

Approximately Expository 35 minutes



## ★ Stand Firm in Freedom

### Galatians Chapter 5

#### ★ 🙏 Opening Prayer:

**Father God, we come before You in the mighty name of Jesus. Thank You for the freedom we have in Christ. Open our hearts to Your Word today. Teach us what true liberty looks like. Protect us from the trap of legalism. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit. And if anyone listening does not yet know You, draw them into Your saving grace today. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

★   **Historical Setting:**

The churches in Galatia were under pressure.

Paul had preached the gospel of grace throughout this Roman province during his missionary journeys. Gentiles had believed. The Spirit had moved. Lives had changed.

But after Paul left, false teachers came in...often called Judaizers...insisting that faith in Jesus was not enough. They claimed Gentile believers had to be circumcised and obey the Law of Moses to be truly saved.

- They were mixing grace with law.
- They were adding works to faith.
- They were turning freedom into bondage.



Galatians chapter 5 is Paul's passionate call to stand firm in the liberty purchased by Christ.

But here's what makes this chapter powerful:

Freedom in Christ is not freedom to sin. It is freedom from sin.

Freedom is not lawlessness. It is Spirit-led living.

### ★1. Stand Firm:

  (NIV) **Galatians 5:1-6 It 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.**

**<sup>2</sup> Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. <sup>3</sup> Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. <sup>4</sup> You who are trying to be justified by the**

***law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup> For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. <sup>6</sup> For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.***

Paul begins with a declaration:

**“It 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.”** (v.1)

Christ did not set you free so you could return to chains.

The “yoke” refers to the burden of trying to earn righteousness through law-keeping.

If you choose law as your path, Paul warns:

**“....If you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all.”**

(v.2)

That's serious.

 Why?


Because if you try to be justified by law:

**“....You are obligated to obey the whole law.”** (v.3)

! The law demands perfection.

And then Paul says something sobering:

**“You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.”** (v.4)

 To fall from grace is not losing salvation....it is leaving the principle of grace and stepping back into performance-based religion.

But Paul reminds them:

**“For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope.”** (v.5)

👉 Christian life is lived:

- By the Spirit
- Through faith
- Anchored in hope



And this beautiful summary:

**“....The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.”** (v.6)

👉 Grace produces love.

! Legalism produces pride.

## ★2. Don't Let False Teaching Spread

  (NIV) **Galatians 5:7-12** <sup>7</sup> **You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth?** <sup>8</sup> **That kind of persuasion does not**

**come from the one who calls you. <sup>9</sup> “A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough.” <sup>10</sup> I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view. The one who is throwing you into confusion, whoever that may be, will have to pay the penalty. <sup>11</sup> Brothers and sisters, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. <sup>12</sup> As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!**

Paul uses a running metaphor:

**“You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth?”** (v.7)

👉 They started strong.  
But someone tripped them up.

**“A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough.”** (v.9)

👉 False teaching spreads.

- Just a little legalism.
  - Just a little spin.
- And it affects everything.



Paul is serious because eternity is serious.

Truth matters.

### **★3. Freedom Is Not License**

**Galatians 5:13-15** <sup>13</sup> **You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.** <sup>14</sup> **For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”** <sup>15</sup> **If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.**

Now Paul addresses the other extreme.

  If we're free from law, does that mean we can live however we want?

 No.

**“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.”** (v.13)

 Freedom is **not** self-indulgence.

 It is selfless love.

True freedom expresses itself in serving others.

**“For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”** (v.14)

 Grace fulfills what law demanded.



When the Spirit fills your heart, love flows naturally.

 But if we live in selfishness:

**“....Watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.”** (v.15)

- Legalism divides.
- Selfishness destroys.
- 👉 Love unites.

#### ★4. Walk by the Spirit:

  (NIV) **Galatians 5:16-18** <sup>16</sup> **So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.** <sup>17</sup> **For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.** <sup>18</sup> **But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**

Now we come to the heart of the chapter.

**“So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”** (v.16)

Notice Paul does not say:

- “Fight harder.”
- “Try harder.”
- “Be stronger.”

He says:

**...Walk by the Spirit...** (v.16)

Christian victory is not self-powered.

👉 It is Spirit-empowered.

**“For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh....”** (v.17)

There is a war inside every believer.

! But:

**“If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”** (v.18)

When a believer is being led by the Holy Spirit, their life is no longer controlled by a religious system of rules trying to earn God’s approval.

The law shows us what is right, but it does not give us the power to live it out. The Holy Spirit does.

Spirit-led living means we are not obeying God out of fear, pressure, or legalism. We are learning to walk with Jesus from the inside out. The Spirit changes our desires, guides our choices, convicts us when we drift, and gives us the strength to live in a way that pleases God.

👉 So Paul is saying this: **the Christian life is not law-driven religion; it is Spirit-led relationship.**

## **★5. The Works of the Flesh**

**Galatians 5:19-21 <sup>19</sup> *The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;* <sup>20</sup> *idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage,***

**selfish ambition, dissensions, factions <sup>21</sup> and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

Paul now describes the works of the flesh.

**“....Sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; <sup>20</sup> idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage...”**

(vv.19-20)

The list continues with division, envy, drunkenness, and more.

He warns:

**“Those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”** (v.21)

Paul is **not** talking about a believer who stumbles, feels convicted, repents, and wants to walk with Jesus.

 Listen .... Every Christian still battles the flesh. A saved person may fall into sin, but

the Holy Spirit will convict their heart and call them back to Christ. That person never lost their salvation...

★ 🖐️ Paul is talking about a **lifestyle of unrepentant sin** .... a person who continues practicing these things with no sorrow, no repentance, no conviction, and no desire to change. That kind of life reveals a heart that **has not truly surrendered to Jesus**. That is why the scriptures say in ***Matthew 7:20 (NIV)***  
***20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.***

🖐️ Freedom in Christ is not permission to live in rebellion.

- Grace does not say, “Now you can sin all you want.”

➤ Grace says, “Jesus has set you free, so you no longer have to be a slave to sin.”

🤔💭 A lost person can live in sin and feel comfortable there.

🔓🔑 But a born-again believer cannot remain comfortable in sin for long, because the Holy Spirit lives inside them. The Spirit will convict, correct, discipline, and draw them back to the Lord.

👉 So the difference is this: the unbeliever practices sin as a way of life, but the believer grieves over sin and is being changed by grace. A Christian may still struggle, but they will not be satisfied staying there. Grace changes our desires, changes our direction, and teaches us to walk in a way that pleases God.

## ★6. The Fruit of the Spirit:



(NIV)

**Galatians 5:22-23** <sup>22</sup> **But the**

**fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,**

**peace, forbearance, kindness,**

**goodness, faithfulness,** <sup>23</sup> **gentleness**

**and self-control. Against such things**

**there is no law.**

Now Paul gives the contrast.

After listing the works of the flesh, Paul now shows us what a Spirit-filled life looks like.

The flesh produces sinful actions that damage relationships, dishonor God, and lead people into bondage. But the Holy Spirit produces Christlike character in the believer.

💡 Notice Paul does not say “fruits” of the Spirit, as if these are separate things we pick and choose from. He says “the fruit of the Spirit.” This is one beautiful work of the Holy Spirit growing in the life of a believer.

👉 Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are not produced by trying harder in our own strength. They are produced as we walk with Jesus, surrender to the Holy Spirit, and allow God to change us from the inside out.

This does not mean a Christian will display these perfectly every day.

- We still grow.
- We still struggle.
- We still need grace.

🔒 🔑 **But over time**, the Spirit begins to make us look more like Christ.

So Paul is showing us the difference:



- The flesh produces works that reveal rebellion.
- The Spirit produces fruit that reveals new life.

A person controlled by the flesh leaves a trail of damage. But a person led by the Spirit begins to leave a trail of grace, love, peace, humility, and self-control.

And then Paul says, **“Against such things there is no law.”** (v.23)

In other words, no law condemns this kind of life. The law is not against love, joy, peace, and holiness. This is exactly the kind of life God desires to produce in His people through the Holy Spirit.

## **★7. Crucified with Christ:**

  (NIV) **Galatians 5:24-26** <sup>24</sup> **Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** <sup>25</sup> **Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.** <sup>26</sup> **Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.**

  Let us get a closer look....

**“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”** (v.24)

That’s decisive language.

At salvation, we declare:  
My old life is nailed to the cross.

**“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”** (v.25)

Walk in rhythm with Him.  
Follow His lead.  
Stay close.

And finally:

**“Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.”** (v.26)

Grace produces humility.  
The Spirit produces unity.

## **Invitation: Be Born Again:**

Maybe you're not living in freedom.

Maybe you're bound by:

- . Sin
- . Guilt
- . Religion
- . Shame
- . Addiction

Jesus did not die to improve your life.  
He died to transform it.

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.

He lived perfectly.  
He died in your place.  
He rose again.

★ You must be born again.

That means:

- Turn from sin.
- Turn from self-reliance.

- Trust in Jesus alone.

Right now, you can pray:

 Let us pray.....

**“Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner.... I cannot save myself..... I believe You died for me and rose again..... Forgive me..... Set me free.... Fill me with Your Spirit..... I place my trust in You alone.” .... Thank you Lord Jesus.... Amen!!!**

“If” you pray that sincerely, you are free.

- Free from condemnation.
- Free from slavery.
- Free to walk in the Spirit.

Welcome to the family of God....

### **Closing Exhortation:**

Brothers and Sisters, stand firm.

- Don't return to bondage.

- Don't abuse freedom.
  - Walk by the Spirit.
  - Bear fruit.
  - Love deeply.

  Freedom is not found in rules.

  Freedom is found in Jesus.

### Closing Prayer:

**Father God, thank You for the freedom purchased by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Help us stand firm and walk by Your Spirit. Guard us from legalism. Produce Your fruit in our lives. And for those who have placed their faith in You today, fill them with Your Spirit and establish them in grace. We give You all the glory. In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.**

