

Free From Yoke of Bondage

Sermon #1027

Study by W.D. Frazee—December 9, 1966

Turn please to Galatians the fifth chapter where we will find our text in the first verse.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” Galatians 5:1.

In our last vesper service we studied from Romans 8 the precious privilege that we have of turning from the life of the flesh, the life of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God. This evening we hear the word of Scripture urging us to standfast in that liberty and not go back to the yoke of bondage. Why indeed should anyone who has been a slave and then become free voluntarily return to the bondage? What a foolish thing. What an insane thing. What an unreasonable thing.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again...” Galatians 5:1.

Don't get caught again in the trap. Don't get wrapped up in the meshes of the snare.

“Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage”
Galatians 5:1.

I would like to suggest this evening four things that are in that yoke of bondage, four things that you and I are to avoid if we are to experience to the full and enjoy to the full Christian liberty. First, the bondage of sin. Is sin a taskmaster, a slave-driver? Oh yes. We were just hearing about this man who was a slave of alcohol in the report tonight. All over this nation there are thousands, yes, literally millions of men and women that would like to quit alcohol tonight if they could. Am I correct? Yes. What is the matter? They are slaves. They are in bondage.

But is Jesus Christ delivering men and women from that? Oh yes. And there are men and women here tonight, thank God, that can testify that Jesus can deliver the slaves of alcohol. I wonder is there anybody here tonight that would be willing to raise your hand that you know by experience that God can deliver the slave of alcohol? May I see your hands? Thank God, friends, every witness testifies that God is true.

What about tobacco? Is that a slave-driver too? Oh yes. Yes. Is there anybody here that the Lord has delivered from tobacco? May I see your hands? Oh yes, a good many of you.

Now I want to ask you something, friends. Are there millions of people in America tonight that would like to quit tobacco? Yes, you know there are. But isn't it a strange thing that after a very temporary drop in cigarette sales when the surgeon general's report came out, the United States government officially told the people that tobacco was causing lung cancer besides contributing to heart failure and emphysema and other things, I say, isn't it a strange thing that after a temporary drop cigarettes came back up and the consumption continues to increase. Isn't that a strange thing?

Is it that the people don't believe that report? Not so much that. Probably some of them don't believe it. But there are millions of men tonight that if you asked them they would say, "I would like to quit if I could." What is the matter? They are in bondage.

Now I know there are some people that can quit anytime they want to. But the problem is to want to want to. That is the nature of the bondage. Don't forget that.

Alright. Now you men and women who have experienced in your bodies and minds and souls the lifting power, the delivering power of Jesus Christ from liquor and tobacco, will you go back to that and be entangled again in that yoke of bondage? Wouldn't that be a strange thing? Here is a person that has known the joy of a clean mouth and clean lungs and a clean brain free from these poisons and then just because somebody invites him to take a drink or take a smoke he gets entangled again with that yoke of bondage. Wouldn't that be too bad?

The Word of God is:

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" Galatians 5:1.

But, friends, I am using alcohol and tobacco as typical things, as examples. There are a thousand other things in which the natural man is in bondage. The man with an evil temper that gets red in the face and says things that grieve his friends and makes him ashamed afterwards. Is he a slave? Oh yes. And we could go on with many illustrations.

Sin brings bondage to those who yield to it. But thank God:

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" John 8:36.

If God has delivered you from any sin standfast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free and don't be entangled again in that yoke of bondage.

I like the way *Steps to Christ* puts it on page 44.

“It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God” *Steps to Christ*, page 44.

Is it freedom to walk with God? Ah, yes it is, my friends. Freedom. You know, the Devil is in bondage himself and he tries to make believe that the way to be free is to be where he is. But just imagine, here is a prison. There are the bars. And there are many inside there. They can't come out here where you and I are. But suppose one of them speaks to us through those bars and he says, “Hey there! You can't be in here where I am, can you? Don't you wish you could have what I have? Just think of what I had for breakfast and what I am going to have for dinner and supper. They furnish it all free in here, but they won't let you in here. Oh, don't you wish you could have what I have!”

And you know, somebody with a receptive mind to that sort of thing if they would stand there and listen to that long enough they might do something just to get in there and see what all that wonderful thing is about.

My dear friends, that is exactly where the Devil is, and that is what the Devil is doing, and that is his sales talk. Never forget it. And remember that the bars that separate us from Satan don't mean that we are in jail, they mean that he is in jail. We are in liberty if we are walking with God. Do you agree with me?

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” Galatians 5:1.

But now that isn't all there is to bondage, my dear friends. Turn to this book of Galatians again. Galatians the third chapter and the tenth verse.

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith” Galatians 3:10-11.

The whole book of Galatians was written by Paul to his converts over there in Asia Minor who had become upset by some Judaizing teachers that came in there and tried to make the people believe that even though they had accepted Christ if they were going to be saved they must take up a lot of human works but of them those that had been prescribed by the ceremonial law which of course Jesus nailed to His cross.

But the real problem was deeper than the matter of the ceremonial law and the doing away of the Passover. The real problem was this. Are men saved by keeping the law, or are they saved by faith in Christ? This book of Galatians was written to prove to those people that salvation is by faith. By faith.

Notice the relation he says of the two in the 24th verse.

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” Galatians 3:24.

Now if the law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, it is a good thing isn't it? Don't we need to be brought to Christ? Do you know how the law, that is the moral law, and the ceremonial when it was in use and still by its teaching, but the great moral law of God, do you know how the law of God is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? Well, very simply it is this. The law points out our sin. The law shows us what is wrong with us. The law tells us what is bad. But the law can't save us.

And therefore the law, pointing out our need, brings us to Christ that we might be cleaned up and accepted and saved. The law can't do that. But it can show us that we need it. But these Galatians had been led to believe that there was a lot of things that they must do if they were going to be accepted. Chief of them was circumcision, a Jewish ceremony that God had given Abraham that Christ, of course, set aside when he died.

Now my point is this, friends, this book of Galatians was left here in the Bible so that people in all ages would understand that the Gospel calls us to acceptance not through what we do for God, but through what God does for us. And whenever any Christian, mark this point, at any stage of his experience turns from looking to Jesus for merit and begins to look at what he has done, or is doing, or ought to be doing as the basis of merit, then he needs to read the book of Galatians. This is what Paul is dealing with specifically in this verse we are reading tonight.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” Galatians 5:1.

Don't go back to that yoke of bondage. Now let me read you what I think is a most wonderful presentation of this point. In Book One of Selected Messages, page 353. There is nobody here tonight that is troubled with going back to the ceremonial law. There is nobody troubled here tonight with the problem of keeping the Passover or offering lambs, or circumcision, or having these various ceremonies. But I want you to note, friends, the basic problem, as I have said, is deeper than that. It is the matter of trusting to what we have done or can do as part of our acceptance with God. That is the basic Galatian problem. As hard as it is to get people to give up their sins, it is still harder to get them to give up their righteousness. And yet all their righteousness is as what? Filthy rags.

Now I will read this statement.

“There are conscientious souls that trust partly to God, and partly to themselves” *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, page 353.

Now notice, these are conscientious people. They are not out in the saloons and the pool halls and the racetracks and nightclubs. They are trying so hard to be faithful Christians. They really work at it. But now watch.

“There are conscientious souls that trust partly to God, and partly to themselves. They do not look to God, to be kept by His power, but depend upon watchfulness against temptation, and the performance of certain duties for acceptance with Him. There are no victories in this kind of faith” *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, page 353.

This is tremendous, friends. I hope every soul gets the blessing that God wants to give. He wants to deliver us, friends. He wants to deliver us, mark this point, not only from the bondage of whiskey and tobacco, he wants to deliver us from the bondage of thinking we have got to pray every day at a certain time and if something happens and we miss it, we are in the doghouse. He wants to deliver us from that kind of bondage.

Now there are religions in this world, friends, where people have got to pray by the clock or else they are not up to where they ought to be. Am I correct? But that is not the religion of Jesus Christ.

Somebody says, “Brother Frazee, aren’t we supposed to pray?”

Sure we are supposed to pray. We are supposed to eat to. Aren’t we? Anybody here that hasn’t eaten for a week? No. Not a soul. But I want to tell you something, friends, while it is a wonderful thing to be regular in our eating habits, and we should, I am not here to break down any thought of regularity either in eating or in praying, nevertheless, I can live and even work if my dinner is a little late or if I have to miss it all together. Is there anybody here tonight that can do that? Nearly everybody.

Friends, in our Christian experience we must not be tied to the thought that if something happens to break up a regular routine, we are sunk gone, defeated before the Devil ever comes around just because we missed reading the Bible or prayer.

Now I know the Devil pretty well. He is going to take what I have just said in the last two minutes and use it to lead somebody to be lazy and careless. Well, remember, that wasn’t what I read. It wasn’t what it was meant to teach at all. What is this talking about? It is talking about the danger of depending upon our regular observance of certain things to give us merit and to give us acceptance with God, to feel that we are ok if we do those things, and if we don’t, we are not ok. We are out.

I am going to read this again because it is so simple and it is so plain.

“There are conscientious souls that trust partly to God, and partly to themselves. They do not look to God, to be kept by His power, but depend upon watchfulness against temptation, and the performance of certain duties for acceptance with Him. There are no victories in this kind of faith. Such persons toil to no purpose; their souls are in continual bondage...” *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, page 353.

What was the last word of our first text tonight? Bondage. Be entangled again in the yoke of bondage. Here is bondage. Not the bondage of sin, the bondage of human works trying to get away from sin. Luther was under that bondage for years. Wesley was. But thank God both of those reformers were led by the Holy Spirit to hear the word of the Gospel—“the just shall live by faith.” Let’s do it, friends.

This says:

“...they find no rest until their burdens are laid at the feet of Jesus” *Ibid.*

Now I want to ask you something. Suppose you have turned not only from sin, but from your own human works. You have just thrown yourselves absolutely on the mercy of Jesus. He has accepted you. How are you going to go on?

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him” Colossians 2:6.

Because the Devil is going to come around to you and say to you, “Yes, it was a good thing you turned from sin. It was a good thing you gave up all your human efforts because you did not have anything that was worth while. But now that God has been so good to forgive you, and so good to accept you, you certainly ought to make a good record from now on. And if you don’t I don’t know how long He is going to have you around.”

And that brings what? Fear.

Alright. Let’s go back to Romans 8 where we were last Friday night. Notice how this text fits right in here just where it belongs.

“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” Romans 8:15.

Oh, my friends, I am so glad that when the prodigal son came back in all his rags and tatters asking for a servant’s place, the father put his robe around him, received him into the house. He didn’t have to go to the barn. He didn’t have to go to the servant’s quarters. He was received as a son. That is the way you and I are received. Let’s not go back to human effort bondage. What do you say?

Well you say, “Shouldn’t we make an effort to please God?”

Certainly. Don’t you think that boy whose father took him back in so royally, don’t you think he tried to please his father? Well, if he had even an inch of gratitude he did. Didn’t he? But what a shame it would have been if every morning he would have thought, “Oh my I have got to walk carefully today. Father has been good to let me back, but oh, I have to walk the chalk because if I don’t probably I will have to go away.”

Was the father like that? Is the Father like that? No. No. Of course He wants us to keep from falling. But, friends, the way to keep from falling isn't to be on attention. It will not only produce ulcers, high blood pressure, and coronary attacks, it produces the very thing that we try to guard against and that is falling. There is only One that can keep us from falling and that is Jesus. And we keep from falling, not by looking at our feet to see where they are stepping, but looking at His face to see where we are going.

Oh, this is so important, friends. There is nothing more important in our study tonight.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” Galatians 5:1.

Pray? Yes. But don't pray to roll up some merit. Don't pray so that you can feel, “Well, I guess I have done what I am supposed to and now I can feel safe.” It is looking at Jesus that saves us. It is looking at Jesus that keeps us. And when the Devil can't get us entangled again with sin, he tries to get us entangled again with piling up human works, human efforts in the vain endeavor to feel that we have attained.

Oh, let's turn from all that. What do you say?

Now the third thing in this yoke of bondage that I want you to notice. We will turn to Isaiah 51:12 and take a look at this. It is the bondage of slavery to the opinions of human beings. My, my, how many people are afraid of what the neighbors are going to say. Or there friends are going to say. Not only what they are going to say, what they are going to think. How many people would accept this message tonight, friends, if they could be delivered from the bondage of the opinions of other people.

Oh, I was about to say millions of them. If there is anybody here tonight that has been in bondage to the opinions of other people on any subject, listen to this verse.

“I, *even I*, *am* he that comforteth you: who *art* thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man *that* shall die, and of the son of man *which* shall be made *as* grass; And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth” Isaiah 51:12-13.

Here is God the great Creator. He looks down on this earth and here we are like little ants crawling along. The Lord sees you and me and if we are fearful about what somebody else thinks, He says, Now look here. Why should you be afraid of some other poor little ant that is just about to die anyway? And you forget all about Me, the great Creator, that made this whole universe.

Why not listen to God instead of what man says. What do you say? And listen, if man puts you in fear, turn to God. The fear of God will drive away the fear

of man. And the fear of God is not a slavish fear, it is a loving reverence. We fear to offend Him because we love Him. And in doing it we lose the fear of man.

Now sometimes we have an opportunity to witness for God, here in this chapel, or in the home where we live, perhaps as we are working, perhaps as we are shopping. Whatever may be our journey. But many a time the witness is muted, the witness is silenced because of what? Fear of what somebody might think or somebody might say.

Friends, that is bondage. Isn't it? Why not be free? If God impresses you to say something, say it. If somebody else likes it, fine, if they don't, leave that with God, friends. You just did what you thought God wanted you to do. It is nice to try to please people, but the most important one to try to please is who? God. And if you please God in the end you will eventually please everybody else. And if you don't please God, eventually you won't please anybody. So why not step out of the yoke of bondage of worrying about what other people think or say. What do you say?

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” Galatians 5:1.

Now the last. The bondage of condemnation. Oh, I think this is the worst of all. We go into a prison and here are various cells.

“How long is this man in for?”

“He is in for six years.”

“How much has he served.”

“Well, he has served so much. He is to for parole.”

Finally we come along and the warden says, “This man is under the death sentence. Next Tuesday night at ten o'clock he is going to be executed.” He is really under what? Under condemnation.

Oh, my friends, to be under the sense of guilt, the sense of defeat, the sense of failure, and I am not talking about the slave of tobacco or whiskey or some sin, I am talking about the person who feels defeated, forsaken, a failure. He would like to be right with God. It isn't that he wants to go back to that liquor or tobacco or wants to go to any sin, he would like to be right with God, but he just feels condemned. He feels a failure. He feels lost.

Listen. Romans 8:1. Oh, I think this is beautiful. What is the fifth and sixth words in this verse? No condemnation.

“*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” Romans 8:1.

Not after we get to heaven. Of course there won't be any condemnation there, but there is therefore *now* no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. So, friends, if we have accepted Jesus, He has accepted us. Is that right? If we have given Him our sins, He has given us His righteousness. Is that right? If we have given Him all we have, He has given us all He has. Is that right? Do you believe that? Ah, how rich we are.

Are we under condemnation? No.

How blessed to feel from my care laden heart,
Christ knoweth my sorrows and bidst them depart.
To lay my tired head in an infinite rest,
On the heart of all others who loves me the best.
When my lips have been touched with the spirit of prayer,
I feel that they presence of Jesus is there.
From all condemnation my soul is now free,
For my blessed Redeemer has suffered for me.

Ah, friends, do you see that the answer to everyone of these four things is looking to Jesus? Does sin strive for the mastery? Looking at Jesus I want Him more than I want indulgence. Is that right? Do human works seek to fill my mind so that I am just all tied up with efforts to build up merit of my own? Oh, look away to Jesus. He has already done a thousand times better than I can ever do. And He has offered it all to me free. Oh, how cheap those human works of mine look. I will accept what He has done because I know God accepts that. I will seek to please Him, yes, but not in the endeavor to roll up some merit, not so that I will feel good.

May I put it this way? I will seek to please Him so that He will feel good not so I can feel good. Do you see what I mean, friends? Just to show gratitude and love. And then do human beings frighten me? Do they put me on a tension? Am I in bondage because of what somebody says or I think they will say? Oh, look away to Jesus. He is the Creator. He is great. These folks, they get reduced down to proper size when I look to Jesus. They are not so important after all. The biggest man in this world is a tiny pygmy along side the Creator. Isn't he?

And then this last one, condemnation. Do I feel guilty as I look at myself? Oh, then I look away to Jesus. I see Him there in the sanctuary pleading for me and I will know that He has said, No condemnation. No condemnation. Let's believe it.

I want to read you a beautiful comment on this point. This is from an old *Review and Herald* article of September 20, 1892.

"When Satan suggests doubt and darkness, begin to sing
of the matchless love of Jesus" *Review and Herald*,
September 20, 1892.

I am so glad all you choir folks are learning more and more to sing the praises of God. But you don't have to wait until you come to choir, you can sing when you are all alone.

“When Satan suggests doubt and darkness, begin to sing of the matchless love of Jesus. ... let your conversation be full of hope and courage in the Lord. Say, ‘I will be free, I am free;’ and when Satan tells you that you are a sinner, tell him, ‘I know it, but Jesus said, ‘I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.’” *Ibid.*

Now I want you to notice those seven words that we are told here to say. I will be free. I am free. What did our opening texts say?

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” Galatians 5:1.

Now these seven words. I will be free. I am free. Now the only way we can be free is in Christ. If we will come out of the cave we will find the sun is shining. If we will come out of the prison house, we will find we are free in God. But this is all by what? Faith. And faith is believing God. God says, I have the power to deliver you from sin, from human works, from the fear of man, and from condemnation. OH, friends, let’s believe Him. What do you say?

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