

## Let Freedom Reign

### Galatians 5:1-12

*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. <sup>2</sup>Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. <sup>3</sup>Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. <sup>4</sup>You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup>But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope. <sup>6</sup>For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. <sup>7</sup>You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth? <sup>8</sup>That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. <sup>9</sup>“A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough.” <sup>10</sup>I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view. The one who is throwing you into confusion will pay the penalty, whoever he may be. <sup>11</sup>Brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. <sup>12</sup>As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!*  
Galatians 5:1-12 (New International Version)

Today's passage helps us identify **three guidelines** for a freedom-filled life.

- **Guideline #1: We must stand firm in the freedom of Christ.**  
(Galatians 5:1)

*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

Three observations from the verse:

#1: Our calling is to have freedom in Christ.

#2: Our commitment is to stand firm in the truth of the Gospel.

To “stand firm” in the Greek can mean to persevere and persist.

*. . . let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. <sup>2</sup>Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. . . .*  
Hebrews 12:1-2 (NIV)

- #3: Our caution is to stay away from legalistic bondage.

*We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.* Hebrews 2:1 (NIV)

*Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.* Galatians 4:8 (NIV)

- **Guideline #2: Freedom must not be lost through legalism.**  
(Galatians 5:2-6)

*In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”* Luke 22:20 (NIV)

*All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”*  
Galatians 3:10 (NIV)

*For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.* James 2:10 (NIV)

Steve McVey, in his book *Grace Walk*, defines legalism as “a system in which a person seeks to gain God’s acceptance or blessing by what he or she does.”

The power of sin is the law. See 1 Corinthians 15:56 (NIV).

- **Guideline #3: We must not allow false teaching to steal our freedom.**  
(Galatians 5:7-12)