

II. Circumstantial bondage.

"With our mouths **we say**, 'Christ alone is what makes me acceptable,' but He doesn't become acceptable to us:

Because in our hearts we say, Christ and my financial freedom, Christ and my health, Christ and a happy marriage, Christ and the respect and happiness of my children.

The answer for us: Jesus adds not one thing to your salvation, neither should you add anything to you accepting Him fully. Otherwise, you haven't found freedom in Christ.

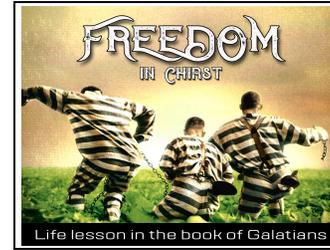
3. Cultural bondage.

We say- *"I'll embrace you as a Christian brother or sister as long as you start to look like me and act like me and think like me and like the same kind of music in church as me."*

The answer for us: The broader point of this passage is anyone whom God has accepted freely plus nothing we must accept freely plus nothing, if their faith is in Christ alone.

Community Group Questions:

1. What tempts you to "add" to your faith in Christ to feel saved?
2. What tempts you to "expect" from Christ in order to feel loved?
3. What "things" are so important to you, beyond faith in Christ alone, that would keep you from including someone in your circle of Christians?



Avoiding the Three Traps That Rob Your Freedom in Christ Galatians 2:1-10

¹ Fourteen years later I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also. ² I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain. ³ Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek.

⁴ This matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. ⁵ We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you. ⁶ As for those who seemed to be important—whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance—those men added nothing to my message.

⁷ On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews. ⁸ For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles.

⁹ James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. ¹⁰ All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do. *Word of the Lord*

What is that truth? That is you are accepted through Jesus Christ plus nothing. What makes you acceptable, what makes you loved, what makes you received by God is Jesus plus nothing.

The problem:

Acts 15:1, 5 *"Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved."* verse 5, *"The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses."*

What the "false brothers" (vs.4) were pushing for was for them to obey the Jewish ceremonial laws given by Moses.



Tim Keller -*The moral law made you different ethically, but the ceremonial law is what made you different culturally.*



N.T. Wright-*Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus and the gift of the Spirit, the believing gentiles were no longer impure and idolatrous pagans but were fellow members of the messianic family. Not even the most zealous Jew can deny these people full membership into Jesus family.*

2 Purposes of the Ceremonial "Clean" Laws

1. To demonstrate that despite living by them you could not make yourself acceptable to God.
2. To set the Jewish people apart from the pagan nations.

In the NT the Book of Hebrews it says: These gifts and sacrifices were only about food and drink and special washings. They were rules for the body, to be followed until the time of God's new way. Hebrews 9:10

"Sacrifices and offerings God was not pleased with, though the law required them to be made, but he sets that aside, for now we have been made holy through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ once for all." Hebrews 10:8-10

Paul would later write about the purposes of these laws and his own response to them after coming to Christ.

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. Romans 3:20

I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

Philippians 3:8,9

Faith in Christ, period, anything else destroys the freedom.

Three Traps to Avoid Enslavement:

1. Spiritual bondage. This matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. Galatians 2:4

Paul is saying they thought they were brothers, and they weren't.

The answer for us: Unless you forsake the idea, you can earn acceptance with God by your good deeds, you're still living a Jesus plus gospel.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8,9

¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

There's no extra credit to earn acceptance with God, *but you were created by your faith in Christ to honor and glorify Him.*

Your obedience will follow your faith.



Dallas Willard- Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning. Earning is an attitude, effort is an action.