

Prologue: A Question of True Freedom

The Presswood family gathered in the garage, surrounded by the hum of the **Time Audit Machine**. They had been reading **Galatians 5:1-15**, where Paul writes about the freedom believers have in Christ. Ariel had been thinking about what it meant to be truly free. Alice, as usual, was holding Mr. Fluffernutter, whispering imaginary questions to him about freedom.

“Daddy,” Ariel asked, “What does Paul mean by freedom in Christ? Does it mean we can do whatever we want because we’re forgiven?”

Ryan smiled, recognizing the importance of the question. “That’s a great question, Ariel. The **freedom** Paul is talking about isn’t about doing whatever we want. It’s about being set free from the **burden of trying to earn God’s love** through the law. When we’re in Christ, we’re not bound by a long list of rules to make us right with God. Instead, we’re **free** to live in His grace, led by the **Holy Spirit**. That doesn’t mean we’re free to sin—it means we’re free to live in a way that reflects God’s love and truth.”

Ariel nodded. “So, it’s about freedom from having to work for salvation, not freedom to just live selfishly.”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “Paul also reminds the Galatians that this freedom isn’t just for themselves—it’s meant to help them love and serve others. Let’s use the **Time Audit Machine** to explore what Paul was saying to the Galatians about true freedom and what it means to us today.”

The Journey Begins: Freedom from the Yoke of the Law (Galatians 5:1-6)

The **Time Audit Machine** powered up, and the family found themselves in the bustling marketplace of **Galatia**, surrounded by merchants, travelers, and a group of believers gathered to hear Paul’s letter being read aloud. The reader began with Paul’s powerful declaration:

“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).

Ryan pointed to the scene. “The **yoke of bondage** Paul is talking about is the idea that people had to follow the Old Testament **law** perfectly to be right with God. The Galatians were being influenced by false teachers who were telling them they needed to be **circumcised** and follow Jewish customs to be true Christians.”

Ariel furrowed her brow. “So, they were trying to add more rules to what Jesus had already done for them?”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “Paul was reminding them that salvation comes through **faith in Jesus alone**, not through following a set of rules. Jesus fulfilled the law, so we don’t have to rely on our own efforts to

be saved. If they went back to relying on the law, they were rejecting the **freedom** Jesus had given them.”

The reader continued, “**For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.**” (Galatians 5:6).

Ariel nodded. “So, Paul is saying that what really matters is **faith**—not outward rules or rituals.”

“That’s right,” Ryan said. “Faith in Jesus is what makes us right with God. And that faith is expressed through **love**, not through following a checklist of rules.”

Freedom with Responsibility: Serving Others in Love (*Galatians 5:7-13*)

The family listened as the reader explained how Paul urged the Galatians to use their freedom responsibly. “**For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.**” (Galatians 5:13).

Ariel turned to her father. “Paul’s saying that just because we’re free in Christ doesn’t mean we should live selfishly, right?”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “True freedom in Christ isn’t about doing whatever we want—it’s about being free to **serve others** out of love. Paul was warning the Galatians not to let their freedom become an excuse for **selfishness** or sin. Instead, their freedom should lead them to **love** and serve one another.”

The reader continued, quoting Paul’s profound statement: “**For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**” (Galatians 5:14).

Ariel smiled. “So, the whole point of the law was to teach us to love others. And now, through Jesus, we can actually live that out—not because we’re trying to earn anything, but because we’re free to love like He did.”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “Paul was showing the Galatians that the freedom Jesus gives isn’t about breaking rules—it’s about living in the **spirit of the law**, which is love. When we love our neighbors as ourselves, we fulfill the heart of God’s commands.”

The Danger of Misusing Freedom (*Galatians 5:15*)

As the reader finished the passage, they read Paul’s warning: “**But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.**” (Galatians 5:15).

Ryan pointed to the Galatians, some of whom were arguing about what it meant to follow Jesus. “Paul was warning them that if they misused their freedom—if they let their disagreements and selfishness take over—it would tear their community apart. True freedom in Christ isn’t about fighting for what we want—it’s about working together in love to build each other up.”

Ariel thought about this. “So, even though we’re free, we still have to be careful about how we treat others. If we’re selfish, it can hurt the whole community.”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “Freedom comes with **responsibility**. When we use our freedom to love and serve, it strengthens the church. But if we misuse it, it can lead to division and destruction. Paul was reminding the Galatians to stay focused on **love** and not let anything—whether arguments, pride, or selfishness—get in the way of their unity in Christ.”

Takeaway: Living in True Freedom

Back in the garage, the **Time Audit Machine** powered down, and the family sat together, reflecting on what they had experienced. Ariel turned to her father, her expression thoughtful. “So, true freedom in Christ means we’re free from the burden of trying to earn God’s love, but we’re also free to love others the way God loves us.”

“That’s exactly right,” Ryan said. “Freedom in Christ isn’t about breaking rules—it’s about being free to live in the fullness of God’s grace, guided by the **Holy Spirit**, and motivated by **love**. It’s about using our freedom to serve and build up others, not to live selfishly.”

Ariel smiled. “I think I get it now. Freedom in Christ means we’re free to live the way God intended us to live—by loving Him and loving others.”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “And when we live in that kind of freedom, we become a reflection of Jesus to the world. We show that true freedom isn’t about doing whatever we want—it’s about living in the power of **God’s love**.”

Key Teachings: The Heart of Freedom in Christ

In **Galatians 5:1-15**, Paul calls believers to stand firm in their freedom, reminding them that salvation comes through **faith in Jesus** alone, not through adherence to the **law**. This freedom isn’t a license to sin but an opportunity to live out the **love of Christ** by serving others. Paul emphasizes that the entire law is fulfilled in one command: “**Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**”

This passage teaches us that:

- **True freedom** is found in Christ and is rooted in grace, not works.
- Freedom in Christ comes with **responsibility**—to love and serve others.
- Misusing our freedom for selfishness can lead to division, but living in love brings unity.

Paul’s message to the Galatians reminds us that the Christian life is about living in the **freedom of grace**, motivated by **love**, and empowered by the **Holy Spirit** to reflect God’s heart to the world.