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Part 5: Absolutely Free!

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**INTRODUCTION:                      DEFENDING AND DEFINING OUR FREEDOM!**

Galatians 5:1-26

**1. We are \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 1-6)**

*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.*

**“alienated”** = rendered inoperative, having no practical use (Strong's)

**“righteousness for which we hope”** = lit. “the hope of righteousness” (a reference to the Second Coming of Christ)

**2. We should be FURIOUS about \_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 7-12)**

*As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!*

The spirit of legalism does not suddenly overpower a church. Like leaven, it is introduced secretly, it grows, and before long poisons the whole assembly. In most cases, the *motives* that encourage legalism are good (“We want to have a more spiritual church”), but the *methods* are not scriptural. (Wiersbe, *Galatians Commentary*, p. 716)

**3. We bear the \_\_\_\_\_ of Spirit-led \_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 13-25)**

**22** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* **23** *gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

In this context, “Inheriting the Kingdom” is not synonymous with “going to heaven when I die.” This is a crucial distinction. The word means “enjoying the allotment of...” and refers to the abundant life God desires for us to enjoy on this earth as members of His household.

**THE BIG IDEA:** As you surrender to grace, the Law will increasingly become the OLD NEWS that it is – and the Spirit will increasingly live the life of Jesus through you! This is nothing but GOOD NEWS!!!

## **SMALL GROUP Q'S**

### **Personal Life:**

1. Over the past week, in what way(s) has the grace of God been evident in your life? Try to give a specific example and avoid being overly general.
2. In what way(s) is our study of Galatians helping you find greater freedom from legalism? What is the difference between "religious flesh" and "rebellious flesh" and why do you say this is so? In what way(s) is the series challenging you to re-think your assumptions?

### **Ponderings:**

3. When you think about your personal testimony, have there been times when you were running a "good race" in the grace-lane, but then allowed some form of legalism to "cut in" on you? (Gal. 5:7). If so, how did you get back into the grace-lane?
4. Talk about Paul's use of the phrase "the offense of the cross" (Gal. 5:11). Describe exactly how the cross is offensive. Share your thoughts about how legalism "abolishes" the offense of the cross...
5. Why is there no such thing as a "cross-less" Gospel? In what way(s) do you see a "cross-less" Gospel being preached in some circles today, if any?
6. Paul emphasized that the *liberty* we have in Christ is not a *license* to sin (Gal. 5:13). Why do people sometimes make this assumption? How is Paul's argument about "inheriting" (enjoying the allotment of) the Kingdom a legitimate deterrent from viewing sin as inconsequential?
7. The law emphasizes our FAILURE (i.e. us striving to "live for God") while grace emphasizes FRUIT (i.e. allowing Jesus to "live through us" as we are resting in Him as the Vine). Which one of these describes the bulk of your Christian experience – living by law or grace? Explain...

### **Promptings:**

8. The invitation to live by grace rather than law is counter-intuitive to most of us. Close by praying the prayer of Ephesians 1:16-21 for yourself and your group...