

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Set Free For Freedom

(Jerry Fite)

Paul writes, “*For freedom did Christ set us free...*” (*Galatians 5:1*). Freedom is a lofty concept cherished in various forms. A teenager, itching to spread the wings of independence, longs for the day when he or she can escape the constraints of parental demands. A citizen, pressed down by a totalitarian regime, dreams of what liberty might be like. A prisoner, remembering what it once meant to be free, longs for the day when the taste of freedom will be even more precious.

Yes, freedom is cherished regardless of our situation or station in life. However, Paul is stressing the most important freedom of all. Regardless of our age, citizenship or circumstance, we need to be set free from sin. While the outward physical circumstances catch the eye, the spiritual freedom from the bondage of sin should deeply touch the heart. Sinless Jesus paid the ransom price with His precious blood, freeing us from the slavery of sin (*I Peter 1:18-19*). Having our conscience cleansed by Jesus’ blood in baptism, we have the guilt of sin washed away (*Hebrews 9:14, Acts 22:16*). We contact the deep cleansing blood of Christ when we are baptized into His death (*Romans 6:3-4*).

Knowing the truth Jesus reveals, we are set “free” from the bondage of sin (*John 8:32*).

Paul is reminding the Galatians that Christ set us free to enjoy freedom. So, “stand fast” in the freedom you have in Christ, and “*be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage*” (*Galatians 5:1*). Some in the churches of Galatia, were trying to incorporate the Law of Moses into the Gospel of Christ. The Law of Moses was never designed to justify man who sinned under its demands (*Galatians 2:16, 3:10*). There is only one Gospel to preach to produce one unifying faith, and that is the good news of redemption in Christ (*cf. Galatians 1:8, 23 Romans 10:17, Ephesians 4:5*).

Our freedom in Christ does not mean we are free to do as we please. We have a new Master. He is the Lord Jesus Christ! We are under His law, submitting to His will as revealed from heaven in the truth of the Gospel (*cf. I Corinthians 9:21, Ephesians 4:5*). By abiding in Jesus’ word, we are equipped as disciples to know the freedom giving truth (*John 8:31-32*).

Being a bondservant of righteousness in Christ, we enjoy some blessings from spiritual

freedom. We have “*escaped from the corruption that is in the world through lust*” (*2 Peter 1:4*). Lust for money, sex and drugs has led many to a life of disappointment and sorrow. They have led many away from the faith and the will of God unto financial and spiritual ruin (*I Timothy 6:9-10, I Corinthians 6:12-13*). In submitting to Christ as your master, you will enjoy monetary blessings as being from God, and share them with others, instead of being in bondage to riches (*I Timothy 6:17-19*). You will flee fornication, knowing that satisfying sexual desires is reserved only for marriage (*I Corinthians 6:18, I Corinthians 6:13, Hebrews 13:4, Genesis 2:24*). As a bondservant of Christ, in enjoying the freedom from corruption, you will not allow yourself to come under the power of any foreign substance (*I Corinthians 6:12*).

Being free in Christ, you will not “*use your freedom for the occasion to the flesh, but through love you will be servants one to another*” (*Galatians 5:13*). By manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, comprised of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control, you will be a blessing to others. You are free to serve! Against such there is no law (*Galatians 5:23*)!