

SERIES: LOOKING BACK – MOVING FORWARD

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Monday, August 15, 2022

Scripture: Galatians 5: 1-4

TITLE: The Gift of Grace

Have you ever received a gift that you just didn't know how to accept it? Or you were glad to receive it, but you didn't know what to do with it? I think this happens all the time.

We struggle when receiving gifts of all kinds...even the gift of salvation.

If you're struggling with grace, Paul has some encouragement for you in Galatians chapter 5 beginning in verse one.(ESV).

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

Paul says Christ has set us free. What does he set us free from? Slavery to sin. Jesus sets us free from being slaves to ourselves and our own selfish and sinful desires. And this freedom was a gift. It was grace.

Maybe today you're struggling with grace. Or you're struggling with your freedom. Maybe you've received God's gift, but you still struggle with greed. You just can't seem to get enough. Maybe you are struggling with lust and now you're addicted to pornography. You know you're forgiven, so you shrug off your addiction. Maybe you look around at the world and you get so angry. But that anger leads to blowing up at a child, a spouse, or anyone in your path.

If you are a follower of Christ, you are free. That doesn't mean you're not going to struggle. What it does mean is that you are free from having to go back to the addiction or the behavior.

But maybe it's not abusing your freedom. Maybe for you it's struggling with accepting the gift. That is why Paul was writing to the Galatian churches. People were going back to the game of religion. Trying to earn their way back to God when Christ paved the way.

That's why Jesus said in John 14:6: *I am the way the truth and the life no one comes the father but through me.*

There's no amount of prayers you have to say or amount of money you need to give away; there's no amount of random acts of kindness that can save you. Salvation and freedom from slavery to sin comes purely as a gift from God through Jesus Christ.

If you today are not a Christian, God offers you freedom from slavery to sin. You don't have to keep doing life the way you've been doing it. If you're like most people, playing the game of religion -- the performance game of life -- leaves you feeling empty and frustrated. God says,

“Give up and meet my son Jesus Christ.” Through Christ, his death on the cross and resurrection is where you can find true freedom and peace with God.

If you are a Christian today and you are struggling with sin, remember you are no longer a slave to sin. The chains have been broken. The door to the prison cell has been ripped off to never be put on again. Pray to him for help. Seek accountability and assistance through a Christian friend or pastor. And go back to the Bible to be grounded in truth.

God’s grace is overwhelming. It’s unlike any gift you can receive. My challenge for you is to receive it and allow it to change you today.