

Galatians “FREEDOM” Quotes

This series of quotes was cited by Pastor Danny Ovalle during the sermon series in Galatians entitled “*The Freedom of Freedom in the Freedom of Christ*” delivered at The First Church of Christ – Bradford, MA from 9/15-6/16. (www.fccbradford.org)
All quotes are cited.

“Show me one who has been unshackled by Christ’s key of forgiveness, and I’ll show you the freest person in the world.” - Chad L. Bird

“In the gospel of Jesus Christ we have inexhaustible grace for an exhausted world.” —Tullian Tchividjian

“The Bible is one long story of God meeting our rebellion with His rescue, our sin with His salvation, our guilt with His grace, our badness with His goodness. The overwhelming focus of the Bible is not the work of the redeemed but the work of the Redeemer. Which means that the Bible is not first a recipe for Christian living but a revelation book of Jesus who is the answer to our un-Christian living.” -Tullian Tchividjian

“The church is not a gathering of the awesome. It's the gathering of the redeemed. The forgiven, league of the guilty who have been saved by grace. God’s grace is made perfect in the acknowledgement of our sin and weakness, not in the confession of self-proclaimed competence.” - Paul Dunk

“If we are not explicitly and regularly taught out of it, we will always turn the message of God's rescue mission into a message of self-help.”

- Michael Horton

“We are justified freely, for Christ's sake, by faith, without the exertion of our own strength, gaining of merit, or doing of works. To the age-old question, ‘What shall I do to be saved?’ the confessional answer is shocking: ‘Nothing! Just be still; shut up and listen for once in your life to what God the Almighty, creator and redeemer, is saying to his world and to you in the death and resurrection of his Son! Listen and believe!’”

- Gerhard O. Forde, Justification by Faith (Philadelphia, 1983), p22.

Jesus Christ...who gave Himself for our sins... Paul never loses sight of the purpose of his epistle. He does not say, "Who received our works," but "who gave." Gave what? Not gold, or silver, or paschal lambs, or an angel, but Himself. What for? Not for a crown, or a kingdom, or our goodness, but for our sins. These words are like so many thunderclaps of protest from heaven against every kind and type of self-merit. Underscore these words, for they are full of comfort for sore consciences.

*To rescue us... Paul answers: "The man who is named Jesus Christ and the Son of God **gave himself for our sins, to rescue us.**" The heavy artillery of these words explodes papacy, works, merits, superstitions. For if our sins could be removed by our own efforts, what need was there for the Son of God to be given for them? Since Christ was given for our sins it stands to reason that they cannot be put away by our own efforts. - Martin Luther,*

Commentary on Galatians

"The Reformation was a time when men went blind, staggering drunk because they had discovered, in the dusty basement of late medievalism, a whole cellar full of fifteen-hundred-year-old, two-hundred proof Grace—bottle after bottle of pure distillate of Scripture, one sip of which would convince anyone that God saves us single-handedly. The word of the Gospel—after all those centuries of trying to lift yourself into heaven by worrying about the perfection of your bootstraps—suddenly turned out to be a flat announcement that the saved were home before they started... Grace has to be drunk straight: no water, no ice, and certainly no ginger ale; neither goodness, nor badness, not the flowers that bloom in the spring of super spirituality could be allowed to enter into the case."

-Robert Farrar Capon, Between Noon & Three: Romance, Law & the Outrage of Grace

"Because Jesus was strong for me, I am free to be weak; because Jesus won for me, I am free to lose; because Jesus is someone, I am free to be no one; because Jesus was extraordinary, I am free to be ordinary; because Jesus succeeded for me, I am free to fail" - Tullian Tchividjian

"If we are ever to enter fully into the glorious liberty of the children of God, we are going to have to spend more time thinking about freedom than we do. The church, by and large, has had a poor record of encouraging freedom. It has spent so much time instilling in us the fear of making mistakes that it has made us like ill-taught piano students: we play our pieces, but we never really hear them because our main concern is not to make music but to avoid some flub that will get us in trouble. The church, having put itself in

loco parentis (in the place of a parent), has been so afraid we will lose sight of the need to do it right that it has made us care more about how we look than about who Jesus is. It has made us act more like subjects of a police state than fellow citizens of the saints.” - Robert Farrar Capon

"Our basic call is to behold, not behave." - Jared Wilson

“We give up on ourselves and efforts to “get better,” and we throw ourselves fully onto the finished work of Jesus in our place. Consider these words from Martin Lloyd Jones: “We can put it this way: the man who has faith [in Jesus Christ] is the man who is no longer looking at himself and no longer looking to himself. He no longer looks at anything he once was. He does not look at what he is now. He does not even look at what he hopes to be as the result of his own efforts. He looks entirely to the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work, and rests on that alone. He has ceased to say, “Ah yes, I used to commit terrible sins but [now] I have done this and that.” He stops saying that. If he goes on saying that, he has not got faith. Faith speaks in an entirely different manner and makes a man say, “Yes I have sinned grievously, I have lived a life of sin, yet I know that I am a child of God because I am not resting on any righteousness of my own; my righteousness is in Jesus Christ and God has put that to my account.” - Martyn Lloyd-Jones

“John Wesley finally saw how little he knew of Jesus in the middle of the Atlantic, on board the Simmonds, when a storm suddenly broke out. A group

*of Moravian missionaries happened to be having a worship service on deck at the time. Wesley records that, when the storm became intense, “a terrible screaming began among the English.” But “the Germans looked up, and without intermission calmly sang on. I asked one of them afterwards, ‘Were you not afraid?’ He answered, ‘I thank God, no.’ I asked, ‘But were not your women and children afraid?’ He replied mildly, ‘No; our women and children are not afraid to die.’” Wesley then knew that something was missing from his life. He found it in Christ. He found all he needed to face life and death in Christ alone.” When the next 9/11 hits us, may we serve others in every way we can. But through it all, and even right now, may we not yield to hysteria. May we calmly sing on, because we have in Christ a hope that nothing in this world can destroy. Our serenity will make an everlasting difference to others. - Ray Ortlund writing about The Wesley episode narrated in A. Skevington Wood, *The Inextinguishable Blaze: Spiritual Renewal and Advance in the Eighteenth Century* (Grand Rapids, 1968), pages 105-106.*

“The Promise was a King in a manger. The plan was a King on a cross. Advent celebrates the grace wrapped in a manger was unwrapped in a tomb.” -Paul Dunk

*“Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an **inexpressible and glorious joy**, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” -1 Peter 1:8-9*

*You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is **fullness of***

joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. - Psalm 16:11

*“The happiness that Christ [is and] gives worth **more than all the silver and gold in the world.**” - Jonathan Edwards*

*“Church should be so full of laughter & joy that outsiders press their noses against our windows **longing to get into the party.**” – Ray Cortese*

*“Christian joy is a good feeling in the soul, produced by the Holy Spirit, as he causes us to see **the beauty of Christ** in the word and in the world.” - John Piper*

Grace Unlimited — Charles R. Swindoll

“ My plea is that we not limit grace to Christ. We, too, can learn to be just as gracious as He. And since we can, we must, not only in our words and in great acts of compassion and understanding but in small ways as well. Let me describe four practical expectations you can anticipate as you get a firm grasp on grace.

First, you can expect to gain a greater appreciation for God's gifts to you and others. What gifts? Several come to mind. The free gift of salvation. The gift of life. The gift of laughter, of music, of beauty, of friendship, of forgiveness. Those who claim the freedom God offers gain an appreciation for the gifts that come with life.

Second, you can expect to spend less time and energy critical of and concerned about others' choices. Wouldn't that be a refreshing relief? When you get a grasp on grace—when you begin to operate in a context of freedom—you become increasingly less petty. You will allow others room to make their own decisions in life, even though you may choose otherwise.

Third, you can expect to become more tolerant and less judgmental. Externals will not mean as much to you. You'll begin to cultivate a desire for authentic faith rather than endure a religion based on superficial performance. You will find yourself so involved in your own pursuit of grace, you'll no longer lay guilt trips on those with whom you disagree.

*Fourth, you can expect to take a giant step toward maturity. As your world expands, thanks to an awakening of your understanding of grace, your maturity will enlarge. Before your very eyes, new vistas will open. It will be so transforming, you will never be the same.” **When you get a grasp on grace and freedom, you become increasingly less petty.***

“When we dumb down/water down the law and the gospel, people don't feel their desperation or their deliverance.” —Tullian Tchividjian

There is no more cruel stroke of the wrath of God than when He sends a famine of hearing His words. —Martin Luther

“If you are not in Christ, God says to you through His holy law that your condemnation is a certainty! If you are in Christ, God says to you through

His holy gospel that your condemnation is an impossibility!”

"If it doesn't make you feel desperate and exposed, you haven't heard the law. If it doesn't make you feel delivered and free, you haven't heard the gospel. Christianity should feel like "my chains fell off" not "I haven't done enough". — Tullian Tchividjian

The law calls for perfection but stimulates rebellion. It creates the very thing it wants to control. - P. Zahl

“The real gospel gives us a God far more holy than a moralist can bear and far more loving than a relativist can imagine.” - Tim Keller

"On our own, we are disconnected, insufficient, and needy. In and because of Christ, we are in community, pleasing to God, and cared for." — Pastor Nick Lannon

“Salvation is a work Jesus does alone. The payment for all our transgressions is done outside of us and apart from us. Our sin goes with Him but we must stay behind. Jesus goes to the cross solo. And just like Peter, we deny Him in the echo of all our misguided promises to Jesus.

But He lives for us and then naked and abandoned, He dies for us. This is what “working on our relationship with God” really looks like. It’s bloody, beautiful, and complete... and you have nothing to do with it. Now that’s glorious!

The Gospel is permanent restoration as a gift. There is nothing for us to do

at Calvary, only something for us to believe and receive. We're going to die someday, but not for our sins. We'll die to gain everything we don't deserve, everything Christ gloriously won—by himself—without you and without me, for you and for me.

So I'm done trying to steal some of God's glory by paying for my own sins. I'm done trying to follow Jesus to the cross. He says I'm not allowed. He goes there alone so we never have to."

— Daniel Emery Price

*"Our main work is by the Spirit of God, with the word of God, to portray the glories of God as more beautiful and more satisfying than anything." —
John Piper*

Corporate worship is designed to simultaneously confront our inescapable sin & idolatry, while encouraging us with God's boundless love and GRACE." - Paul David Tripp

MOVEMENT - MONUMENT - MAUSOLEUM - Ray Ortlund

Some years ago a friend of mine used these three simple categories to objectify the stages of a church's rise and fall.

Movement: *A healthy church is born as a burst of positive gospel energy. It's a Pentecost-like explosion of joy, a vital gospel movement. Such a church has a sense of mission, even a sense of destiny. It's exciting to be in*

this church. Think of a steep upward trajectory.

Monument: *Given human weakness, after a time, this movement becomes a monument. The spirit of the church changes from hunger to self-satisfaction, from eagerness to routine, from daring new steps of faith to maintaining the status quo, from outward to ingrown. It's easy not to notice this shift. The self-image of the church might still be that of a vital movement. But deep within, everything has changed. Think of leveling off.*

Mausoleum: *If the trend toward mediocrity is not arrested, the church will decline and become a mausoleum, a place of death. The church as an institution may have enough social momentum and financial resources to keep churning on. But as a force for newness of life, it no longer counts. Think of steep decline – indeed, a death spiral.*

The responsibility of a church's leaders is to discern when their movement is starting to level off as a monument. It is at this crucial point that they must face themselves honestly and discover why they have lost their edge and go into repentance and return to the costly commitments that made them great to ...

Celebrity or Legacy?

Interviewer: There's a huge difference between leaving a legacy in the lives of people and people having starry eyes toward a celebrity. What would be the difference between a celebrity's influence and a legacy maker?

Howard Hendricks: I do not think that celebrity is in any way Christian. Celebrity is something that is attached to you by people. A legacy is something that God produces in your life. He uses you, but you're not the

center of the activity. And I find that we're living in a society in which celebrity-ism is everything. Hollywood runs by it. All of the sports run by it. Politics runs by it.

But in the final analysis, that's just what people think. The truth of the matter is, they frequently don't know the whole story. What intrigues me is to read the true stories of some of these Hollywood stars. I mean, you want to throw up in the process of listening. What's going on behind the scenes? The utter promotion of an individual with no basis in fact.

But when you are talking about a person who leaves a legacy, no one can ever question the impact of it. He or she may not know the true impact. But God does. And it remains permanently.

Dallas Connection, Spring 2008, page 1.

*“If, therefore, God desires every knee to bow to Jesus and every tongue to confess Him, so should we. We should be ‘jealous’ (as Scripture sometimes puts it) for the honor of His name—troubled when it remains unknown, hurt when it is ignored, indignant when it is blasphemed, and all the time anxious and determined that it shall be given the honor and glory which are due to it. The highest of all missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is, especially when we contemplate the wrath of God...), but rather zeal—burning and passionate zeal—for the glory of Jesus Christ.” - John Stott, *The Message of Romans* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 53.*

“What I'm most deeply grateful for is that God's love for us, approval of us, and commitment to us does not ride on our resolve but on Jesus' resolve for us.

The gospel is the good news announcing Jesus' infallible devotion to us despite our inconsistent devotion to him.

The gospel is not a command to hang on to Jesus; it's a promise that no matter how weak and unsuccessful our faith and efforts may be, God is always holding onto us.” - Tullian Tchividjian

True Freedom in The Aroma of the Law & The Gospel

“If their teaching doesn't make you feel desperate & exposed, they haven't taught you the proper use of law”

“If then, their teaching about Jesus doesn't make you feel delivered and free, they haven't taught the gospel”

“Whether in a sermon, book, facebook post or tweet – if the lasting impression doesn't make you feel lighter & free, it's not the gospel!”

- Liberate Network

"Instead of standing at some antiseptic distance from our agonies and our failures, Jesus comes to meet us in the very thick of them." - Robert Capon

"The Gospel is karma's worst nightmare: we get the exact opposite of what we deserve.” - Chad Bird

“The greatest knowledge and the highest wisdom of Christians is not to know the law and to be ignorant of works, and of the whole active righteousness, especially when the conscience is wrestling with God. Contrary, among those who are not of God's people, the greatest wisdom is to know and to urge the law and the active righteousness. But it is a strange thing and unknown to the world to teach Christians to be ignorant of the law and to live before God as if there were no law; notwithstanding, except you be ignorant of the law and be assuredly persuaded in his heart there is now no law, nor wrath of God, but only grace and mercy for Christ's sake, you cannot be saved; for by the law comes the knowledge of sin. Conversely, works and the keeping of the law is strictly required in the world, as if there were no promise, or grace.” - Martin Luther

“What more, you may ask, do we want? ... We do not want merely to see the beauty [of Jesus], though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words — to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it.” - C. S. Lewis, "The Weight of Glory"

“We shall now have a full definition of faith, if we say that it is a firm and sure knowledge of the divine favor toward us, founded on the truth of a free promise in Christ, and revealed to our minds, and sealed on our hearts, by

the Holy Spirit.” - John Calvin, Institutes 3.2.7

“Our churches exist so that people can readily say, "You guys make it feel like Jesus has come to town." The more our churches can say, with Jesus, "We are gentle and lowly in heart," the more people will believe Jesus is really present.” - Ray Ortlund

*On Galatians 5:16, Martin Luther writes "We are partly sinners and partly righteous. Yet our righteousness is more abundant than our sin, because the righteousness of Christ, our sin-bearer, vastly surpasses the sin of the entire world." In his later years, he wrote, "For this is true, that according to the Divine reckoning we are in fact and totally righteous, even though sin is present. So we are in fact at the same time and altogether sinners." Here we can see Luther insists on the paradoxical language of totality in the phrase *simul justus et peccator* (at the same time, just and sinner).”*

We have as much a chance of deciding to stop the bad (and start doing the good) as a spider web has of stopping a 50 ton boulder from falling down a landslide. – Danny Ovalle

Father, always grant me character that is greater than my gifts and humility that is greater than my influence. Amen. - Scott Sauls

A very Happy Mother's Day to all our Mom's, whether by blood or by the Mom-like relationships you have with those who do not share your DNA. For those women who have longed to be a Mom, but God's design has not brought that about... may you know that in God's purpose for you, He has been unfolding (and may still be) His manifold grace to you in the unseen and painful. May you be comforted with His all-surpassing grace. And may you make the Mom-like difference in the lives of those God has placed in your life! Remember, Motherhood never ends. It only morphs to adapt to the seasons of life. And in all the seasons of life, may you, Mom, reflect those maternal (and paternal) qualities of God that are glorifying to Him, and are O-so needed by those given to you! - -Happy Mother's Day from FCC

"Sleep doesn't help if it's your soul that's tired" (unknown)

"To preach Christ means to feed the soul, make it righteous, set it free, and save it, provided it believes the preaching" - Martin Luther

"For the most part, the church is NOT known for being in the forgiveness business." - Steve Swartz (At Fcc Bradford we are changing that perception. We ARE forgiveness specialists...by personal, first-hand experience!)

"That's why we're here, in the Lord's four walls. He throws wide the door and calls us in to supper. Come on in, all of you. Bring your black eyes and bruised hearts. Bring your criminal records and soiled pasts. Bring your lust, same sex attraction and internet history. Jesus isn't afraid of your sin

or your righteousness. His cross is big enough for us all. So is His house...
- Chad Bird

“A man may love another as his own soul, yet his love may not be able to help him. He may pity him in prison, but not relieve him, bemoan him in misery, but not help him, suffer with him in trouble, but not ease him. We cannot love grace into a child, nor mercy into a friend; we cannot love them into heaven, though it may be the greatest desire of our soul. . . . But the love of Christ, being the love of God, is effective and fruitful in producing all the good things which he wills for his beloved. He loves life, grace and holiness into us; He loves us into covenant, He loves us into heaven.” - John Owen, Works (Edinburgh, 1980), II:63. Style updated, italics added.

“In my heart reigns this one article, faith in my dear Lord Jesus Christ, the beginning, middle and end of what ever of spiritual and divine thoughts I may have, whether by day or by night.” - Martin Luther

“The one who boasts in their works does not say Christ who loved me and gave himself for me.” —Martin Luther

“If you hide the cross, you hide Christ. If you hide his death, you hide our salvation. If you hide his empty grave, you hide our freedom”
— @defeatedvictor

“If you hide the cross behind the example of Jesus, you hide Christ behind a wall of works” — @defeatedvictor

“Jesus’ words always do what they say. When He says “your sins are forgiven”, they are!” - RJ Grunewald

“The Reformation was a time when men went blind, staggering drunk because they had discovered, in the dusty basement of late medievalism, a whole cellar full of fifteen-hundred-year-old, two-hundred proof Grace—bottle after bottle of pure distillate of Scripture, one sip of which would convince anyone that God saves us single-handedly. The word of the Gospel—after all those centuries of trying to lift yourself into heaven by worrying about the perfection of your bootstraps—suddenly turned out to be a flat announcement that the saved were home before they started...Grace has to be drunk straight: no water, no ice, and certainly no ginger ale; neither goodness, nor badness, nor the flowers that bloom in the spring of super spirituality could be allowed to enter into the case.

Saint Paul has not said to you, “Think how it would be if there were no condemnation”; he has said, “There is therefore now none.” He has made an unconditional statement, not a conditional one—a flat assertion, not a parabolic one. He has not said, “God has done this and that and the other thing; and if by dint of imagination you can manage to pull it all together, you may be able to experience a little solace in the prison of your days.” No. He has simply said, “You are free. Your services are no longer required. The salt mine has been closed. You have fallen under the ultimate statute of limitation. You are out from under everything: Shame, Guilt, Blame. It all

rolls off your back like rain off a tombstone.”

It is essential that you see this clearly. The Apostle is saying that you and I have been sprung. Right now; not next week or at the end of the world. And unconditionally, with no probation officer to report to. But that means that we have finally come face to face with the one question we have scrupulously ducked every time it got within a mile of us: You are free. What do you plan to do? One of the problems with any authentic pronouncement of the gospel is that it introduces us to freedom.” – Robert Capon

“American Christianity now is in crisis, in large part because people have marketed it as a religion of good people getting better, when in fact it is a religion of bad people coping with their failure to be good.” - David Zahl