LIFE  
ASSC. PASTOR DANIEL GOLOVENKO**

---

**The Freedom to Love One Another**

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:1 - For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

**SUMMARY**

One of the profound teachings of the faith is the concept of Christian Liberty/Freedom. “Thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have...been set free from sin” (Romans 6:17). In Christ, each person is a new creation unshackled from the sinful person they once were and by the grace of God are now free to live a fulfilling faithful life. Yet, While we have been set free it is still possible to revert to a slave/imprisoned mentality. Much like the Israelites wanted to return to the comforts of Egypt after being freed from slavery, we may sometimes find ourselves returning to past behaviors.

In Galatians, Paul is dealing with a congregation who have gravitated back into a legalistic and works-oriented spirituality. They believe that they can earn their own salvation through good behaviors, to which Paul summarizes his exhortation in One Verse, to paraphrase “When Christ freed you, he meant for you to stay free, you ought to stand firm and not return to the yoke of slavery”.

Paul explains why we should take Christian freedom so seriously and also how to protect ourselves from being entrapped again.

**The Serious Problem of Rejecting Freedom**

Galatians 5:2,6

Listen! I, Paul, am telling you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you... 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts is faith working through love.

The Galatian Church had seen a surge in legalistic spirituality, summarized by their act of circumcision. And Yet Paul warns them that if indulge such behavior then they are nullifying the significance of Christ. Christ means for us to remain free and to reject the freedom in Christ is to push Christ aside.

They need to take note of the true reality, that none of their actions truly count. All that counts is faith, and as we know 'faith without works is dead' and in Paul's definition a working faith is a faith that works by love.

### **What Causes Us to Get of Track?**

Galatians 5: 8-10

You were running well; who prevented you from obeying the truth? 8 Such persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. 9 A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. 10 I am confident about you in the Lord that you will not think otherwise. But whoever it is that is confusing you will pay the penalty.

Paul speaks candidly that the Galatian church has gone off track and that their spirituality is not something that comes from God. Paul uses a proverb regarding yeast to illustrate how this all started, alluding to Christ's teaching, "beware of the yeast of the Pharisees". It started when someone among the Galatians had the wrong idea, and they allowed it to spread till the whole congregation thrown of track. Paul speaks that those who divert others off course will bring a punishment on themselves

### **What Should We Do Now?**

Galatians 5:13-15 For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. 14 For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 15 If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

Paul reminds the Galatians that they are free, but he also cautions them from jumping to another extreme of using their freedom selfishly. Instead Paul teaches that we ought to serve one another, we are free to serve one another. He defines the obligation we have with the profound reference to love our

neighbors as ourselves, because as it is our failure to love results in us acting like wild dogs biting at one another.

Overall The Galatians show us several reminders of human behavior. Sometimes we take twist the freedom of Christ into a new form of legalistic imprisonment, and on the other hand some might be tempted to use their freedom to be selfishly indulgent. Both extremes count for nothing, what truly matters is that we learn to appreciate that we are free to love one another, for by loving one another we prove our faith is real and that we are live according to how Christ Called us.

---

Ethan Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church  
4000 Shiloh Springs Road, Clayton, Ohio 45315