

Freedom Isn't Free
Independence Day 2017
7/02/2017 Sunday AM

Scripture: Galatians 5:1-15

Introduction

- Tuesday will be Independence Day here in the United States.
- On July 4, 1776 America declared independence from the British Empire.
- For the past 241 years America has enjoyed freedom.
- Freedom is something special in the United States of America, not only our national freedom, but our personal freedoms as well.
- However, our freedom is also something that we very much take for granted.
- This morning we will look at Freedom Isn't Free as we discuss the eternal freedom that Christ gave us in light of our national holiday of Independence.

Galatians 5:1-15

¹It 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. ²Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. ³Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. ⁴You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. ⁵But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope. ⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. ⁷You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth? ⁸That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. ⁹"A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough." ¹⁰I 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. ¹¹Brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. ¹²As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves! ¹³You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. ¹⁴The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

- Paul is speaking here to the Galatians about the freedom that Christ gave them.
- How is it that "Christ has set us free"?
- The price for our spiritual freedom was Jesus sacrificing His life on the cross over 2000 years ago.
- Paul cautions the Galatians in v. 1 to "Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."
- What Paul was saying to the people was that they did not need to revert to the ways of the past.
- The people of Paul's day had a hard time grasping this new found "freedom" that Christ provided to them.
- Many people were still trying to live by the letter of the Mosaic Law while at the same time, claiming allegiance to the New Covenant that Jesus Christ established.
- To continue to try and find righteousness in the Law, was to basically say Christ died for nothing.
- In **Matthew 5:17** Jesus says, "'Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.'"
- Jesus had fulfilled the requirements of the Law and because of that we had been set free.
- Again this "freedom" and being "set free" idea really confuses people sometimes.
- In v. 13 Paul says, "You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love."
- We are "set free," BUT there are limitations to our freedom. Spiritually, we should not consider our freedom from the letter of the law a license to "indulge the sinful nature."

- As we stated in the beginning, Freedom Isn't Free, it always comes with a price.
- One of the Prices of Freedom is:

I. Personal Sacrifice

- We gained freedom as a nation 241 years ago because of the personal sacrifice on many men and women of the time.
- The colonists did not just sign and adopt a declaration, they had to fight the Revolutionary War against Britain which lasted over 8 years.
- The freedoms that you and I enjoy in this country today, have literally been bought with the blood of those that gave their lives in personal sacrifice over 200 years ago.
- The freedom that you and I enjoy spiritually, was literally bought with the blood of Jesus Christ over 2000 years ago.
- Again, Freedom Isn't Free. Another price of freedom is:

II. Perpetual Vigilance

- Freedom is something that is very fragile.
- Often times freedom isn't taken from us, we slowly let it slip from our hands.
- Historian John Gibbon said, "The first warning of Rome's ruin was not in the hostile armies mobilizing against her, but in the feasting and boasting and riotous living in her vicious capital."
- If we want to maintain the freedoms that we enjoy in this country, we must always be vigilant about what is happening around us.
- Unfortunately, our freedoms are being stripped from us year after year and we are "sleeping" through it.
- A lack of reverence for God usually precedes freedom's fall.
- Paul was urging the Galatians to "stand firm" and to be vigilant concerning their freedom in Christ.
- As Christians, our salvation is secure as long as we have surrendered our hearts and lives to Jesus Christ.
- However, we can "shackle" ourselves when we do anything to diminish Christ's payment for our salvation.
- The last price of freedom is:

III. Personal Restraint

- We somehow have the idea that freedom means we can do whatever we want, that is not true.
- As American, we enjoy many freedoms, but these freedoms come with limitations.
- For instance, we have the freedom of speech, but you cannot falsely yell "FIRE!" in a crowded room.
- Freedom requires that we all limit ourselves in order to maintain freedom for all people.
- To illustrate this point, my freedom to swing my fist, ends where your nose begins.
- In v. 13 Paul gives the people a BUT statement.
- He tells the Galatians that they should not see their freedom as a license to "indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love."
- Our spiritual freedom comes with limitations just like our freedom as Americans.
- We must live our lives within the limitations that have been set forth, this requires personal restraint.
- In 1776 the colonist had reached a point where they were tired of tyranny and oppression and they sought freedom.
- Are you tired of the tyranny and oppression of this world that we are living in today?
- Are you ready to find ultimate freedom through Jesus Christ?

Tonight's Bible Study

The Book of Colossians – "Review of Colossians" Colossians 4:7-18

Wednesday Night Bible Study:

Who's Who in the Bible? Jezebel