



# Sermon Growth Guide

**August 21, 2022**

**Freedom – Liberated**

**Galatians 1:1-10**

**Key Verse:** Galatians 1:3a

“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age.”

**Big Idea:** Jesus won a better freedom than the freedoms of this world.

## Foundations

This week we begin our series in Galatians on **Freedom**.

We sing about it in the national anthem. We see it inscribed on buildings, monuments and symbolized in our flag. We rally for it at the polls, or in protests, and we celebrate it on holidays like Martin Luther King Jr. Day or the Fourth of July.

Galatians is all about freedom. But, 1,725 years before the birth of America, Paul was singing about a very special kind of freedom. It was a freedom he had seen while on the road to Damascus, so bright that it blinded him for three days (Acts 9:8). But so compelling he would give his whole life to share about it (Gal. 6:17).

This is freedom in Christ, who “gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age” (Gal. 1:4). It is a freedom now from the domination of sin, which holds humanity condemned, separate from God. Christ our savior has given Himself on our behalf, so that we who are in Christ are no longer condemned, but free, no longer in bondage to the powers of the present evil age.

And this free gift is not given to us because of who we are, or what we’ve done to earn it, but because of the grace of God in Christ. A gift so valuable, Paul would pour out his heart by pen, so that the Galatians might not give it up.

## Understanding God’s Word

Together, read Galatians 1:1-5. What elements of the gospel message do you see in Paul’s introductory statements?

Reviewing verses 6-9, what, according to Paul, has gone awry in these congregations? Take note of the energy, emotion, and rhetorical devices Paul uses. How do these help you understand the problem Paul has with this false gospel?

## Applying God’s Word

Being that the gospel is a free gift, protecting its integrity is essential. If we distort the gospel, we begin to distort how we live, think and act towards God and others. And a vicious cycle is born. We might not even know we are doing it! Theologians call this our “functional theology,” not what we say we believe, but what we actually think and do.

How does your functional theology diverge from what you know to be true about the gospel? What spiritual practices and relationships might help you align your functional and confessed theologies?

## Witnessing God’s Word

The world is full of false gospels that, promising freedom, place us in bondage to a set of rules, or particular image or identity, and cause us to embrace a spiritual or cultural caste system that denigrates the dignity of others and dishonors God.