

Serve One Another (Free For A Purpose)

The One Anothers

Galatians 5:13-15

Bro. Ken Culver

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! Galatians 5:13-15

I. What Freedom Means

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13

A. What We Are Freed From

Jesus gave up His glorious life in Heaven, His freedom as a member of the Triune Godhead, to secure our freedom. He willingly submitted Himself to the Law, fulfilling it perfectly, and died a terrifying, sacrificial death on the cross. The infinite source of life was even entombed, until God raised Him from the dead and restored Him to His place in Heaven.

Because of His life, death and resurrection, we are free from:

- God's wrath

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. Romans 5:9

- The mastery of sin

But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit [a]to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. Romans 6:22

- The dominion of Satan and his demons

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and [a]conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, Colossians 1:13

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 1 John 4:4

- Living under the curse of the Law

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), **Galatians 3:13**

- We are free from having to approach God with terror and dread

12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. **Ephesians 3:12**

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. **Hebrews 4:16**

- The condemning accusation of Satan and ourselves

8 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who[a] do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. **Romans 8:1**

- The tyranny of other's expectations

"Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience? **1 Corinthians 10:29**

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. **1 Corinthians 10:31**

II. What We Are Freed For

God's goal for our freedom is to live as the redeemed people we are. It's as if He has released us from the prison of sin and now we are free — free not to do those things that would put us back in prison but to live a meaningful life, a beautiful life.

God's freedom takes us to Himself and opens the way to the highest and best in the life He has created us for.

- Instead of the empty despair of sin, we are called to righteousness and hope

And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. **Romans 6:18**

And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. **Romans 15:3**

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. **2 Corinthians 5:21**

- Rather than living in grasping selfishness, we are called to openhanded generosity

As it is written:

*“He has dispersed abroad,
He has given to the poor;
His righteousness endures forever.”*

10 Now [g] may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, [h] supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, **11** while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. **2 Corinthians 9: 6-11**

Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 1 Timothy 6:18

- Instead of drifting in the haphazardness of our desires, we are directed into the steadiness of God’s will

that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. 1 Peter 4:2

And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1 John 2:17

- Rather than living divided and divisive lives, we are called to be reconciled to God and to be agents of His reconciliation.

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not [a] imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. **2 Corinthians 5:18-20**

- Instead of self-centeredness, we are called to care for others

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the [a] holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. **32** All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats. **33** And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. **34** Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: **35** for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; **36** I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

37 “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? **38** When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? **39** Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ **40** And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’ **Matthew 25:31-40**

*that there should be no [a]schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. **1 Corinthians 12:25***

- Rather than living in isolation, we are called to community

*For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. **Romans 12:4-5***

*16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. **Ephesians 4:16***

- Instead of rigid conformity to the world around us, we are called to be transformed into the likeness of the One who is the Way and the Truth and the Life

*For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. **Romans 8:29***

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. **Romans 12:2***

- Not unbridled individualism, but holiness and love

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” **John 13:34-35***

*And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. **1 Corinthians 13:13***

*but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, **1 Peter 1:15***

III. The Proper Outworking of Freedom

What grand designs God has for us! But what grand messes we so often make of them. We forget what we’ve been freed from and freed for. We forget what true freedom is and fall back on our false ideas of unrestrained, independence, chanting our mantra of “I’ll do what I want, when I want.”

But that isn’t freedom, and that isn’t life. God wants both true freedom and life for His people.

A. Freedom vs. The Flesh

*For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; **Galatians 5:13a***

Christian freedom is not freedom to indulge the flesh.

as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for [a]vice, but as bondservants of God. 1 Peter 2:16

Christian freedom is freedom from sin, not freedom to sin

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Galatians 5:24

Our sinful desires don't want to admit that they are dead, so we have to keep reminding them!
They are nailed to the cross and no longer have any authority over us.

B. Freedom Is Found In Serving

"you were called to freedom, brethren; ... so through love serve one another." Galatians 5:13

1. Christian Freedom Is Not Freedom To Exploit Others

"We are not to use others as if they were things to serve us; we are to respect them as persons and give ourselves to serve them."

— John Scott:

Serving out of love frees us to respect and restore the dignity of others; it helps us recognize others' God-given value; and it humbles us so that we stop trying to control others and start participating in God's way of doing things.

C. Freedom And The Law of Love

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! Galatians 5:14-15

1. Christian Freedom Is Not Freedom To Disregard The Needs of Others

We are not to be:

- self-indulgent - using our freedom as an opportunity for the flesh
- self-servicing - exploiting others to accomplish our ends
- self-centered - caring only for ourselves and ignoring the good of others.

We are to love God and one another, fulfilling the heart of God's Law

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." **Matthew 22:36-40**

“The rejection of law-keeping as the way of salvation does not alter the fact that the law gives us a useful guide to the way we should live.”

— Leon Morris

10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. Romans 13:10

This law of love is one of God’s greatest purposes for setting us free.

But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! Galatians 5:15

Paul shows us what happens when we revert to our self-oriented, human ideas of freedom.

A loveless life is a selfish life, driven by clawing competition and cutting criticism. Instead of nourishing each other, we chew each other up; instead of growing together, we shrink into ourselves. As someone has said; “Any man wrapped up in himself makes a very small package.”

Let’s not live small lives, but let’s live in the fullness of Christ’s freedom, serving from a heart of love so that the whole world will see Christ and come to Him for real freedom.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45

And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32

36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. John 8:36