

Galatians: Freedom In Christ

Week 10: Stand Firm (Gal 5:1 – 5:12)

Look Around

We often implement new habits or routines to help us accomplish goals (i.e., improved fitness, better time management, completing a project, etc.). Have you ever gotten so caught up in perfecting the tasks of the new routine that you got burned out before you could accomplish your goal? What caused you to become so fixated on perfecting tasks?

Sticking with a new routine to help accomplish our goals requires consistency in our commitment to the new routine and remembering why we started the new routine in the first place. When we lose sight of our original goal, we can become fixated on going through the motions of the routine and lose sight of why we started in the first place. The same is true in our journey with Christ. When we get caught up in perfecting religious practices and rituals, we lose sight of God's grace and the freedom we have in Christ to grow closer to God and to express our faith as love—an expression made possible through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Look at the Text – Context

In this section of the letter, Paul again pleads with the Galatians to remember that faith in Christ grants freedom from The Law. But to realize their freedom, they must stand firm and resist the urge to become fixated on obeying The Law. Not only is obeying the whole law impossible, but it alienates them from Christ and what truly matters: expressing their faith in love. Paul also asks the Galatians to look again at what keeps them from standing firm in their freedom in Christ. Indeed, whoever is keeping them from freedom is not motivated by the things of God, and they will have to pay for the confusion they are causing!

Look at the Text – Observation & Interpretation

Galatians 5:1 – 12

Observation

- What is Paul asking the Galatians to do in Galatians 5:1?

- What does Paul say will happen to the Galatians if they try to be justified by The Law?

- If The Law doesn't bring righteousness, what does?

- What does Paul say will happen to anyone who suggests the Galatians continue to follow The Law?

- If circumcision or uncircumcision doesn't matter, what does?

Interpretation

- Galatians 5:1 says, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourself be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." What does it mean to "stand firm"?

- Why is it so important to Paul that the Galatians understand the consequences of trying to be justified by The Law?

- Why do you suppose Paul tells the Galatians that the only thing that matters is expressing their faith in love?

- In Galatians 5:8, Paul says that any suggestion to try to be justified by The Law does not come from God. Why do you suppose Paul feels this way?

- Why is Paul convinced that anyone who continues to persuade the Galatians to be justified by The Law will have to pay a penalty?

Look At God

- So often, the human relationships we cherish most become strained and challenging, but our relationship with God doesn't have to be that way. Because of Christ, we have the freedom to continuously remain in a loving, intimate relationship with God, who will never expel us from his presence. How will you use this freedom to deepen and strengthen your relationship with God?

Look At Me

- In your own words, write a paragraph that summarizes what it means to be free in Christ.
- In Galatians 5:7, Paul asks the Galatians what keeps them from living in the freedom Christ gave them. What would be your response if Paul asked you this same question today?
- What are some of the ways you have seen people be hindered from living in the freedom of Christ?
- How can you be sure you are not hindering others from living in the freedom Christ gave them?



- How can you keep yourself from being hindered from living in the freedom Christ gave you? In other words, how can you stand firm in the freedom Christ gave you?