

The Value of Freedom

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Galatians 5:1 NIV

5 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

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

The Galatian Christians had become caught up in the idea that they had become enlightened by those who had come in among them telling them they needed to do more to be saved. These were the “Judaizers” or Jewish followers who wanted to believe in Jesus, but hold to the law of Moses. They were what we would call “legalistic.” There was also another group that was trying to teach that since they were under grace they could sin without regret. Both were wrong.

Here, Paul begins to remind them of the spiritual freedom from the curse of sin Christ had purchased for us all. This liberty was not to be corrupted or taken for granted. In this one verse, let’s consider two important *truths* about valuing the freedom given to us through Jesus Christ.

I. The Value of Freedom is Determined by the Price Paid for It.

A. Jesus gave His life and blood for our freedom.

The old song, *Jesus Paid it All*, says it all,

Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

B. There is no greater act of sacrifice than to lay down one’s life for another.

According to the Chicago Tribune, on June 22, 1997, parachute instructor Michael Costello, forty-two, of Mt.Dora, Florida, jumped out of an airplane at 12,000 feet altitude with a novice skydiver name Gareth Griffith, age twenty-one.

The novice would soon discover just how good his instructor was, for when the novice pulled his rip cord, his parachute failed. Plummeting to the ground they faced certain death.

But then the instructor did an amazing thing. Just before hitting the ground, the instructor rolled over so that he would hit the ground first and the novice would land on top of him. The instructor was killed instantly. The novice fractured his spine in the fall, but he was not paralyzed.

One man takes the place of another, takes the brunt for another. One substitutes himself to die so another may live. So it was at the cross, when Jesus died for our sins. (Choice Contemporary Stories and Illustrations, Baker Books, compiled by Craig Brian Larson, pg57).

C. Freedom enjoyed, as a Christian or a nation, exist because a high price was paid by someone.

It's been said that, “American’s know the price of everything, and the value of nothing.” God help us as Christians or Americans if we do not value our freedom.

II. Forfeiting the Freedom Purchased with Blood is a Great Offense to the One Who Made the Sacrifice.

A. To forfeit our spiritual freedom is to trust in a person or idea that is unproven and unworthy.

Acts 4:11-13, Jesus is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.’ 12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

B. To forfeit freedom is to dishonor the sacrifice of the One who paid the price for the freedom.

Consider the price paid for our freedom as Americans: Fifty-six men signed the Declaration of Independence. Their conviction resulted in untold sufferings for themselves and their families. Of the 56 men, five were captured by the British and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons in the Revolutionary Army. Another had two sons captured. Nine of the fifty-six fought and died from wounds or hardships of the war. Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships sunk by the British navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts and died in poverty.

At the battle of Yorktown, the British General Cornwallis had taken over Thomas Nelson's home for his headquarters. Nelson quietly ordered General George Washington to open fire on the Nelson home. The home was destroyed and Nelson died bankrupt. John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their thirteen children fled for their lives. His fields and mill were destroyed. For over a year, he lived in forest and caves, returning home only to find his wife dead and his children vanished. A few weeks later, he died from exhaustion. -Kenneth L. Dodge, *Resource*, Sept./ Oct., 1992, p. 5.

C. To forfeit that freedom is count the blood that was shed as being without value.

Hebrews 10: 26-31, If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, **27** but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. **28** Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. **29** How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? **30** For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." **31** It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. NIV

Conclusion

One newspaper editor recently gave us these wise words: "The way some are inclined to try to do business with Reds and conduct trade with Communist countries because of hopes of immediate financial advantage is quite in contrast with a situation involving Declaration of Independence signer John Hancock in the American Revolution.

"When Gen. George Washington besieged Boston, he asked Hancock whether the city should be bombarded, to which Hancock replied: 'Nearly all the property I have in the world is in houses and other real estate in Boston; but if the expulsion of the British army requires their being burnt to ashes, issue the order for that purpose immediately.'"

How wonderful it would be if the spirit of Hancock as to his property in relation to the cause of freedom would possess all Christians as to the causes of Christ. I would that all Christians everywhere were able to give the testimony Paul gave:

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Philippians 3:7-11).