

FREEDOM!

Scripture used: [Galatians 5:1 \(NASB\)](#); [Micah 6:8 \(NASB\)](#); [Luke 10:25-28 \(NASB\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Dan gave us a special sermon this week to commemorate Father's Day. He shared the story of his own father, who is still alive in his nineties! Pastor Dan recounted the most powerful lesson he learned from his father: freedom can easily turn into chaos. In other words, freedom does not mean doing whatever we want. There must be boundaries to our freedom, otherwise we will hurt the people around us. These responsibilities of freedom are even more important spiritually. Through Jesus, we are offered this eternal freedom, and must live according to the example He set. That means living according to God's purposes in this world. This sort of freedom requires us to make hard decisions each day, putting others before ourselves. Fathers and father figures do this well, making sacrifices as servant leaders. Today we are honoring their Christlike examples by serving the people around us.

KEY POINTS

- 1) **God's freedom is the only eternal freedom.** Political freedom, social freedom, economic freedom, and other kinds of worldly freedom are important. The pursuit of these freedoms inspire us to be better. But these freedoms are not as important as freedom from sin. This is the ultimate freedom, which Jesus earned for us by fulfilling the scriptures and rising from the grave on the third day. It is this freedom that Paul reminds us to treasure in [Galatians 5:1 \(NASB\)](#), because we might end up accidentally "subject again to the yoke of slavery" of some other kind.
- 2) **We are set free by Jesus, and must stand firm in that freedom.** Freedom is not a passive state. We don't just "have freedom." Freedom is actually an active stance, an attitude toward life. What sort of attitude? The "good" attitude that leads to the three behaviors that Micah describes in [Micah 6:8 \(NASB\)](#).
 - a. **Doing God's justice.** This means setting things right with others, and with ourselves. This is often hard for us because we tend to focus on those things we've suffered at the hands of others, rather than the ways we can help others despite what they've done.
 - b. **Loving-kindness.** In [John Chapter 8 \(NASB\)](#), Jesus was approached by the scribe and Pharisees with a woman who was caught committing adultery. Jesus did not condemn the woman according to the Law of Moses. Instead He saved her life by pointing out that all the men had also sinned in some way. This sort of action-oriented mercy is exactly the kind we have to live out in our own lives.
 - c. **Walking humbly.** This life is hard. We all face challenges, fears, obstacles, and anxieties. Following Jesus is a daily practice of turning toward Him and trying to be like Him no matter what is going on around us.
- 3) **Living free starts with love.** When questioned about how we can inherit eternal life, Jesus answered in [Luke 10:25-28 \(NASB\)](#) that we must love God and love others. This radical love that spills out of us is the motivation for the justice, kindness, and humility that we must practice as free Christians. By practicing these behaviors every day, we will avoid being swallowed up by the temporary freedoms of this world.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Fathers and father figures are often asked to sacrifice a lot for their families, friends, and neighbors. They are called to be the servant leaders that Jesus describes many times in the Bible. This sort of life is hard, but fulfilling. How have you experienced a father or father figure expressing the love of God to you? If a father or father figure has wounded you or harmed you, have you brought that pain to God, allowing God to heal and redeem with His love?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Every one of us is capable of living a more Christ-centered life. Each day is an opportunity to take a step toward that better life. Let's model ourselves after Jesus. Ask "am I walking in the same manner as Jesus walked?" In particular, do you more often see freedom as a right to be asserted, which is often the case in our nation's political conflicts, or rather as an empowerment to do the things of God and serve and bless others? How does Micah 6:8 show us what is most important to God?
- 3) **DO** - God has already fulfilled the scripture. Jesus is risen, and He is Lord. Eternal life is ours, and we are invited to be a part of God's plan for redeeming this world. Pray emphatically "I will allow God's love to be expressed through me!" Join us next Sunday for the start of a new message series, "Dangerous Prayers."