

## Set Free – Part II: Set Free to Serve

Sunday Morning, September 24, 2017

Let's take a minute to remind ourselves of Part I of our series "Set Free". Last week's message taught us that we are "Set Free to Live!" Our focus verses were in

**(Galatians 5:1, 13)**

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

As you have noticed the last part of Galatians 5:13 says, "but through love serve one another." It is expected by God that after we have received "liberty" in Christ, we are to choose to serve one another, this in essence is serving Christ. Look with me at

**(Matthew 25:40)**

And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

The more we are free from serving ourselves, the more we are free to serve others.

Keep in mind that freedom in Christ is not a freedom toward "self-indulgence". Rather, the exercise of loving service is the truest mark and measure of Christian freedom.

Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1953 to 1961 said,  
"The road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action."

*(Markings [New York: Ballantine, 1993], 103)*

Our Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated the greatest actions of service that we could imitate, being followers of Christ.

Turn to **(I Thessalonians 1: 6 – 9)**.

**6** And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit,

**7** so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

**8** For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

**9** For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

It is here that we have a clearer understanding of the actions that God expects from us.

Let's look at this passage a little closer. In verse **6** it states that we're to become "followers" or imitators of Christ. In fact, we're to become followers of the Apostles examples as they followed Christ. The Apostles taught people how to live God's way. They wrote what Jesus taught them, that other's may walk as examples, imitators following Jesus. The way we follow the teachings of Jesus is to know and apply His Word to our lives that we, like the Apostles, would be examples that other Christians can follow! How great is God's expectation of each of His children!

In verses **7 – 9** notice that the Christians in Thessalonica were commended for the example that they displayed to the known world! They truly embraced what God expected of them to do! In the freedom they had in Christ they decided to turn from their idols, endured persecution and pursued the liberty they had in Christ. They chose to follow and serve God!

How great of a Christian do we want to be? \_\_\_\_\_

Look at what is said in **(Matthew 20: 26 – 28)**.

**26** Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.

**27** And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—

**28** just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

The key to being “great Christians” in God’s eyes is determined by how great our service is to others! Beginning with service to our Church family, then out in to the community and then out in to the world.



In the comic strip “Peanuts”, Lucy is often the poster child for a self-indulgent philosophy. In reading a book to Lucy, Linus says, “It says here that the world revolves around the sun once a year.” Lucy replies, “The world revolves around the sun?? Are you sure? I thought it revolved around me.”

This type of thinking seems to be a reflection of our culture and...of the modern church. So many churches have the sole purpose of promoting or preaching only those things that make the people happy and help them to become prosperous. Those that are guided in life by the Holy Spirit and bear His fruit know that true happiness and fulfillment in life is found in not serving ourselves, but in serving others.

I want to read a quote from one of the generals of the Salvation Army who used his uniform to teach others about service.



*“There are just two things about my uniform that I want to tell you about. They are my two brass buttons on the lapels of my jacket; “S...S.” As he put his thumb under his right lapel, he said, “This ‘S’ stands for saved. I have been saved by Jesus Christ.” Then he placed his thumb under his left lapel and said, “This ‘S’ stands for serve. It lets the world know that I have been saved for one purpose and one purpose only, and that is to serve.” Then with a note of seriousness he said, “Quite frankly, folks, I grow very weary of some of my Christian brothers and sisters who are always talking about the brass button on the right and do not have a clue what the button on the left is all about.”*

Finally, let each one of us think about how we have been “set-free” in Christ to serve others the way Jesus did. It begins here among us and reaches into eternity!