

Bridgeway Community Church  
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## **Freedom - Part #2**

### **Breaking the Chains That Are Holding You Down**

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Last week we established that any and every time we are controlled by anything in life, we are enslaved by it. It doesn't matter what it is, if it controls you, it owns you — and if it owns you, it enslaves you.

Last week we also established that Jesus Christ is the only true source of FREEDOM

“The true solution to whatever it is that you’re going through in life, his name is Jesus. He’s able and willing to love and help and support and encourage and build you up regardless of what it is.”

Key Verse for series:

Galatians 5:1 NIV

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.

“If God has set you free already, don’t go back to captivity, don’t let your life and situation control you to point where you are back into captivity.”

Philippians 1:6 NIV

being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

“What I am saying...understand who set you free...embrace that freedom...continually go to the Lord for that freedom and that strength and that hope whatever [you] need to get to the other side.”

## Two Areas of Freedom

***First Area of Freedom: “Jesus came to set us free from Religion and Tradition.”***

In **Galatians 5**, the terminology the Apostle Paul uses is the Law, What Law? The law of the Pentateuch which is also called the Law of Moses. While they were originally designed by God for order in the land, the “Law” had become a mental religion and mental tradition to most.

Question: Why did Jesus come to set us FREE from religion?

To many, the word religion or religious is a descriptive term, it’s used to describe a person or a particular faith practice. In reality, Jesus came to set us free from all religion because it is actually the appearance of Godliness. Religion is just the appearance of spirituality.

“What makes it real is the moment you let God into your heart, into your life, you let him into your soul. You give him complete access to your situation then suddenly... then the religious behavior becomes real, substantial and transformational.”

“A person can be a religious individual and not be a follower of the Lord...you can be very religious and not be surrendered to God.”

John 14:6 NIV

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 8:31-32 NIV

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup>Then **you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**”

“The danger behind religiosity is that it can actually convince you that you are a godly person yet you are distant from God.”

The Pharisees in the gospels - they said all the right things, they knew all the rules, they could quote the law, they dressed the part - similar to today’s to Christianize!

Question: Have you become real with the true meaning of Christ, the transformational power of the Lord?

The Pharisees were so full of tradition, that they couldn't make the transition. God was moving towards them, their way in the person and ministry of Christ, but their religious practices and worldview did not allow them to actually see Jesus.

“Just because God moved in a certain way in your life in a particular season doesn't mean that that's exactly how he is moving now. God, through the Holy Spirit, is continually doing something new. If you're still stuck on yesterday's move, if you're still stuck on yesterday's anointing, the chances are that you are religious.”

The Old Testament story of the bronze serpent:

Numbers 21:8-9, NIV

The Lord said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.

2 Kings 18:4 NIV

He [King Hezekiah] removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it. (It was called Nehushtan.)

They had taken the move of God created for a moment and made it into a religion. They offered sacrifices to it. They started to worship it. They started to burn incense to it.

Hezekiah had to destroy the bronze serpent because the people had converted it into a religion, into a tradition, but God wanted to do something different, something new in their lives.

Question: What are the serpents in your life that God has to destroy? What are the things in your life that have become a tradition? What are the things in your life that have come a religion?

God might have moved in your life in a certain way in the past and now you have idolized it when God wants to do something new and different in your life.

You can not see what God is doing new now because you are stuck in the religion and traditions and ways of thinking of your past experiences with God.

Galatians 2:20 NIV

I have been crucified with Christ and **I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.** The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

God is saying I want to take you beyond religion, to take you beyond tradition, beyond spiritual opinion, an imitation of spirituality that is NOT true, and I want to take you into my presence, into a new place but I have to free you from that mindset so that you can experience who I am.

***Second Area of Freedom: “Jesus came to set you free from Guilt, Shame & Condemnation.”***

“Due to our human limitations and the fact that we can’t predict the future, the enemy has caused us to believe in failure by making us feel guilty, shameful and condemned. Often we carry the burden in our hearts of our decisions and our mistakes...you can only see the failure in front of you.”

Romans 8:1 NIV

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus

“This is something that you’re feeling yourself because God is not throwing that feeling in your direction.”

“If we can only see what the Lord sees our attitude will be completely different.”

Ephesians 1:4 NIV

For he [God the Father] chose us in him [Christ] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

If God chose you before the creation of the world, it means he plan for your life! His plan for you will be accomplished one way or another. Everything God created, he created to succeed.

“Your future is God’s past.”

Jeremiah 1:5 NIV

[The Lord speaking] “Before I formed you [Jeremiah] in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

Isaiah 46:8-10 NIV

[God speaking] “Remember this, fix it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels. <sup>9</sup> Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. <sup>10</sup> I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

“What he is saying is: from the very beginning he knew the end of your life from the beginning of creation. From the moment you came into existence, God already knew what he was going to do in your life.”

Question: What does this have to do with shame, guilt and condemnation?

“If you understand that you are under construction, that God has a purpose for your life, instead of walking around with that guilt, with that shame, with that condemnation...it is not of God...embrace what God is doing in your life because the truth is...he knows the end from the very beginning of your life.”

“God finished you before he started you!”

“You shouldn’t walk around in guilt and shame because one way or another you’re ultimately the glory of God.”

Psalms 37:23 NLT

The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.

Remember: Noah was a drunk. Abraham was old. Isaac was a daydreamer. Jacob was a liar. Leah was ugly. Joseph was abused by his brothers. Moses had a stuttering problem. Gideon was afraid. Sampson...was a womanizer. Rahab was a prostitute. Jeremiah and Timothy were young. David had an affair and committed murder. Elijah was suicidal. Isaiah preached naked. Jonah ran from God. Naomi was

a widow. Job went bankrupt. John the Baptist ate bugs. Peter denied Christ. The disciple fell asleep.

But God had a mission for them all!

Are you feeling overwhelmed by whatever it is you are being challenged with?

1 John 1:9 NIV

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.