

Serving One Another

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Date: 12 September 2021

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[0 : 0 0] So today I want to continue this series of one another, but mainly just focusing today and serve one another.

So please go with me again to Galatians chapter 5 verse 13. For you were called to freedom brothers, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another, but through love serve one another.

I have to say that one of my favorite films is Braveheart. Maybe you don't agree with Mel Gibson's Scottish accent, but the poetic story behind the film is, I mean behind the landscapes and the glens and everything is fascinating for me.

I was just like five years or seven years old, I can't even remember, but back in Chile just watching this film. And wow, I really like that film. This warrior spirit of William Wallace captures the people's hearts, right?

This sacrificial way of serving the Scottish people is vital to understand this film. Today I just had some lunch with a couple of people and I just asked, have you watched this film Braveheart? And he said no. So for those of you who have already watched this film, do you remember the last words of William Wallace?

[1 : 5 4] No? Well, no. But it was freedom. Yeah? Okay, yeah please. You have to anyway.

But it's freedom. It's not just freedom, but freedom. So according to this film, freedom and service were related to each other.

But after all, this is just an only a film. So some people doubt the historical accuracy of Braveheart.

Therefore, all this inspire spirit of serving one another, it just disappear when this film ends. However, we keep yearning for this sense of freedom in our hearts.

Now, let me ask you this. Do you know what freedom is? Have you ever experienced this freedom? As Christians, how do we know if we are living according to this gospel of freedom?

[3 : 0 6] Jesus said, by their fruits, you shall know them. And according to Paul in Galatians 5 verse 13, there's an important and vital fruit that comes from true freedom.

And that is service. Again, but through love, serve one another. So I want to continue this series about one another by talking about serving one another.

And this is really connected with the previous sermon about loving one another. Because to love one another is so important in the Christian life that we cannot talk about love like in a film or in a movie.

No, because this is not a film. This is real life. This is about life itself. Therefore, the reality of love is expressed by serving one another. As Paul says here, we must serve through love in freedom.

So I want to speak only two points and not three points in this sermon. The first one is true service comes from true freedom.

- [4 : 32] So the first point, true service comes from true freedom. And the second point is true service and true freedom are rooted or come in the true servant, the Lord.
- So true service and true freedom are rooted in the true servant, the Lord. So the first point is true service comes from true freedom.
- So having said this, we should mention that therefore it exists a false service that comes from false freedom.
- In other words, false service comes when someone is tied to something that not only opposes to growth, but lives in constant oppression that harms your life.
- A man with chains, sorry, in her hands and feet cannot move. He's unable to serve well.
- [5 : 44] Everyone of us belongs to someone. In other words, everyone of us has a master and in a certain sense we become his or her servant or slave.
- To whom do we belong? And this is very important. Who is taking your thoughts, your energy, your joy, life, family, gifts and heart?
- And heart, sorry. The person or the thing you dedicate your thoughts, words, actions, affections, does it bring you joy, satisfaction and true comfort in trials?
- And let me tell you this just briefly. Three things can bring a burden or can enslave your life in a pretty bad way.
- The first is a religion that preaches a false gospel. Paul is serious about anyone who preaches a different gospel according to Galatians.
- [7 : 05] But what is a false gospel? Any message that focuses on your works or your efforts or deeds to obtain the approver and salvation from God.
- The second thing that can enslave our lives is the consequence of breaking God's law. And please remember this. Our enemy, your enemy, my enemy is not the law.
- It's our sin because the root of the law is love. Therefore, the meaning of the law is to love God and love your neighbor.
- So if we talk about the root of sin is hate. It is to hate God and hate your neighbor in a conscious or an unconscious way, whatever you call it, but it's to hate God and hate your neighbor.
- And the wages of sin is eternal death. And the third thing that brings this that can enslave our lives is sin, sin itself. And sin is not a toy.
- [8 : 25] What God hates is sin. And I have to say this. I really like the Westminster Shorter Catechism, the definition of sin and the question 14.
- Question 14, what is sin? And the answer is this. Sin is any want of conformity onto or transgression of the law of God.
- Again, sin is any want of conformity onto or transgression of the law of God. So in other words, is when we disagree with loving God and loving our neighbor, and in some sense we create a new system of law that leads us to hate God and hate and slave our neighbor.
- This is why sin is so awful. And this is the nature of every kind of sin, of every secret sin. We are hitting God and we are hitting our wives, children, church, ministry, job, whatever.
- That's the nature of sin. So when we live enslaved to sin, false service appears. Because false service seeks to use the gifts of people for our own benefit in a very selfish way.
- [9 : 55] Sometimes it manipulates, sometimes it has an appearance of service, just an external appearance of service, but at the end of the day it's not true service because it's not real.
- Only in freedom, in freedom we can serve well, and that is not for our glory, but for God's glory and the well-being of our neighbor. Only in true freedom there is true service.

Obviously the whole Bible is about the gospel, and here in Galatians we see this gospel, about the work of God for our salvation, not about our works to earn salvation.

And it's about faith in Christ. It argues for freedom as a result of the gospel, sorry, nevertheless while we don't do good works to obtain salvation, we do good works because we are already saved by the love and grace of God.

So we are not saved by doing good works, but we are saved for good works prepared beforehand by God.

[11 : 16] And all this is done in the context of freedom. So as we, as Ken read, for freedom Christ has set us free, stand firm therefore and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Do we want to breathe this freedom? Do we want to live in freedom?

Do you want to experience this freedom? Then we have to serve, we have to serve one another.

Again verse 13, for you were called, you were called to freedom, brothers, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh and that is to enslave people into your own laws and things like that, but through love the last, the previous sermon, serve one another. Freedom, it's a position and the reality of liberty, freedom from the requirements of the law to be saved, freedom from the condemnation and consequence of breaking this law and also liberty from the power of sin.

Only in freedom we can serve one another. So service, what is? It is to put our gifts and hearts for others. It is to put our gifts and hearts for others in love, not for my glory, not for the glory of our ministries, not for the sake of our names, but for God's glory. Service is to build up the body of Christ through reciprocal sharing of gifts and hearts for God's glory. So again service is to build up the body of Christ through this reciprocal sharing of gifts and hearts for God's glory. So to serve well we have to first serve God.

If we go to the Old Testament as I read and now Israel and now people here at Sanctis, members of this church, members of the Church of Christ whatever you are if you are watching online and if you are put your faith in Christ, what does the law of your God require of you? But to fear the law of your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the law of your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

[14 : 13] So to serve God here, the word here implies just this to work for God in the sense of worship God.

So to serve God is to worship God. So because God brings freedom to his people, his people worship him, worship God, his God in freedom, in this sense of awe, joy and thankfulness with all their heart and soul. So from this worship to God in freedom we can serve our neighbor and in distinction from our service to God the Creator and Redeemer we serve our neighbor because we are created and in need of redemption and sanctification.

And not only that, we are social beings so we need each other. This is something reciprocal.

God's freedom allow us to experience true service. I serve you in love and I receive your service for God's glory. This is something mutual. It is not something that I only give to you but only through service means that I receive something from you.

So we serve each other when we realize this is very important that God has given us something that is for us but it's not ours. And that is our gifts. So God gives you gifts but not for you but for your neighbor. So you have something that is yours but it's not yours because it's for your neighbor. That's the reason why every single member of the body of Christ has gifts. So you have gifts that are not yours but are for your neighbor. For the person who is next to you right now or behind you. So gifts are made to be given. And in seminary we are learning about how to preach.

[16 : 58] We always receive this advice. Do not mention the original work in Greek or Hebrew about some word. So I'm not going to mention the Greek or Hebrew word but the Latin word and the Spanish word. So I am okay with this. So I love this because the Latin word for gifts is donum. And in Spanish I'm from Chile by the way, South America is don. So don, don, where is don? Well done, done. So don means to donate. You know what I mean? So don to give, to donate yourself to the person who is next to you. So that's a gift. So you have gifts to be given to your neighbor.

That's service. So you give your gifts and your heart to the person who is next to you, to your neighbor for God's glory. Service is to donate our lives for Christ the king and his body, the church. We freely give our gifts because freely we have received them.

That's service in freedom, in gratitude, just to give your heart for Christ the king and his body. So having said this, we serve each other when we realize that I don't have all the gifts of the world. Therefore I need others gifts.

You need the gifts of the person again who is next to you in front of you. We need each other. We are needy and we are needed. I need to work for you and you need to work for me.

Through love we serve each other in freedom by the gospel.

[19 : 19] And now let me tell you this. How can we serve well? We serve well when we know each other. We serve well when we know each other. Otherwise it is impossible to give a true service.

It is impossible to give a true service to someone who I don't know that person or that guy. So we need to spend time and be intentional in getting to know more about each of us.

We need to know our names, hobbies, dreams, struggles, gifts and so on. This is key in service.

We cannot love someone if we don't know him. Same with service. You can't worship or serve God if you don't know him. We cannot really serve our brothers and sisters if we don't know them or if we don't have the practical intentionality and the heart to know them. It is impossible.

Otherwise it's going to be something very mechanical, external and a true service. What are we doing to get deeper in our knowledge about God, the Creator and Redeemer?

[21 : 06] And also what are we doing to get deeper in our knowledge of the person who is next to you? Maybe we are resistant to this because society teaches us that true freedom is just something, just to be isolated, just to be yourself and just fulfill your dreams and that's all.

So that is not freedom. Maybe you think that you don't serve to serve others. Yeah, maybe we think about that. No, I don't have the gifts.

I don't serve to serve others. Maybe you think that you are doing the opposite to serve. But let me tell you this. God calls these kind of people. When we more recognize that we can't serve well, it is when God uses our lives to serve him and to serve others.

And this is the gospel again. Think about this. Paul, he was persecuting the church. Therefore, he was not serving the church. He was serving his own desires. Paul was killing the church.

Again, he was not serving the church. Therefore, in reality, he wasn't serving God. He thought he was serving God, but he didn't. Why? Because Paul was a servant of his legalistic religion. He was a slave of his own righteousness. And he needed freedom. And the God of the gracious covenant of grace, the God of Abraham, came to him and broke the chains. In that moment, Paul, he got the sweetest freedom. He was completely free by the free grace of God. And now the best way to live out that freedom was by living as a servant, actually as a slave of Jesus Christ.

[23 : 32] When you read the New Testament, he presents himself as Paul, a servant or slave of Jesus Christ.

In Philippians, Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ. And please don't think about this awful slavery of the 18th or 19th century. No, in Paul's social context, we found bad masters and good masters. And concerning good masters, there was a good bond between the master and the servant.

The servant or slave was devoted to the well-being of his master. And his master was concerned about the well-being of his servant. So in this case, Paul presents himself as a servant of Jesus Christ.

So the true experience of freedom and service comes when we declare that all Lord is Jesus Christ. We are free people when we live under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. And literally, this is not about us. It's about Christ. So that's the best comfort, both in life and death.

I really love and encourage you to study or to read the Heidelberg Catechism, just the first question. What's your only comfort both in life and death? And the answer is that I'm not my own.

[25 : 06] But both in life and death, in body and soul, I belong to Jesus Christ. That's the only comfort, both in life and death. Are you dealing with bad issues during this week? Do you need comfort?

That's your comfort. That we do not belong to people. We do not belong to fallen political system. Even we do not belong to our secret sins. No, we belong to Christ. And Christ is our Lord.

So we are free people. Our identity is not in our feelings or approbation, but in Jesus Christ. Why? Because Christ, the Lord of Lords, the King of kings came to surface people.

True service comes from true freedom. And now let me go to the final and second point. True service and true freedom are rooted in the true servant, the Lord. The true servant is the Lord of Lords. For even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many, according to Mark 10, 45. He came to serve. And the word here in the original means to attend to the wants and need of others. He came to serve the worst of the worst people in society. He came for the sick. Are you sick? Are you sick of struggling with things or you know what things you are struggling right now? Do you feel sick or do you realize that you are sick? So the gospel is for you. The gospel is for me. He came for those who are dead.

Do you think that you are dead and you're tired of everything? The gospel is for you. So he came for the sick. He came for those who are dead, dead in their trespasses and sins.

[27 : 38] And he came to serve in order to give and satisfy the greatest need of our hearts. And the greatest need of every single human heart is life. Spiritually, we are born as dead people. Therefore, nothing in this creation will satisfy our hearts because our hearts were not created for creation but for the Creator. And the Creator comes to redeem our hearts.

He comes to bring freedom. He came to serve and to give his life. He gave his life to give us life and that life is God himself. He is the highest good to bring absolute freedom.

Then the Lord of Lords took a human nature, a form of a servant. Let me go quickly to Philippians. Have this mind among yourself which is yours in Christ Jesus.

Though he was in the form of God, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Here is the gospel. The Lord of Lords got himself, took a human nature, and being fully man, he took a form of a servant to be the suffering servant.

[29 : 22] By his life, we see the beauty of the gospel because he fulfilled the law for us, for you, for me. By his life, he lived the perfect life by representing his people. Therefore, he loved his God, he loved God with all his heart, and he loved his neighbor, us, with all his heart and life. He fulfilled the law. But not only that, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. And maybe you can say, I already know this, I am a Christian, but this is vital for service. Why? Why Christ died for this?

Because our selfish desires turn into attitudes, attitudes that enslave people for our ugly benefits deserves death.

Or manipulation and false service deserves death. Our lack of love and service to our wives, to our husbands, widows, children, or people in church deserves death.

Jeremiah 48 verse 10, cursed is he who does the work of the Lord with slowness.

By his death, we see the beauty of the gospel because Christ took the curse that we deserve and he took the death that we deserve and he died for us. If you are a Christian, my friend, amigo, amiga, do you feel guilty for not serving God and your neighbor right now?

[31 : 33] Here's the gospel. By his life and death, Christ removes the guilt of every single sin. By his life, death, and spirit, Christ removes the power of sin. And in the resurrection day, Christ will remove the presence of sin in every redeemed heart. Now there's not condemnation for us. There's not condemnation for you and me. Therefore, by the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we have true freedom.

True freedom. What are we going to do with this freedom? Enjoy it. Enjoy this freedom. Not only in a good Cayley dance with your brothers and sisters in the church, but by serving God. That is worshiping his name, by meditating about the person and work of Christ while you walk to your job or while you are being tempted to commit that secret sin.

Again, what are we going to do with this freedom? Enjoy it. But how? By serving our neighbor. The life of Christ brings redemption in order to give freedom and also an example for us.

We receive a complete forgiveness of sin, past, present, and future sins to serve God, to have fellowship with God, and also to serve our neighbor and to have fellowship with our neighbors. This is by grace. Jesus, who is fully God, came to give the best gift himself. Jesus came to serve us. If you are free, if you have the best example, if the guilt has been removed, then God commands you, commands me to serve through love. There's not option.

This is the sweetest imperative to serve one another. This is the time to spend more time with our families, friends, and brothers and sisters of this congregation, or with all, from other congregations, to know them better. And with this, we will be able to give and receive love.

[34 : 23] And with freedom and love, you will be able to serve your neighbors and receive their service as well. Maybe you are thinking in practical things to do, to serve the church, to serve your brothers and sisters, and that's fine. That's good. But first, fill your heart with Christ, to give and serve with a heart full of Christ. That's what we need right now, to serve with hearts full of Christ, because our service must reflect the service of Christ, to the church, to the world, to every corner, to the end of the world. Amen. Let's pray together.

Oh God, we worship you because of who you are, because of the gospel, the beautiful gospel, the guilt, the power of sin has been removed by your life and death, and by your Holy Spirit, you apply this freedom in order to serve, to serve you, to worship you in freedom, because there is no condemnation. Again, the guilty has been, the guilt has been removed. There's freedom to love you, to know you more, to spend more time by worshiping your name, by declaring your wonderful works in the past, in the present, and also in the future. God, we want to love you more, and also in freedom, by the work of Christ.

Help us, and awake our hearts to serve our neighbors, to serve the brothers and sisters here, to put our gifts for the service, for the sake of the one who is next to me.

And also, help us to receive the service from our brothers and sisters. Help us to experience this freedom by serving one another in love. We thank you. We thank you for your word.

Oh God, please help us to understand that there are no excuses. There's only freedom.

[37 : 33] So please help us that you only know how many days we have here on earth, so help us to live every single day for your service, to serve you well, and also to serve our neighbor. Thank you. We thank you because this is not a film, but this is the best reality, the gospel of freedom, to love you and serve you and serve our neighbors. In Jesus Christ, in your precious name we pray, Amen.