

# Free in Christ

Learning Zone 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**Golden Text - (Gal 5:1)** "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ have made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage"





## LESSON PLAN

1. Introduction – Theme
2. Guard your Freedom
3. Free to Serve in Love
4. Live in the Spirit
5. What are the learning points?
6. Questions



## INTRODUCTION

# We live in love and freedom by Christ's Spirit in us.

Readings from

- Galatians 5: 1-26

We will investigate the characteristics of our freedom in Christ, and govern our freedom by love for Christ and others



Last weeks lesson focused on the believers being the descendants of the promise God made to Abraham. The Galatian believers were being seduced to follow the Law in order to obtain salvation. Paul reminded them that God made a promise to Abraham before the 10 commandments were given. Abraham acted in faith and he obtained the promise that God made with him, despite the nature of flesh/man trying to make the promise come true in other ways (the birth of Ishmael).

In this weeks lesson Paul gives a triumphant yet practical call to be led by the Spirit.. The overall theme is to walk in the Spirit. By doing this will give the Christian a freedom that they would never have by strictly adhering to the Law. Christ freedom is not a license to sin, rather it is a birth of a lifestyle guided by the Spirit. As Christians we are to live responsibly. We are called to obedient living. We are not guided by the tablets of stone, but the Spirit has written a higher law on our heart.

**The Focus** is that we should investigate the Characteristics of our freedom in Christ, and govern our freedom by Love for Christ and others

**The central truth** is that we live in love and freedom by Christ's Spirit in us

## GUARD YOUR FREEDOM



Gal 5:1-12

### **The Liberty of Grace**(Gal 5:1-6)

- How must Christians “stand fast” and why? (v1)
- Why cant a person be “justified by the Law”? (v4)
- Name two things that Faith does in the believer? (vs 5-6)

### **The offence of the Cross** vs 7-12

- How are false teachers like a runner? (vs 7-8)
- How are false teachers like “yeast”? (v 9)
- What warning is given in verse 10?

### **Guard your Freedom Gal 5:1-6**



#### **The Liberty of Grace (Gal 5: 1-6)**

Paul declares that Christ have made or set us free by liberating us from Sin’s horrific bondage. However he cautions us to “stand fast” and persevere in the freedom that Christ made available for us – by his death on the cross. Paul warns the Galatians that it is possible for them to become “entangles again” in the yoke of bondage, and it is impossible to anyone to free him/herself from such entanglements. The only hope is in Christ, only he has the power to set us free and keep us free from sin when we obey him and firmly stand on his promises. The Galatians were being tempted to forsake the freedom found in Christ by adopting legalism of the old testament laws. The Judaizers were demanding the Galatian Christians to adopt the mosaic laws to be truly saved. If they were to do this, they would be abandoning their freedom in Christ to adopt a religion based on works (which cannot save anyone) It would render the works of Christ to be ineffective

The mosaic law introduced circumcision for male heirs. With the freedoms that come through Christ, whether one is circumcised or not does not matter. What really matters faith expressing itself through love. This is the ultimate calling for faithful service to Christ and others. It is the fulfilment of the two greatest commandments (1) Love God with all your being and (2) Love others as we love yourself.

#### **The Offence if the Cross – vs 7-12**

The Galatian who became Christians started their Christian journey well. They then got side tracked from the pressure placed on them by the Judaizers. This had a negative impact on the Galatian believers. They neglected their calling from God and started to follow the heretical doctrine of the false teachers. God does not take such behaviour lightly – and a warning concerning judgement is declared. Some of the false teachers even stated that Paul was promoting circumcision – and that was denied. Paul refuted this by pointing if he was preaching circumcision, then that message would not offend anyone. The persecution he experienced was because he preached Salvation through Faith in Christ and that he died on a Cross as the supreme sacrifice for all mankind. This was the offence of the Cross . Still today people are often offended at the thought that Jesus’ death on the Cross is humanity’s only hope of redemption.

# FREE TO SERVE IN LOVE

Gal 5: 13-21



## **Love does not Bite** (vs 13-15)

- Describe the freedom God gives to believers? (vs 13-14)
- Explain the warning in verse 15

## **The Flesh fights the Spirit** (vs 16-18)

- Describe the battle between the flesh and the Spirit

## **Fleshly works are deadly** (vs 19-21)

- How are the works of the “flesh” exhibited both inwardly and outwardly?



### **Free to Serve in Love - Gal 5: 13-21**

#### **Love does Not Bite (vs 13-15)**

One of the end results of the controversy between the Judaizers and the Galatian believers was the lack of love in relationships. The Judaizers and their coverts had become elitists, claiming the moral and spiritual high ground to others. However the Galatian believers were not immune to this. No doubt there was competition between the two groups and they became critical of each other to demonstrate morality or spirituality. Faith must be guided by Love. Faith may bring harmony to the individual, but love brings harmony to the body of Christ. Christ died not only to fulfil the debt of sin, but also to fulfil the obligation of Love. Whereas sin is to be put to death, love was to come alive – both because of Jesus Christ.

#### **The Flesh fights back (vs 16-18)**

Walking in the Spirit is not optional. This is necessary for our spiritual survival. The Holy Spirit will instruct us where to go and what to do – then we wont be doing things after the flesh. With this type of walk in mind, we become moulded by the power of the Spirit. Our character and personality comes under the guidance and influence of the third person of the Godhead. It means that we rely on the Spirit for motivation and resources to help us to live in this world. Standing opposite the walk in the Spirit is the “lusts of the flesh”. Lust comes from the Greek word “passionate, driving desire”. Here it emphasises behaviour motivated by sensual desires. Lust leads to Sin, ungodliness and disobedience. The walk in the Spirit and the lust of the flesh – are in direct opposition to each other. They cannot mutually co-exist in a Christians life, Compromise of the Christian’s Spiritual walk destroys the Christian’s Spiritual walk.. But by walking in the Spirit it will bring victory over the flesh.

#### **Fleshly Works are deadly (vs 19-21)**

Paul listed the “works of the flesh” in verses 19-21. The list carefully outlines the pattern of passion embedded in the lustful walk of the flesh. The persons who follow their own inclinations will produce the evil results such as : impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred and fighting, jealousy and anger, constant effort to get the best for yourself, complaints and criticism, the feeling that everyone else is wrong – except those in your little group, and there will be wrong doctrine. Envy, murder, drunkenness, wild parties and all sort of evil doing. Paul emphatically stated that these actions do not have a part in the person who is waking by the Spirit. The persons who lives this life will not enter into Heaven.

# LIVE IN THE SPIRIT



Gal 5 : 22-26

## **Fruit of the Spirit** (vs 22-23)

- Name ways “the fruit of the Spirit” was demonstrated in Jesus life on earth?

## **The Spirit filled Walk** (vs 24-26)

- Is crucifying the flesh a onetime act or an ongoing action?
- If a church does not follow the commands in verse 25, what will happen?



## **LIVE IN THE SPIRIT (Gal 5: 22 – 26)**

### **Fruit of the Spirit (vs 22-23)**

In contract to the works of the flesh., Paul presents the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit is a result of a reaction to a stimulus. In this case the source of the fruit is the Spirit. The very phrase “fruit of the Spirit” indicates the origin is from God and not us!!! It is difficult to maintain these virtues in the face of sin and corruption of this world. The Christian life requires us to remain at peace and return gentle and a loving response to the hatred and cruelty of this world. It is indeed very difficult. To consistently return love for evil and sympathy for anger tries every sinew and fiber of the believers faith. It is an impossible task unless the believer is walking in and drawing on the power of the Spirit. Paul then lists the fruits of the Spirit beginning with the Agape Love, which is divine love, then joy, peace patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control – and all these are not in conflict with Jewish laws. The listing of the fruit of the Spirit strategically matched the meanings and the order of the inner lusts and works of the flesh. Love overcomes fornication and adultery, Joy overcomes lasciviousness and uncleanness, Peace overcomes witchcraft and idolatry, long suffering overcomes variance and hatred. Gentleness overcomes emulations, Goodness overcomes wrath and strife, Faith overcomes sedition and heresies, meekness overcomes envy and murders and finally temperance overcomes drunkenness and revellings.

### **The Spirit filled Walk (vs 24-26)**

Verse 24 summarizes the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit. The conclusion is that the works of the flesh must be crucified if the fruit of the Spirit is to be manifested. The crucifixion of the flesh will create room for the move of the Spirit. However if we become “crucified with Christ – we become alive in Christ and will live in the Spirit. Verse 26 reminds us that life in the Spirit is not exempt from temptation. We are reminded that Christ went through temptation and yet he did not fall in sin. He remained close to God in those times. He is our perfect example and with the Holy Spirit guiding us we can live a life in the Spirit. Paul also named three ways in which we must be on our guard: a) hold to humility, b) avoid a combatant attitude and c) refrain from being jealous.



## LEARNING POINTS

1. Guard your freedom
2. Be free to serve in Love
3. Live in the Spirit

**Golden Text - (Gal 5:1)** “Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ have made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage”



### Conclusions

Walking in the Spirit is a natural by product of Living in the Spirit. If our daily walk is not consistent with God's word then we have to question ourselves and implore the Holy Spirit to help us discern what is wrong and then act on the Spirit's leading. While living in the realm of the Spirit – we can be transported into the presence of Christ himself. It is equally true that Christian Living regular contact with the unregenerate world. As Moses came down from the spiritual ecstasy of Sinai only to behold the idolatry of the Israelites bowing before a golden calf, so we must be prepared to face and withstand the carnality and indifference of this world and its attitude of disrespect for God and sacred living.

We must not forget that we are called of God to be salt and light in this sinful world – and that God will empower us to live in and depend on the Spirit to equip us to consistently bear Spiritual fruit. Christ over came so that we can be overcomers!!!

We are encouraged to stand in the liberty where Christ has made us free. Opposite of liberty is bondage and Paul reminded us not to get entangled again with the yoke of bondage (legalism). The liberty and stand of the believer is mightier than the bondage of sin and the law. The identity of the believer is as a child of God. The confidence of a believer is based on the work of Christ.

## QUESTIONS



- How must Christians “stand fast” and why? (v1)
- Why cant a person be “justified by the Law”? (v4)
- Name two things that Faith does in the believer? (vs 5-6)
- How are false teachers like a runner? (vs 7-8)
- How are false teachers like “yeast”? (v 9)
- What warning is given in verse 10?
- Describe the freedom God gives to believers? (vs 13-14)
- Explain the warning in verse 15
- Describe the battle between the flesh and the Spirit
- How are the works of the “flesh” exhibited both inwardly and outwardly?
- Name ways “the fruit of the Spirit” was demonstrated in Jesus life on earth?
- Is crucifying the flesh a onetime act or an ongoing action?
- If a church does not follow the commands in verse 25, what will happen?
- How does Paul describe the heritage of Christians?







## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

The pampering of the flesh is  
the quenching of God's Spirit

Thomas Watson

