



LIBERTY IN CHRIST DOES NOT GIVE A LICENSE TO DO AS YOU LIKE!

The Freedom we have in Christ is one that offers us the right to enjoy the abundant life.

Jesus said, "I have come that you might have life and you might have it abundantly" (John 10:10b).

He comes that people may have life in Him that is meaningful, purposeful, joyful, and eternal. We receive this abundant life the moment we accept Him as our Savior.

This word "abundant" in the Greek is perisson, meaning "exceedingly, very highly, beyond measure, more, superfluous, a quantity so abundant as to be considerably more than what one would expect or anticipate."

In short, Jesus promises us a life far better than we could ever imagine, a concept reminiscent of 1 Corinthians 2:9: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."

The apostle Paul tells us that God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, and He does it by His power, a power that is at work within us if we belong to Him (Ephesians 3:20).

THE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

Galatians 5:2-12, "Look now it is I, Paul, who am speaking to you I tell you that if you get yourself circumcised Christ is no good to you. Again I give my word to every man who gets himself circumcised that he is under obligation to keep the whole law. You who seek to get yourselves right with God by means of legalism have got yourself into a position in which you have rendered ineffective all that Christ did for you. You have fallen from grace. For it is by the Spirit and by faith that we eagerly expect the hope of being right with God. For in Jesus Christ it is not of the slightest importance whether a man is circumcised or uncircumcised. What does matter is faith which works through love. You were running well. Who put up a road-block to stop you obeying the truth? The persuasion which is being exercised on you just now is not from him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence in you in the Lord; I am sure that you will take no other view. He who is upsetting you--whoever he is--will bear his own judgment. As for me, brothers, if I am still preaching that circumcision is necessary, why am I still being persecuted? So the stumbling-block of the Cross is removed, is it? I wish that those who are upsetting you would get themselves not only circumcised but (render themselves useless)! "

It was Paul's position that:

- ***The way of grace and the way of law were mutually exclusive.***
- ***The way of law makes salvation dependent on human achievement;***
- ***The man who takes the way of grace simply casts himself and his sin upon the mercy of God.***

Paul went on to argue that if you accepted circumcision, that is to say, if you accepted one part of the law, logically you had to accept the whole law.

To Paul all that mattered was faith which works through love. That is just another way of saying that the essence of Christianity is not law but a personal relationship to Jesus Christ. The Christian's faith is founded not on a book but on a person; its dynamic is not obedience to any law but love to Jesus Christ.

"A little leaven leavens the whole lump."

For the Jew "leaven" nearly always stood for evil influence. What Paul is saying is, "This legalistic movement may not have gone very far yet, but you must root it out before it destroys your whole religion."

Paul ends with a very blunt saying.

Those "Judaizers" who are upsetting you and causing you to change the meaning of the cross... "They need to go further than just being circumcised."

PAUL'S COMMENTS IN THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS CHANGES AT THIS POINT!

Galatians 5:13-15, "As for you, brothers, it was for freedom that you were called, only you must not use this freedom as a bridgehead through which the worst side of human nature can invade you, but in love you must serve one another; for the whole law stands complete in one word, in the sentence, "You must love your neighbor as yourself." But if you snap at one another, and devour one another, you must watch that you do not end up by wiping each other out."

Up to this point the emphasis has been theological; now it becomes intensely ethical.

To him a theology was not important unless it could be lived out.

- **Paul always ends his letters to the various churches on a practical note.** "The test of a good theologian is...can the theologian go from his thoughts of what a text means to something that the ordinary man can understand and do!"

Paul always satisfies that test when he sends an epistle...just as here in this letter... the whole matter is brought to the acid test of daily living.

- **Grace over Law: Paul's theology always ran one danger.**

By declaring the end of the reign of law had come and that the reign of grace had arrived, it was always possible for someone to say, "That, then, means that I can do what I like; all the restraints are lifted and I can follow my inclinations wherever they lead me. Law is gone and grace ensures forgiveness anyway."

Not a good example of God's Grace. Does God's grace ensures/assures forgiveness anyway?

Grace is a gift from Heavenly Father given through His Son, Jesus Christ. The word grace, as used in the scriptures, refers primarily to enabling power and spiritual healing offered through the mercy and love of Jesus Christ. ... The grace of God helps us every day.

"GRACE" means: God's Redemption At Christ's Expense.

When all is said and done...for Paul there remained two (2) obligations:

1. **The obligation to GOD.** If God loved us like that then the love of Christ constrains us. I cannot soil a life which God paid for with his own life.
2. **The obligation to our fellow men.** We are free, but our freedom loves its neighbor as itself.

Final thought in this passage:

The Christian is not a person who has become free to sin, but a person, who, by the grace of God, has become free not to sin.

Paul adds a bit of advice. "Unless," he says, "you solve the problem of living life together you will make life impossible."

Galatians 5:16-18, "I tell you, let your walk and conversation be dominated by the Spirit, and don't let the desires of the lower side of your nature have their way. For the desires of the lower side of human nature are the very reverse of

the desires of the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are the very reverse of those of the lower side of human nature, for these are fundamentally opposed to each other, so that you cannot do whatever you like.

No man was ever more conscious of the tension in human nature than Paul.

A Poem by Studdert Kennedy: *I'm a man and a man's a mixture...Right down from his very birth; For a part of him comes from heaven...And a part of him comes from the earth.*

For Paul it was essential that Christian freedom did not mean freedom to indulge the lower side of human nature, but freedom to walk in the life of the Spirit.

Note: *The Spirit mentioned here in these verses never authorizes sin or the shadow of sin in any origin. The Holy Spirit can't sin and is grieved when the place where he resides in us is indulged in the practices of ungodly actions we brought within our minds, will, or emotions (soul).*

It is true... "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of [the](#) the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."
Ephesians 6:12

Paul is basically saying to the church... "You should be walking the walk and talking the talk"... Living the Abundant Life.

The Abundant Life... *Under the burdens of guilt and care Many a spirit is grieving,
Who in the joy of the Lord might share Life everlasting receiving.*

*Refrain:
Life, life, eternal life! Jesus alone is the giver;
Life, life, abundant life! Glory to Jesus forever!*

*Bearing our burden of guilt, there came One who is strong to deliver;
Bringing to men, through His wondrous name, Life "more abundant" than ever.*

*Burdened one, why will you longer bear Sorrows from which He releases?
Open your heart and, rejoicing, share Life "more abundant" in Jesus!*

*Leaving the mountain, the streamlet grows, Flooding the vale with a river;
So, from the hill of the cross there flows Life "more abundant" forever.*

*O for the floods on the thirsty land! O for a mighty revival!
O for a sanctified, fearless band, Ready to hail its arrival!*