

Sermon

The Faith of Freedom?

Galatians 5:1-15

Jeff Jackson

“Living For the One Who Branded Us...Jesus”

INTRODUCTION:

This week we celebrate the birth of our country which is known for its freedom. People are trying to come to this land by the droves just for the chance to be free. The question for us to ponder is ‘What is Freedom?’ Do we as a society even understand what it means to be free? Sadly, the answer to that question maybe shocking. I would make a case we are no longer a free nation because we are lacking as a society the key elements that are necessary for freedom to exist and certainly to sustain itself. The truest understanding of freedom is not freedom of country but freedom within our own hearts.

I’m not saying, as many have, the Framers of our country were all Christian, because they weren’t, but what the Framers did was to borrow from the Christian framework/worldview to establish a foundation for this country where freedom was indeed possible. The same principles we find in Scripture for freedom to exist in the individual as believers in Christ are the same principles that we need to rediscover again if this nation is to achieve sustainable freedom.

Galatians 5:1-15

Christ has liberated us to be free. Stand firm then and don’t submit again to a yoke of slavery. Take note! I, Paul, tell you that if you get yourselves circumcised, Christ will not benefit you at all. Again I testify to every man who gets himself circumcised that he is obligated to keep the entire law. You who are trying to be justified by the law are alienated from Christ; you have fallen from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision accomplishes anything; what matters is faith working through love.

You were running well. Who prevented you from obeying the truth? This persuasion did not come from the One who called you. A little yeast leavens the whole lump of dough. I have confidence in the Lord you will not accept any other view. But whoever it is that is confusing you will pay the penalty. Now brothers, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. I wish those who are disturbing you might also get themselves castrated!

For you were called to be free, brothers; only don’t use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. For the entire law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself. But if you bite and devour one another, watch out, or you will be consumed by one another.

I. With Freedom comes Renunciation (2-4)

Notes: _____

The Declaration of Independence (1st Paragraph)

When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

II. With Freedom come Responsibility (13-14)

Notes: _____

1 Corinthians 6:12

"I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything.

Charles Kingsley

"There are two freedoms - the false, where a man is free to do what he likes; the true, where he is free to do what he ought."

George McDonald

"Free will is not the liberty to do whatever one likes, but the power of doing whatever one sees ought to be done, even in the very face of otherwise overwhelming impulse. There lies freedom, indeed."

III. With Freedom comes Reverence (13-14)

Os Guinness

The Golden Triangle of Sustainable Freedom

1. Virtue
2. Faith
3. Freedom

Ronald Reagan

"Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God is acknowledged."

Billy Graham

"The framers of our Constitution meant we were to have freedom of religion, not freedom from religion."

Charles Finney

"Unless the will is free, man has no freedom; and if he has no freedom he is not a moral agent, that is, he is incapable of moral action and also of moral character."

John 8:36

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

IV. With Freedom comes Respect

Self-government is a system in which the citizens of a country (or smaller political unit, such as a state) rule themselves and control their own affairs. Self-governments are free from external government control or outside political authority. Republican governments and democracy in the United States are based on principles of self-government.

Abraham Lincoln

America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves.

Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:12)

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets

IV. Freedom Can't Come without Redemption

Notes:

Martin Luther

"Either sin is with you, lying on your shoulders, or it is lying on Christ, the Lamb of God. Now if it is lying on your back, you are lost; but if it is resting on Christ, you are free, and you will be saved. Now choose what you want."

2 Corinthians 3:17

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom

Romans 8:1-2

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ²because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

(Conclusion on next page)

CONCLUSION:

Thomas Jefferson (Deist) (2nd Paragraph to the Declaration of Independence)

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The above statement, even though written by a deist, cannot be obtained, understood, or made sense by any other worldview but the Judeo-Christian worldview. If we are to retain any sense of freedom as a nation, we must return to where the idea came from, and that is in the person, work, and redemption story of Jesus.