

## GALATIANS 5:1-15 – What Does It Mean To Be Free?

### How Does This New-Found Freedom OPERATE?

#### 1. Worship becomes RELATIONSHIP not RITUAL.

- \* Old Testament worship was heavily regulated by an extensive list of SACRIFICES, RITUALS & FEASTS.
- \* Over time, the POWER & MEANING of those was lost, and they became ROUTINE acts of RELIGIOUS COMPLIANCE.
- \* Here comes the freedom: All those feasts & sacrifices are wonderful in that they all point to JESUS  
... But they have now ALL been FULFILLED in Christ (Matt 5:17-18).
- \* You don't need those feasts, rituals, sacrifices to TAKE YOU INTO relationship with God or to MAINTAIN that relationship, because now you have the PRESENCE of the HOLY SPIRIT in your heart (1 Pet 2:4-5).
- \* Our sacrifices are offerings of THANKSGIVING, PRAISE & WORSHIP (Heb 13:15).
- \* So, our relationship with God takes on a NEW NATURE, led, motivated & moderated by the HOLY SPIRIT on the inside (Eph 5:18-20, Rom 8:26, Ps 2:1-2)

→ *Would you say that your worship-life was relational, Spirit-led, spontaneous or is ritual, routine & repetitive?*

→ *Why does our worship-life, devotional-life, prayer-life tend to slip into religious repetition? What are the dangers of that? How does our relationship with the Lord 'come to life' when it is no longer based on ritual & compliance, but becomes all about intimacy, worship & walking together?*

→ *How do you view the Old Testament festivals? Do you think they have any relevance to your Christian life?*

→ *"You no longer have to 'go to the Temple,' because you 'are' the temple." Discuss. How does that relate to belonging to a church and/or attending services?*

#### 2. CONDUCT regulation comes from Holy Spirit CONVICTION instead of a MORAL CODE.

- \* Under the New Covenant, we're not CUT LOOSE to do WHATEVER WE WANT.
- \* It's not that we no longer have a call to HOLINESS ... if anything, that call has become STRONGER.
- \* Actually, the moral code is pretty much the SAME; it's just now that call comes from a DIFFERENT SOURCE.
- \* Before, you needed TABLETS OF STONE to tell you what was right & wrong. Now you have the CONVICTING POWER of the Holy Spirit guiding you into righteousness & holiness.

- \* One of the major differences between legalism & freedom is the choice of verbs: Legalism = OUGHT, SHOULD, MUST; Freedom = CAN, GET TO, WANT TO.
- \* Legalism was about EXTERNAL PRESSURE; freedom is about INTERNAL ABUNDANCE (Phil 4:13, 2 Cor 12:9, 2 Pet 1:3, Ps 23:5).

→ *Is the 'moral code' still the same? Did it change at all on the flip from Old Testament to New?*

→ *Has the call to holiness become stronger? If so, how and why?*

→ *"Now, you don't need the Letter of the Law to instruct you because you have a far more powerful force: the Spirit of the Law. You are no longer just relying on willpower; now you have the empowering of grace." Discuss!*

→ *For you, does it tend to be ought to, should & must or can, get to & want to? Why does that mindset shift actually make such a difference?*

→ *"Holy Spirit has the power to change your 'want to,' as well as informing your 'have to.'" How does this thought tie into our conduct regulation?*

#### 3. Relationship becomes the OVERFLOW of LOVE, rather than RULES & REGULATIONS (v6,13-14).

- \* You don't need your relationships to be DICTATED by a set of DO'S & DON'T'S. Instead, you have the LOVE of GOD leading you (Rom 5:5).
- \* Key Revelation: The LETTER of the LAW has been superseded by the LEADING of LOVE (2 Cor 3:6).
- \* It's no longer the LETTER of the Law expressing itself through FEAR, but the SPIRIT of the Law, expressing itself through LOVE.
- \* It's no longer because the Law says we HAVE TO, but because the LOVE of God is JUMPING UP & DOWN on the inside, meaning we respond from a very DIFFERENT place (Col 3:12,15, Gal 5:13).

→ *Which is the strongest force in your relationships? a) An inferred list of do's & don't's. b) Your own love, c) Yielding to the love of God poured into your heart by the Holy Spirit? Which should it be? How do you shift it towards c)?*

→ *What is the effect of the 'letter of the Law' in relationships? What is the effect of the 'leading of love?' (See John 6:63)*

→ *Why does 'Letter' tend to fear, whilst 'Spirit' tends to love?*

→ *How do you recognise when the love of God is 'jumping up & down on the inside?'*

#### APPLICATION: How to GET free & STAY free

1. Make your Christianity about RELATIONSHIP.
2. Let GRACE lead your behaviour.
3. Let the OVERFLOW of LOVE shape your relationships.

→ *Pick the one of those that speaks to you right now. What could you do / change / pray to help you into a greater degree of freedom?*