



**Date:** July 5, 2009

**Title:** Two Enemies of Freedom

**Text:** Galatians 5:1-15

**Speaker:** Brad Evangelista

### **Galatians 5:1-15**

**Intro:** In his letter to the Galatian church, Paul sternly warns the Galatians and us not to return again to the yoke of slavery that religion requires. Instead, he encourages us to pursue the freedom in Christ for which we were set free. In this message, we explore the two errors of religious legalism and selfish license that war against the freedom for which Christ set us free.

#### **1. ENEMY #1: LEGALISM (Galatians 5:1-12)**

Legalism: The tendency to add something to the Gospel. Instead of justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, legalism wants to add something. For the erroneous teachers in Galatia it was circumcision. For us today it is things like church attendance, financial giving, spiritual gifts, or a variety of other things we like to add on to the Gospel as ways we think we can make God more pleased with us, or, more erroneously, put God in our debt.

Some observations about legalism:

1. For the Galatians it was circumcision. But what does it look like in our day? Church type, denomination, worship style, good works?
2. We tend to be legalistic about the things we are good at and overlook our weak areas but give no grace to the weak spots of others.
3. Legalism inevitably leads to judgementalism and hypocrisy.
4. Legalism is really not freedom at all but makes us prisoners to religion and rules.

#### **2. ENEMY #2: LICENSE (Galatians 5:13-15)**

License: This is an over-reaction to legalism. It is the tendency to take our freedom to the other end of the spectrum and use it only for our own selfish pleasure.

Some observations on license:

1. It's almost always an over-reaction to the religiosity of legalism.
2. It may feel like you are free, but you're actually still captive, this time just to yourself and the flesh.
3. License wrongly causes salvation to terminate on ourselves, rather than realizing that God freed us for a purpose—not just for our sake.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

God has given us freedom in Christ. It is a freedom from religion, but also from selfishness. We've been freed to serve, to live our lives for God's glory and others, not for ourselves. And, in the end, this is really the most joyful and free way to live.