

“Releasing God’s Freedom”

Galatians 5:13-15

Introduction

All sports have rules. In football, a team is penalized if a defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is put in play. In basketball, players violate the traveling rule when they take more than two steps without dribbling the ball. Tennis players can not touch the net or cross to their opponent’s side. Without rules, sports would be chaotic, violent, and impossible to score. Sports and athletes need boundaries to make the games worthwhile. In life, however, people often ignore boundaries, thinking that a lack of restriction equates to freedom. This is not the freedom God intended for us. Freedom is the divinely authorized opportunity to righteously and justly pursue your divinely ordained destiny while serving others.

Biblical freedom is the divine goal for humanity. God wants His people to experience freedom to maximize their capacity and potential under His governance and guidelines. God first authorized freedom when He told Adam, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat” (Genesis 2:16-17). Freedom involves maximum opportunity and little regulation. But also dire consequences when those regulations are broken. Freedom is not doing whatever you want. It is doing what you ought to do within legitimate boundaries set by God. We must rely on divinely revealed truth to understand what freedom truly means.

When God sets us free, we should want to serve others instead of using our freedom to oppress others. We should be motivated by love to seek the well-being of others. We should desire reconciliation in our relationships and the culture around us. If you operate according to biblical freedom, you will experience extraordinary benefits. First, you will be able to maximize your divine calling because God can use you to a greater level. Second, you will develop greater intimacy in your relationship with God. As you abide more in Him, you become more like Him. Third, you will enjoy more of God’s favor as you cooperate with His divine guidelines. God’s blessings await you if you will embrace the biblical freedom He offers you.

Getting Started

1. What would happen in any sport if all the rules were taken away?
2. What are the results when people define freedom as doing whatever they want? Can you think of examples where that kind of freedom turned into oppression?

Let’s Get Personal

1. Based on this message, how is your understanding of freedom not in line with biblical truth?
2. When have you ignored God’s boundaries? How did your actions affect your relationships?

3. Where do you need reconciliation in your life? What has prevented you from seeking it?

Take the Next Step

1. What is your God-given calling, and how will biblical freedom help you maximize that calling? Pray with an accountability partner or mentor this week to ask God for wisdom on your next steps in pursuing your calling.
2. Whom should you be serving in a greater way than you are currently doing? This week, how can you serve and love that person well?
3. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the following passages: Galatians 5:13-15; Leviticus 25:10; Exodus 21:16; Ephesians 2:10; Luke 22:24-27; Matthew 10:25-35; 1 John 3:14-15; John 8:31-36; Luke 4:18-19.

Renew Your Mind

***“For you were called to freedom, brethren;
only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh,
but through love serve one another.”***

Galatians 5:13
