



SERIES: WE ARE FREE (A Study of Galatians) December 2022 – January 2023

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Saturday, January 14, 2023

Scripture: Galatians 5:11-15

TITLE: True Freedom

How would you define freedom? Is freedom the opportunity to do whatever you want, no matter the cost? Does it mean freedom to do whatever you choose at no cost? Does freedom mean a life without restrictions? What is true freedom? The answer might surprise many of us, and that's what we want to talk about today in Galatians 5, beginning in verse 11-15 (ESV). Listen to what Paul says about freedom.:

But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

What is going on here? What does this have to do with freedom? I mean Paul's talking about religious fervor, to the point of cutting off parts of your body. Paul is challenging a group of believers to consider what it means to be free in Christ. On one hand, freedom is: resting in God's grace is sufficient for you. This group of people really struggled with that. They felt like they kept having to go back to their old religious ways, to earn their way to God. I think we all struggle with this, regardless of what kind of religious background we come from.

But then in verse 13, he makes a very shocking shift. He says, “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

You see, here's the problem with freedom as the world defines it: It is narcissistic and self-destructive. It's destructive to oneself, but it's also destructive to the community around you.

You see, when we view freedom as an opportunity to do whatever we want, whenever we want, we're destined to fail. That philosophy is unlivable. And frankly, that principle should be understandable for a Christian.

The Apostle Paul said in Romans 6, by no means shall we keep living in sin, (vs. 1-2). In verse 7, Paul would say, “for one who has died has been set free from sin.”

Our freedom in Christ does not give us a license to sin. There are some who will tell you that God's love has no boundaries. That's not true. Yes, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

His love is extended to all, but it is not forced upon anyone. Because God loves us, He frees us from our sinful desires. He frees us from being slaves to sin. Today, if you are feeling like a slave to sin, but you are a child of God, then you must realize that you are free. We have no excuse to be playing in sin. We have no reason to pretend like we cannot stop.

Today if you are struggling with pornography, alcoholism, drug addiction, greed, know that God has freed you. But you have to desire that freedom. You have to pursue that freedom. And you have to rest in that freedom today.

My challenge for you is to believe that you are free. Live as a person free from slavery to sin. And instead, live as a child of the King.