

Standing in the LIBERTY given by Christ

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January 31, 2021

GREETINGS It is such a great blessing for me to come to you today. I have a powerful scripture that I am going to deal with you from Galatians chapter 5. We're going to be talking right from the heart of Paul and the concern that he has for the local church. That's also what I am bearing in my heart.

I want people to stand in the freedom that Christ has set them free to and no other freedom. You know that God has come to set us free and there is a freedom that we have that is on account of God setting us free in Christ Jesus. There are many freedoms in this world but we get a freedom that is on account of Christ and that is the eternal, everlasting freedom that God has given us.

From Galatians chapter 5, we are going to go right into Romans chapter 3 and then jump into Romans chapter 5. We can talk about the justification that is a free gift and then in Romans 5 talking about boasting about Christ Jesus and what that means. It is going to be a powerful session! Thanks so much for allowing me to serve you with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

PRAYER: Father, thank You so much that we can be here together. Thank you for Your Gospel. Thank You for the powerful message of grace. Thank You for the message that can reach our hearts whereby we can be set free and remain free. Thank You for the love that You have for us, the care that You have for us, the way You extended Your hand of grace towards humanity whereby You come and give birth to who You are in us so that we can live a free life. Hallelujah! Thank You, Lord Jesus! Amen and amen

TODAY'S MESSAGE: Yesterday I was driving and we were listening to what is called Bura music. Now that is just old, traditional, German, farmer kind of music that was also developed here in South Africa. It is a very special kind of music and the person talked about a song and he says that with this song you would find man and animal howl and have tears as they would listen to this song that is so flooded with sorrow. Now I just burst out laughing when he said he found man and animal crying when you listen to this. I can see where this kind of music and the violin and everything, how man and animal is howling and crying.

When I heard that I said to Helena, "I need to use this in my message tomorrow because many times when we hear a gospel, a certain gospel, that gospel just makes people cry and sad and they are howling in desperation finding no form of life in that message.

The message where people are not truly set free, where people are not finding the liberation that comes from what God has dreamt for us, what God has desired for us. A liberation that is set inside the ability of man and the works of man which is not strong enough to bring forth that liberty. A liberty that is found and directed towards the systems of this world, what man can attain in his own ability as pertaining to finances how he raises his kids or politically on what can happen, you know, as pertaining to politics. A liberty and a liberation that is set inside the culture of man and is not set inside the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 5;

1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.

I like the focus that it brings here. It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Now that scripture is very powerful and does put a focus on what Christ has come to do for us and how He has come to liberate us and what He has liberated us for. He has liberated us for freedom. It is for freedom and no other reason. Then it goes on and says) ***Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.***

So, what we see here is slavery on the one side and then freedom on the other side. Now, that can be used by slaves as saying that God has ended slavery, talking about physical slavery, and that I am now set free. This was basically not the case in the early Church. We thank God for the slaves that are set free and all of that, but that was not what Paul had in mind. The King James brings it a bit more beautiful to me. It says: ***Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.***

He basically says that there is a certain liberty that Christ has brought over us and we need to stand fast in that liberation that was brought to us by Christ. It is a different liberation. We get the liberations, let's say, of the Jews where they were set free from the death camps and the Nazi oppression and all of that which we are very grateful for. But we find that a lot of those Jews that have been set free there spoke up and we find the end of this absolute oppression, the holocaust, which we thank God for. But we find that freedom is not the freedom that Galatians spoke about because Galatians' freedom had nothing to do with what happened to the Jews and what happened to the oppression that came by the Germans. It was written about two thousand years before that. So, what is he talking about when he says, "***Stand fast therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has set us free...***"

We clearly see that the liberty that Christ has made us free into is not a political liberty. It is not a liberty that has been orchestrated by man. It is another liberty and we have to look at what that liberty is. For that is what Paul says we need to stand fast in. And I tell you that this simple thing that Paul had, is saying here, is so powerful and so relevant and so needed today. Let's read it again. **Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty (liberation) wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.**

You know, as I'm reading this, I'm thinking of the Jews that have been liberated. They have been liberated from the oppression that came from the Germans and we thank God for that. But the sad thing is that we find many of those Jews still dying Atheists not believing in Jesus and they have not received the true liberation. They have not made use of the true liberation which Christ has for us. Now I know that the Jews is a very sensitive topic and sometimes I push myself to a place where I use very sensitive topics. Now I can have a very negative thing that the people switch the video off but it can also get your attention to think of what is truly at stake and what it is all about.

It's sad to think that some of the Jews that were put in those ovens and were cremated and were poisoned and all that, died without belief in Jesus Christ. They died without having the true freedom. It is also on the one side good but there is also a hidden sadness when you think of the liberation that the Jews did receive when they were set free from those death camps and from the oppression of the Nazis and still are not walking in the freedom that Christ has set them free with. The freedom that Christ has set them free with was not to be entangled into a yoke of bondage which is much greater than Nazi oppression, which is much greater than any oppression any human can bring over another human race. It's an oppression that causes you not to have the very life of God.

Now, I can just see that Paul writes this with absolute sincerity in his heart, love for the Church, a concern in his heart and he wants the Church to be utterly free. Listen to what he says in **verse 2: *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.*** What is he talking about? He is saying that man has been liberated, or the Jews have been liberated, from finding their identity in the flesh and living in the power of the flesh. Wherein they will then boast and know that, from that foundation, or from that logic or truth or what they think was needed, they can then draw life and that which they think God has intended for them.

Let us read it again but now in the NIV.

Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all.

So, when he talks about a liberation here, he is saying that we are liberated from one thing to something else. And what we have been liberated unto is that Christ profits us.

Now when we look at **5:1**, it says, ***Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.***

What is that liberty? What is the liberty that Christ has made us free unto? We're going to read that in Romans 6 but I am just going to quickly put it out there for you. The liberty that Christ has made us free with is that we've been liberated from sin in the flesh or we have been liberated from the sin that was committed by Adam and the sin of walking in unbelief in Jesus where we are bound to bring forth holiness by ourselves where our confidence and our boast is in the flesh. To the Jews it was to be a Jew and to follow the customs of the law.

So, it says here that Christ has liberated us and He's liberated us from death and everything that leads to death. That means that He has even then liberated us from the system whereby we, through the works of the law, put ourselves in a place where we think we can benefit from God. So, He basically set us free from the law. He set us free from sin and death and because we have been set free from sin and death everything that was ever laid before man, in order to get him free from sin and death, we have also been liberated from.

Let me put it this way and I've used this example before: We used to use an eight-track tape. When I was just a kid, my dad had a radio that had an eight-track. Then he bought the smaller cassettes that you've used when you wanted to listen to music. Then we got the CD. Now we have the phone with Bluetooth and the MP3 files and so forth. The moment the CD industry came and developed the CDs, we find that everything that led to the cassette or the tape industry was not needed anymore. We were liberated from the tape or the cassette and we were therefore also liberated and there is therefore no more need for those factories. Whatever could produce it is not needed anymore. All the laws about how long that cassette must be for a 60-minute cassette or everything that governed that system is also not needed anymore. In the very same way, since we have been set free from sin and death, everything that guided us in the old prior to our liberation, we have also been set free from. Therefore, we have been set free from the system of circumcision and the laws of Moses. We've been set free from that. We've been absolutely liberated from that. Glory to God!

Let's read it again. **Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.**

So, Christ has made us free with a certain liberty and that is what we need to stand fast in. Other liberties that humanities bring us, we can thank God for those liberties but it is not where we should have our stability. You know, you can find a liberty that has been given to you, and tomorrow it is gone. We can just look at governments and we've seen that now in the United States. When Donald Trump came in, he signed many things into law. I remember the first week. I mean the guy was just signing. That's the first thing. He's busy! He's working! He's right at it. He's signing like crazy! I mean you just get these files and the special pens and the man is signing.

Then you find Biden coming in... I mean, listen, everything that Trump signed was now for freedoms. Hallelujah, it was for these freedoms that he signed, all these documents and things into law and whatever. Then you find Biden coming in and the very same thing and he's canceling everything that Trump was hiding in. Now, what Paul is saying is, "Listen, the freedom that we need to stand in, the liberty that we need to stand in, where we find our emotional stability, where we find the power that we live from every day is definitely not these freedoms that is temporal. The freedoms where we can find our stability, where we can find our emotions standing strong is not that one that can change every four years. It is the one that is eternal. Glory to God!

You know, we can have such an unstable emotional life should we not stand in the liberty wherewith Christ has set us free. There's a liberty where a politician can set you free. There's a liberty where a government can set you free. Then there is the liberty where Christ has set us free. He's liberated us from death and whatsoever leads to death in our own lives. He's liberated us. This is what the bible says in Philippians where we can even say, "I can do all things through Christ that has strengthened me. I know what it is to be happy and rich and I know what it is to be happy and poor. I know what it is to be happy." That is what he is talking about. Glory to God. "I know what it is to only trust in the One that raises the dead!" Glory to God!

So, let us just take it together with the first part of this message. There is a freedom and there is a liberation where Christ has set us free and that liberation is defined in the grave being empty. That is what it is.

This week, I think some of you might have seen that I didn't do all the daily devotionals but Helena and I went with our son. We took him to a friend where he is now going basically work and see if he can start his own business in some way. We will see what is going to take place. We went there and spent some days there with him and just fellowshiped with some good old friend from university days. When we were there, we could see just what he is getting into and what this is all about. The evening before we left, I said this to him: "Son, it doesn't matter what you are faced with. The answer is this: Jesus was born and He lived on the earth as a physical man. He physically died. His body was buried and He was bodily raised. He ascended on high from where He, in that reality, rules over you and you identify in that liberation and in that freedom with Him. Take that simple truth and it might sound very complicated to apply that to every area of your life." I said, "But my son, this is the best advice I can give to you today, always. It doesn't matter what. That is the answer!"

I mean, his father is a preacher. I'm preaching and a lot of people listen to my messages. He's going to find many people in that area that also listen to me are going to ask him questions, "What about this scripture? What about that scripture? Your father teaches this. How do you explain this and all those kinds of things?" The answer is just one thing: The liberation is defined in an empty grave. The liberation is defined in the ascension. That is the liberation and whatever Jesus was liberated to into His resurrection is what we have been liberated to by Him! Glory to God! Now when we see that, we find the need of other liberties just diminishing a little bit, not being so important anymore, almost now defined as simple luxuries.

Romans 3: I'm going to read this from the NIV. Now you know how nice it is when you know your son is leaving the home and he's going on in life that the key thing you can leave him with is the knowledge that the physical grave is empty and that he can identify with that. I want to say to you that when we identify with the resurrected Jesus Christ and who and what He is at the right hand of the Father, as our hope and we know that that belongs to us, we will not try to make a living. We will maybe work and make money but that will not be making a living because we would have a living. All of a sudden living would not be connected to money.

Living would be connected to Christ and we will make money or do business or work for our salaries in getting money as people that simply just work for money. We will not do it with the desperation of making a living. We would know that we have a living. We are living by the power of the resurrected Jesus Christ and it doesn't matter where we go because we have life. We would find that we would do business and we would have a job and we will continue that way even to the point of generosity. Glory to God! I hope you hear what I am saying.

Many people say, "What is he doing for a living?" Then he will say, "Man, I'm just making a living." Making a living would mean, "Well, I'm just getting enough money to stay alive." In Afrikaans we would say, "What are you basically doing to have life?" A Christian would say, "Life is a gift from God and I've been liberated from death. Glory to God! Eternal life is a gift inside me and my decisions and my actions are not made any more in the desperation where man and animal is howling, hoping for some form of life that is created by their own effort living in the pain and misery of looking back at what you've maybe lost or what could have been or looking at politics and looking at leaders who are messing things up where you are howling for life. We have been given life! Glory to God! And the access that people have to that life is through faith in Jesus Christ. That is the only way! Glory to God! If you want people to have that life, preach the gospel, share the gospel, and those to whom the Father has already been preaching in their hearts and have said, "Yes" to the Father would hear you. Hallelujah! That is absolute good news! Glory to God! I tell you, "The gospel makes you happy!"

Romans 3:

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.

20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

21 But now apart from the law the righteousness (the good action) of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

22 This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe (The faithfulness of Jesus and belief of Jesus). There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

24 and all are justified freely by (the power of the resurrection) his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

So how are we justified? Many of us cry for justice. The way we are justified is by the resurrection in Jesus Christ. That is what it says here. Let's read it:

22 There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

We, who have studied the scripture, know that grace talks about the influence upon the human race by the power of the resurrection. So, what is he saying here? He says that all people fall short of eternal life, Jew and Gentile. Both of them are ungodly in their own ability. But we are justified, set free. from sin and death by the redemption that came through Jesus Christ which is through the power of His resurrection. That is how we are justified with life.

Now back to Galatians 5... Remember, be set free. Stand in the liberty wherewith Christ has set you free. How has Christ set us free? He justifies us with life. So, if we cry for justice in the earth, what are we crying for? We are crying for the power of the resurrection to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit inside people's lives. That's what we cry for. **We cannot stand at government's door and cry for justice. They need justice as much as what we need justice! Justice is defined in a person's life being set free by Jesus Christ. So, let us stand firm in the justice, or the justification, which is the liberation by the resurrection power of Jesus Christ whereby we have been made free. Let us not move away to any other form of freedom!**

Let me tell you something and I'm getting back to what I said in the beginning. Justice did come to the Jews because it is simply not just that people get tortured, that people are in death camps. Glory to God and let us always speak for the freedom of the oppressed! But let me tell you that the liberation that they have been liberated with cannot be compared to the liberation wherewith Christ has set us free. There are many people that have been liberated from atrocities in this world that have still not experienced the liberation that comes from Christ which is a liberation that is from sin and death in themselves where they are justified with the true justification which is the power of the resurrection.

My oldest son, Abrie, is now starting his first job tomorrow. He can now work at this company which is a very good company. They treat their workers well. But it can be, and this is how life sometimes is, that there is somebody there that maybe just doesn't like his face and certain injustice can be done towards him Who knows? But I want my son to stand and where he must make his stand emotionally, where he must make his stand about who he is about his future, about the true freedom, I want him to stand in the liberation where Christ has set him free. I want justice to be served to him which is that he would be justified by the grace of God. We're not even talking about his business now. I'm talking about justified with the grace of God whereby he can say, in the situation where he's in, would it be good or bad, that I know what it is to be strengthened with Christ. That I can have contentment if it goes good or bad at my job. That is the liberation he stands in. That is where he makes his stand. And then the justification that is maybe not the justification that came by Christ but the justification that can come by the laws of the company or the laws of the government where a person can be set free because of injustices, that he can have that as a second or third or fourth justification. But the true justification is that which is in Jesus and that would be where he would stand. And that is the same for all people.

My second born, Hendri, is in videography. He does weddings. When the Covid came and the lockdowns, the company that he worked for retrenched many people and he lost his job. And now with the second wave coming in, he had six or seven weddings cancelled. Now, my word to him would be my word to any person, my word to nations, my word to countries is this: Stand fast in the liberation where Christ has set you free and don't be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. The yoke of bondage to my son would be a yoke where you find your freedom and your liberation in how much money you make or how many weddings you have or according to the laws of this country. Don't find your freedom there. Find your freedom in the liberation wherewith Christ has set you free, where you are not making a living but where you've been offering a living. And this living is eternal life manifested in the goodness of God bringing forth the very character of God in you. That is robust enough to handle being retrenched. That is robust enough to handle losing six or seven weddings. That's just robust enough that can put a smile on your face. And I see him smiling. I see him happy. I see him joking here. I see him talking about the goodness of God. Why? Because he is not making a living. He has eternal life and lives from that. That's what I want for all my kids and that's what I want for the Church. That's what God wants for me and for you! Glory to God! Hallelujah! Well I think we can go to our last verse.

Romans 5:

1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

2 through whom we have gained access by faith into (the power of the resurrection) this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from wrath through him!

10 For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

We were not making a living. We are being made alive by the life that God made for humans in raising Jesus Christ from the dead. Hallelujah! Glory to God!

11 Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ

We boast in the hope of glory of God and we boast in God. The one meanings of the word, boast, and a word that is derived from or used in conjunction with is the word, wish, to wish or to pray. So, when you boast in the flesh, it simply means that the confidence of what you are expecting, your wish, is based on your flesh. So, if you boast in prayer, the wish or your prayer is answered based on how much you've prayed. That's boasting in prayer. The Jews boast in the flesh. They think because they are the people of God and obey the law, so they boast in the flesh and their obedience to the law, they think that their prayers would be answered because of them being Jews and being circumcised. That is boasting in the flesh. That is confidence in the flesh. Confidence means boast.

It means to wish from that foundation. Now what he says here is, “We boast or we have confidence in the hope of the glory of God or it says here, “We boast in God Himself.”

So our wish or the prayer we have and the knowledge that we know, the confidence that we know that our prayers are answered is not because of our flesh or because of any good thing that we have done, or the government, or who is in power, or any of those things. It's not the economy. It's not the stock market. It's none of those things. It is not even the atmosphere that is being created through government to do business and so forth. It has nothing to do with that. Our confidence for life is God Himself. So why will we experience life? It's not because we are confident in anything but because God decided to give it to us and we are willing to receive it from Him because God said He would give it and 're just believing it. That is the way it works. Glory to God!

So, I want to tell you, “Go away and you can boast.” What I want you to do as we end this message, go away boasting, saying, “I've got confidence because I have the hope of eternal life. Eternal life belongs to me and I have the confident expectation, the boasting that is not in my flesh, that is not in my works, that is not in my amount of reading the bible, that is not in the amount of prayer or even accurate prayer. But I am resting and boasting and my wish, my prayer, finds its origin in God promising me it and in God's faithfulness in doing it. Therefore, I need justification in no other way. My justification is of God manifested in a life where I can have joy in the midst of the things of this world. Glory to God!

I hope this message encouraged you and that it just gets your mind to know that you are justified by Him. Let us end off by just reading **Galatians 5** again. And this is my word for you: ***Stand fast therefore in the liberation wherewith Christ has made you free.***

My word for South Africans: You know we have been set free when Nelson Mandela became president. Yes, you have been set free. You have been set free from the apartheid by the power of government. But I want to tell you, “Don't stand fast in that. Don't let that be the foundation on which you build because tomorrow we might have another president that might come and decide to make South Africa a Communist country and it might be completely different than what it was under Mandela and then you had a liberation that is now lost. Stand fast in the liberation wherewith Christ has made you free.

To my friends in the United States: Don't stand fast in the liberation wherewith you think you were set free under Donald Trump. They were a liberation. You were liberated from certain things but don't stand fast in that! There might be some of my friends in the U.S. that are saying, “I've been set free with a liberation that came by the Democratic party and Joe Biden and we've been set free from certain things.” Be careful! That liberation has “power”... I mean it is so funny! There is signing and signing just for the next guy to come and sign again and just end it. Then it's howling again: “My freedom is taken away!”

My friend, let us stand fast there from the liberation where Christ has made us free. That is liberate. We have been liberated from death itself and we have the life of God and we boast in the hope of the glory of God which is the resurrection and the recreation. And we boast in God Himself and not in our flesh, not in our governments... not in any of those things. We boast we are sure that we will have the life of God because of the faithfulness of God. There are different justifications but thank God that we are justified with the justification of eternal life in Christ having the fruit of the Spirit now that is born from that justification as we live in the hope of eternal life. Glory to God!

Thank you so much that I could serve you with this Good News today. Go and enjoy your day and the rest of the week. Know that you have a beautiful hope in front of you. You don't have to make a living. You can now, for some of you maybe, the first time, just go and do your job and do your business and not make a living. You can now know you have a living and you're just doing a job and getting some wages for the work you've done. But now you know that you are not making a living, finding life from it anymore. When it comes to politics maybe you can go and cast a vote and know that you are not making a living for you and your children that way. You are just casting a vote and giving some input about government for the interim period while you're just choosing the guy that is going to sign the stuff for the next four years that might bring in the next guy who signs it out and then you're going to vote again. That is just the way it works. That is life. Let us open our eyes to just the realities of what's going on around us and let us see the liberation that Christ has given us. Enjoy your week. God bless...