

LifeGroup Study: Freedom!!!

Tonight's study will revolve around Freedom, namely the freedom we have in Christ. Take some time to reflect on the freedom you have.

What event have you experienced in life that taught you the most about freedom, or caused you to value freedom more?

Has there ever been a moment in your life where you felt that you didn't have your religious freedom?

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

-Galatians 5:1-6 ESV

Paul begins with the bold statement of why Christ died, freedom. Are we living out His cause today?

What is slavery? Is it a bad thing in every circumstance? Discuss

What was the yoke of slavery Paul referred to? Why did he choose it?

Why did Paul want people to change their thinking about the popular Jewish tradition of circumcision?

What do you think God would say about our traditions today? Are they good, bad, neutral? Do they free us from slavery?

Where do our traditions come from?

You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion is not from him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view than mine, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

-Galatians 5:7-12 ESV

Who/what is it that hinders us from obeying the truth?

What does the phrase "A little leaven leavens the whole lump" mean? How does that end up restricting our Freedom in Christ?

Paul writes: **"I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view than mine,"** This statement is absolutely exclusive. Jesus even states that:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man comes to the father except through me."

- John 14:6

In other letters the apostles identify themselves as slaves of Christ:

James 1:1 NLT

1 This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:1 NLT

1 This letter is from Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:1 NLT

1 This letter is from Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, chosen by God to be an apostle and sent out to preach his Good News.

How does voluntary slavery and such exclusivity (as Paul and Jesus talked about) lead us to freedom?

What is the biggest thing Christ has freed you from personally?

Is that freedom difficult to retain? Why is struggle so often identified with freedom?

How have you found your personal slavery to Christ is able to bring freedom in your life?

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

-Galatians 5:13-15 ESV

As Americans we were born with freedom, it was given to us at a great price. But Paul says we are called to freedom. What does that mean and how does it differ from simply being given freedom?

Can freedom itself become or lead to a trap? If so how?

According to Paul our freedom isn't meant to indulge in the flesh, but to serve each other. How do we find freedom in serving others?

As we close, take time to reflect on the price paid for not only your personal and political freedom, but for the freedom that only Christ can bring as well. Be sure to pray for each other and your families.

Have a blessed and safe 4th of July.