

FREEDOM IN JESUS MEANS DEATH TO SELF

YEAR: UNITE / FOCUS: LIVING IN FREEDOM
SERIES: GALATIANS

BIG TRUTH: FREEDOM IN JESUS MEANS DEATH TO SELF

Romans 6:6; 8:13; Colossians 3:5-11; 1 Peter 2:24

BIBLE VERSE: GALATIANS 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

BIG IDEAS

- We have been crucified with Christ.
- Christ lives in us.
- In Christ we live by faith.

BIBLE PASSAGE: GALATIANS 2:15-21

UNITE: LIVING IN FREEDOM

The Unite year is an exploration of what it means to be united in Christ as the family of God (Romans 12:5). When we are saved, we are brought into the family of God- seen throughout the Old Testament as "God's People" and in the New Testament and today as the church (Exodus 6:7; Colossians 1:18). We are set free from our sin to walk in freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1) and use our influence to call others to do the same.

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- True freedom is only found in being a servant of Jesus
- We are set free not to do whatever we want, but to live for Christ



Every student should feel...

- Grateful for Christ who sets us free
- Convicted of the ways that they are ruled by the desires of their flesh
- Responsible to use their influence to make much of God alone



Every student should strive to...

- Read through the book of Galatians each week
- Memorize the Bible verse each week
- Deny the desires of their flesh to walk in step with the Spirit



Every student should want...

- See the ways that they are tempted to pursue self-salvation, and repent of these
- Live for the approval of God, not others
- Help others move out of slavery to sin toward freedom in Christ

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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FREEDOM IN JESUS MEANS
DEATH TO SELF**BIBLE VERSE: GALATIANS 2:20**

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Following Jesus means dying to the old way of living and not following our sin nature.

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me..."

- Saving faith involves repentance from our sin. It involves a recognition that we are indeed sinful and in need of Jesus to save us. We turn away from our sinful way of life, joining Jesus in crucifying our sin nature, and we turn to following Him in a new way of life.
- When we crucify our flesh, we reject our old way of life and we turn toward living a right life in Christ. This means that we die to ourselves daily, taking up our cross and pursue Jesus, living in obedience to God.

Following Jesus means living like Christ.

"...but Christ who lives in me."

- Christ lives in us through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us and empowers us to obey God's Word. The Holy Spirit guides us and teaches us what it means to live for Christ and leads us to be Christlike, living holy and blameless lives.
- Christ in us means that we live through His power. Because we are only human, we cannot do this in our own power. It is Christ's righteousness that is applied to us that allows us to live a new life in obedience to God.

Believers live for Jesus by trusting in the gospel.

"And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

- The life we live is through faith in Christ, who God sent to save us. Out of love for His people, Christ humbled Himself to live the perfect life as a human and to die in our place. He was the sacrifice needed to atone for our sins and make a way for our reconciliation.
- We live by faith, trusting in Jesus who is our Lord and Savior. We submit our lives to Him because we trust in Him first for salvation and second for our eternal life. Our hope is in the eternal life that He has promised us, and we live with eternity in focus.

FREEDOM IN JESUS MEANS
DEATH TO SELF**BIG IDEA #1: WE HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST.¹****[THIS]**

In Galatians 2:15-16, Paul writes of the condition of every person born on this earth. Every person is born a sinner. No person is justified by the works of the law. The Jewish people were given the law to guide them and to help them live for God. It showed them their need for a Savior and pointed them to the coming Messiah. The law also shows us our inability to save ourselves. The Jews could not keep the law. The law could not make them justified or reconciled to God the Father. No person can live perfectly and justify themselves. We are all born sinful. We have a nature that leads us away from God and not towards Him. We seek the way of the world and choose to please ourselves instead of pleasing God. This sets us at odds with a holy and righteous God. We are all under the wrath of God because God hates sin and as the right and true Ruler of the world, He sits in authority over all of creation.

[THEREFORE]

What are some futile ways that we try to justify ourselves today?

Romans 3:20 tells us that we gain a knowledge of our sinfulness through the law. For us today this means that God's commands and His standard for our lives reveal our inability to obey Him. We often try to be good enough or do enough good things to outweigh the bad.

Why is it dangerous to think that we do not need to be justified? How could you share the gospel with someone who believes this?

Many today struggle to believe that they need a Savior. They justify themselves by thinking that there is no reason they need to be justified anyway. However, to think this is to put oneself in a position higher than God. Because God has all authority, He is the standard of which we fall short in our sin, as Romans 3:23 reminds us.

[THIS]

When a person becomes a follower of Jesus, our old lives are crucified with Jesus. Because Jesus took on our sin debt on the cross and died in our place, the debt we owed was crucified on the cross. When we have saving faith, we turn away from our sinful way of living, crucifying it, which means we consider it dead to us. We turn instead to following Jesus and obeying God's commands in His Word. We join Jesus in living an obedient life for Him. Our old way of life is no longer our pattern of living. Instead, we gain freedom from that way of life, and we are free to live a new way. We pattern our life after Jesus who is our example.

[THEREFORE]

Read 1 John 3:7-10. How is your life different since you became a follower of Jesus?

Our lives will look different when we crucify our flesh. We will bear fruit because we will no longer be enslaved to our sin nature. We will live for Jesus and obey God's Word. We will walk in the Spirit, and the practice of our lives will be one that reflects God.

How does the truth that you have been crucified with Christ bring you joy in your daily life?

In Galatians 2:15-19, Paul teaches that we do not have to save ourselves. The law does indeed prove that we are sinners, and it can lead us to try to keep the law or attempt to be good enough, but the joy it should bring is that there is hope in Jesus. When we are crucified with Him, we have freedom from that bondage. We live free from the debt we owed, and we can live for God in obedience to Him.

1. Galatians 2:20: Believers are crucified with Christ. We crucify our old way of living and walk in a new way of life.

FREEDOM IN JESUS MEANS
DEATH TO SELF**BIG IDEA #2: CHRIST LIVES IN US.²****[THIS]**

Freedom for a believer means that he or she dies to self. This first death is a death to sin. A person must first identify with the death of Christ on the cross, dying to his or her old way of life. We do this by turning away from our sinful pattern of life and turning to Jesus. As Paul writes in Galatians 2:20, we are crucified with Christ. Our old lives are put to death, and we are also raised to a new life. The new life is the resurrected life that allows us to live for God. This is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who lives in us and leads us to live differently than we once lived. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that guides us and directs us to obey God. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we bear the fruit of the Spirit and grow in our Christlikeness. This is Christ living in us and this is true freedom.

[THEREFORE]**How have you experienced true freedom in Christ?**

John 8:32 tells us that those who know the truth are set free. Knowing the truth of Christ makes enslaved men free men. When we experience the truth of who Christ is, we are set free from the bondage of our sin nature. This is true freedom. We are free to live for Jesus and in a right relationship with God.

[THIS]

Freedom for a believer also means dying to self daily. To live for Jesus means to take up our cross every day and to die to our flesh. Because we have been crucified with Christ, we must walk in the freedom that Christ has purchased for us on the cross. We do this by choosing every day to set aside our fleshly desires. We choose not to fulfill the desires that would lead us away from God, but instead we choose to do what pleases God. When we do this, we become more Christlike, and we live a righteous life. It is this righteous life that brings freedom to us. We are free from judgment, free from condemnation, free from shame, and free from guilt. We are free to live the life we were created to live. This is real freedom, unlike the freedom the world promises when it claims that following our hearts and pursuing our dreams will bring us freedom. Day by day our hearts and lives are being renewed and transformed by Christ's Spirit.

[THEREFORE]**How is it difficult for you to die to yourself daily?**

Often it is difficult to die to ourselves daily because we are not focused on living fully for Jesus. We can become distracted with our daily lives and the mundane and temporal things of the world. Luke 9:23 and Matthew 10:38 tell us that we should take up our cross daily to fully live for Jesus. This is when we will really find true freedom.

What does daily joy and freedom look like in someone's life when they have taken up their cross daily to live for Jesus?

2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us that those who are followers of Christ are new creations. This means that we are made new through the power of the Spirit. As we take up our cross daily, we are being transformed into new creations who are more Christlike each day. As we grow in our Christlikeness, we grow in our joy and freedom.

How should we respond when following Christ makes life difficult?

There is always a cost to following God faithfully. In Hebrews 11, Moses is praised for the faith that led him to be mistreated with God's people rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. When we hold fast to the reality of God's authority and cling to His promises, we will endure.

2. Galatians 2:20: Believers live in Christ by faith. It is through faith in Jesus and the eternal life He promises that we have hope in this present life.

FREEDOM IN JESUS MEANS
DEATH TO SELF**BIG IDEA #3: IN CHRIST WE LIVE BY FAITH.³****[THIS]**

Faith is a foundational part of every believer's walk with Jesus. Without faith we cannot please God, as Hebrews 11:6 tells us. It is through faith that we confess our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. It is faith given to us through God's grace and His mercy that allows us to experience freedom from the sin debt we all owe. When we trust in Jesus as our Savior and the propitiation for our sins, we are doing so through faith that what God has promised, including His promise of eternal life, is true. We trust that the promise of sanctification, or making us like Christ through His Spirit, is true. We trust this process by the faith we have in Christ who has redeemed us and reconciled us to the Father.

[THEREFORE]

How has faith been an important part of your daily walk with Jesus?

Hebrews 11:1 tells us that faith is the confidence in what we are hoping for and the assurance of what we cannot see. Faith is necessary to grow in our trust of God because we do not see Him, and we must hope in the eternal life that He has promised us.

[THIS]

Part of growing in our faith is a denial of our self. This daily denial of our self is possible because of our faith, and it also results in a greater faith. We experience great freedom as we die to ourselves and take up our cross to follow Jesus. God does not require of us anything that He does not equip us to accomplish. A denial of ourselves is not possible in our own power. God gives us His Spirit to dwell inside of us to empower us to live sacrificial lives so that we may grow in our Christlikeness. When we understand this truth and submit to the leading and guiding of God's Spirit, we walk in true freedom. We understand that it is in Christ in us that enables us to deny our fleshly wants and desires. It is Christ in us that enables us to truly live. Without Him, we are dead men and women walking, focusing on the futile things of this world.

[THEREFORE]

How have you experienced doubt in your daily life? How does this doubt cause you to move your focus from Jesus to yourself?

When doubt creeps into our minds, we turn our eyes from Jesus and trusting His promises to our circumstances. This can cause us to focus on ourselves and we can lose our trust. Colossians 3:2 reminds us of the importance of setting our minds on heavenly things, on things that are of eternal value and significance, because it is these things that help us focus on Jesus.

What are some specific things that you need to die to daily to help you walk in the freedom Jesus has purchased for you on the cross?

Colossians 3:5-10 shows us that there are two distinct ways of living: the old way of living and the new way of living. When we have saving faith, we begin walking in the new way, but we must die daily to the old way. We must put to death what is earthly in us and put on the fruit of the Spirit. We must walk in the godly things that are products of growing in our knowledge of God and our obedience to Christ.

3. Galatians 2:20: Believers live in Christ by faith. It is through faith in Jesus and the eternal life He promises that we have hope in this present life.