

"The Gospel of Freedom"

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Galatians 5.1-26
July 9, 2023.
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This week we began to talk about the freedom we receive, by grace, through justification by faith. Freedom is, without a doubt, one of the most valued conditions of human life in our societies, or at least it is one of the most defended rights.

Perhaps that is why it is striking that Paul addresses the Galatian Christians insisting on the fact that they are free.

"Christ gave us freedom so that we may be free. Therefore, stand firm in that freedom and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery" Galatians 5:1

What slavery does the apostle Paul refer to? To the slavery of the Law.

It is that within the recently created community of the Galatians there were people who insisted on returning or willingly accepting some of the prescriptions of the Jewish Law, among them the rite of circumcision.

Through this ritual, Jewish men being circumcised are given an identity and a sense of belonging. Hence, the force that this prescription had should not surprise us, since human beings have always and to this day walk the world trying to feel part of something, looking for something that identifies us, that unites us, that makes us feel part of a larger group and accepted by it.

Pablo fears that this practice will finally lead to a submission to all of her. And he knows better than anyone how dangerous it is to become a slave to the Law, believing that it is capable of justifying and saving. He knows how seductive the regulatory framework provided by the Law can be, since in its light everything is clearly defined: the one who complies is just, the one who is not a sinner.

But Paul also knows how much a slave a person can become to her achievements or her failures in their attempt to be approved / justified by the religious works of the Law. That is why he insists that Christians not lose the freedom they have received through Christ.

But he also insists that this freedom should not be used for anything. Let no one believe that freedom regarding the works of the Law automatically means absence of limits and permission to do anything: "Be careful because if you bite and eat each other, you will destroy each other." V.15

Because freedom, that precious asset that we value so highly, is, like all things, neither good nor bad in itself. It is true that not having freedom and being subject to an external domain that forces us without being able to decide anything is exhausting, and therefore the absolute lack of freedom is a problem. But the existence of a freedom emptied of meaning and direction is also a problem.

The freedom that is directed towards the side of death, even if it is presented full of life, is a freedom that not only leads to destructive but also self-destructive behaviors.

That is why the announcement and exhortation of the Apostle Paul is so pertinent and relevant: Christ gave us freedom to be free... but do not use that freedom to give free rein to your instincts. Rather serve one another out of love" v.1, 13.

Recover that freedom that comes to us from the Lord in order to make a human and worthy use of it. And for this it is necessary to link freedom again, not only with our possibilities and our nature, but rather with the work of God. By turning freedom into a purely human good, we have abandoned the root that it has and we are using it for very undignified purposes.

For Martin Luther, Christian freedom is a gift from God. On the Cross, Christ took on all the chains and oppressions and freed us from all of them. Freedom is a grace from God that is given to us to put at the service of God and his Kingdom.

We are no longer free to live for ourselves, but we have been freed to live for others, to serve others, to serve God in building his Kingdom. It is a freedom that, unlike freedom understood humanly, does not isolate us as individuals, but rather makes us part of a community. It is a freedom that generates satisfaction because it is the freedom that leads us to give of what we are. It is a freedom that comes to us from God and at the same time humanizes us.

Dear brothers, the Word of God announces to us that the freedom that will make us free from pressure and depression is that which is received from uniting our life to that of Jesus Christ without pretexts. In that unit that leads to follow-up we will find Life and life in Abundance.

Without excuses, let's unite our lives to Jesus. So be it. Amen.