



Sermon Notes from 30 June

The Transformed Life (*Galatians 5*)

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Freedom is one of the central themes of Christianity. It has been given to us through Christ. *'Freedom is both the means and the end of the Christian life! Everything about the gospel is freedom. Jesus' whole ministry was an operation of liberation.'* – Timothy Keller. Yet, there is still a battle within us; we do not feel free, but held back.

What should we do with our God-given freedom?

1) Freedom to Serve

v1 – Paul warns us of the fragility of our God-given freedom. Christians who have been set free by Christ, can slip back into slavery. *'The two greatest enemies of Christian freedom are legalism and license.'* – Philip Ryken.

v13-14 – Paul prescribes two boundaries for our freedom:

The flesh – refers to man's sinful nature: we want to do what we want, and not what God wants. Do not use this freedom as a license to sin! Anyone who uses it to indulge in the flesh is not free at all. *'Real liberty comes when Christ frees me from sin, not to sin.'* – Philip Ryken.

Loving and serving one another – Paul says that by serving one another, you fulfil the entire law of God. God desires for us to keep His commandments. By doing so, we express our love for Him. The law is there not to lead us to salvation, but to guide and lead us on the right path. Use your freedom to love and serve one another!

2) Freedom to Overcome

v16-17 – There are two opponents that are battling within us with opposing desires. The Greek word of 'desire' (v17) is *epithymia*: an over-desire with all-controlling drive and longing.

The flesh – this over-desire leads us to fall in love with created things rather than the Creator. Anyone who looks

for freedom by the satisfaction of the desires of the flesh is walking down a path of disappointment and destruction. The Spirit – God puts His Spirit in us to give us better desires. It is strong, passionate, powerful, uncorrupted and holy. It desires to glorify Jesus (Joh. 16:14). When our desires align with the desires of the Spirit, we experience true freedom (v16)!

v19-21 – The works of the flesh can be categorized into 4 categories: sexuality, religion, substance abuse, and relationship. The root of engaging in the work of the flesh is a lack of trust in God - not trusting Him to provide, not appreciating our identity as His children and not believing that the gift of salvation through Jesus is enough.

3) Freedom to Transform

The life of a Christian is a life of transformation: the walk of sanctification. The Spirit gives us a fruit that possesses 9 properties: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (vv22-23).

4 Natures of the fruit

1. Gradual – growth takes time. Be patient and trust in the Holy Spirit!
2. Inevitable – as long as the Holy Spirit lives within you, growth is guaranteed!
3. Connected – we are connected to Christ the Vine, who will supply all that we need!
4. Well-Rounded – all properties of the fruit will grow together!

The 9 properties of the fruit of the Spirit is a character-sketch of our Lord Jesus. While we were His enemies, He treats us with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. He is the only One worthy of our worship and adoration.